

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins effort to prevent pharmaceutical companies from price gouging COVID-19 vaccines, treatments

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, a member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), helped introduce legislation to ensure that any taxpayer-funded vaccine or treatment for coronavirus (COVID-19) proven to be safe and effective will be accessible, affordable, and available to all individuals.

The *Make Medications Affordable by Preventing Pandemic Price-gouging (MMAPPP) Act*, led by Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Tina Smith (D-MN), would prevent price gouging on any COVID-related vaccines or treatments. Specifically, it would forbid monopolies and exclusive licensing of any taxpayer-funded COVID-19 vaccine or treatment, require reasonably affordable prices for those drugs, and improve transparency from drug manufacturers on expenditures related to COVID-19 vaccines or treatments. It would also prohibit price gouging of drugs used to treat future diseases that cause a public health emergency.

“Wisconsiners were struggling to afford their lifesaving medications before this pandemic. Now, there’s public health and economic crises and families are really worried about having affordable access to the COVID-related vaccines and treatment they need,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “Our legislation will stop big pharmaceutical companies from jacking up the price of taxpayer-funded vaccines or treatments for the coronavirus, so families and patients can get through this public

health crisis and stay healthy.”

Specifically, the legislation would:

- Prohibit monopolies and exclusive licensing of taxpayer-funded drugs that are used to diagnose, mitigate, prevent, or treat COVID-19 to ensure these drugs are universally and fairly accessible;
- Require the federal government to mandate reasonably affordable prices for any new, taxpayer-funded drugs used to diagnose, mitigate, prevent, or treat COVID-19;
- Safeguard transparency by requiring manufacturers to publicly report a detailed breakdown of expenditures related to any drug used to diagnose, mitigate, prevent, or treat COVID-19, including specifying what percentage of expenditures were sourced from taxpayers; and
- Prevent price gouging of drugs used to treat future diseases that would cause a public health emergency by waiving exclusive licenses and providing companies reasonable compensation.

“Americans are depending on access to affordable vaccines and treatments to beat COVID-19, but Big Pharma has shown time and again that they can’t be trusted to put patients before profits,” **said Robert Kraig, Executive Director of Citizen Action of Wisconsin.** “As long as Congress continues to hand over taxpayer money to the drug corporations with no strings attached, granting those corporations monopoly control to set and keep prices high, price-gouging patients will remain standard practice for this industry. Senator Baldwin’s bill would create long-overdue accountability to ensure that COVID-19 treatments, therapeutics and vaccines are affordable to all Wisconsinites, no matter where they live, what they look like or how much money they have. I applaud and thank Senator Baldwin for championing this issue and standing up for her constituents.”

The *MMAPPP Act* is endorsed by the Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Progressions, Oregon ALF-CIO, Health Care for All Oregon, Public Citizen; Lower Drug Prices Now; Patients for Affordable Drugs; Families USA; ACT UP Philadelphia; AIDS Healthcare Foundation; the Alliance for Retired Americans; American Federation of Teachers; American Muslim Health

Professionals; Americans for Tax Fairness; Arkansas Community Organizations; CASA in Action; Center for Popular Democracy Action; Coalition on Human Needs; Communities United; Congregation of Our Lady of the Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces; Consumer Action; Consumers' Checkbook/CSS; Equality North Carolina; Faith in Healthcare; Hero Action Fund; Hispanic Federation; Indivisible; Knowledge Ecology International; MomsRising; NASTAD; National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice; Oxfam America; Peoples Action; Public Advocacy for Kids; Right to Health; Pandemic Prevention Project; Social Security Works; Treatment Action Group; Young Invincibles; AFL-CIO.

In addition to Baldwin, Merkley and Smith, the *Make Medications Affordable by Preventing Pandemic Price-gouging Act* is also cosponsored by Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Kamala Harris (D-CA).

More information about the legislation is available [here](#).