

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins local wisconsin leaders in calling for more federal emergency funding for state and local governments to provide essential services

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin is supporting calls from state and local officials in Wisconsin for the next COVID-19 relief legislation to include additional federal funding for states and localities to respond to COVID-19 and cover budgetary shortfalls that have resulted from the public health emergency and economic crisis.

In May, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the HEROES Act, which includes federal support for state and local COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. The funding includes \$500 billion for states, \$375 billion for local governments and \$20 billion to tribes. Senate Republicans have not taken up the legislation for nearly three months and made a proposal last week that doesn't include any federal funding to help states and localities with their budgets.

Local officials across Wisconsin have reached out to Senator Baldwin's office about the need for more funding from the federal government so they can continue supporting essential workers and essential services during the pandemic. As state and local governments report anticipated cuts to their budgets, this will invariably affect such services as public schools, social services and health departments, with widespread economic consequences. Local and state governments expect cuts in services to local health departments which employ essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as child welfare workers, social workers, firefighters

and more employees. Many county and state governments have been forced to furlough workers due to the pandemic, and without funding, these furloughs could become permanent job losses. Decreased local government spending may lead to a \$344 billion decrease in economic output and 4.9 million fewer jobs.

“For months now, state and local governments have been on the frontlines of our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The House passed the HEROES Act, which includes more federal funding to our state and local governments in Wisconsin as they work to provide essential public services. Wisconsin towns, cities and counties need federal help to cover budgetary shortfalls that have resulted from this ongoing pandemic,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “It’s past time for Congress to take action with bold legislation that includes additional resources to give local governments in Wisconsin the relief they need to move forward.”

“Urgent action is needed to assist the City of Green Bay and other communities like ours. To this point, we have received nothing from the federal government to fill the gap left by declining revenues associated with the coronavirus pandemic,” **said Green Bay Mayor Eric Genrich.** “Without federal assistance, we will be forced to reduce services, defer necessary maintenance, and cut employee compensation or hours, which are all counterproductive measures in the midst of a recession. The impact the coronavirus has had on Americans’ health and well-being has been devastating. It will only get worse unless and until a majority of federal legislators follow Sen. Baldwin’s lead and demand support for local communities and economies that is equal to the challenges we face.”

“We are at the front lines of battling the spread of COVID-19, while at the same time dealing with the budgetary hardship caused by this pandemic,” **said Troy Streckenbach, Brown County Executive.** “Our departments and staff will not only shoulder the burden of state funding cuts and lost revenue but still maintain delivery of services from food, housing, and mental health, to child support, first responders, and law enforcement, to a community where the demand is exponentially greater.”

“Now more than ever we need the federal government to step up and provide vital resources for counties like Outagamie and communities like the Fox Valley. We cannot do it alone; we are blessed to have Sen Baldwin as our senator — a good friend of local government and a true champion of the middle class in Washington,” **said Thomas Nelson, Outagamie County Executive.**

“City staff estimates that Brookfield’s revenue losses could approach \$5 million annually from economically sensitive sources such as hotel taxes and investment income for the next few years,” **said Brookfield Mayor Steven Ponto**. “Without congressional support during this pandemic, City services relied upon by both residents and businesses will be at real risk of cutbacks affecting safety and quality of life.”

“An overarching need for all counties in the next COVID19 relief bill will be supportive funding to help counties compensate for lost revenues. Extending the \$600 per week unemployment benefits would help pump much-needed money into the local economy,” **said Monica Kruse, La Crosse County Board Chair**.

“Without a way to recoup some of these revenue losses, our county will have no way to ensure residents will continue to receive the necessary critical services they depend on,” **said Casey Bradley, Adams County Manager/Administrative Coordinator**.

“Firefighters, EMTs, teachers, and other public servants are the lifelines in their communities,” **said State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski**. “Without additional federal support, Wisconsin and our local governments will not be able to address the unforeseen financial challenges this pandemic has caused. It will come at the cost of essential services people are relying on, now more than ever.”

“The City of Beloit certainly advocates for stimulus funding that can be distributed to municipalities that are facing the gaps in revenues. Additionally, the residents of the City of Beloit are recovering from higher than average unemployment. Support to those residents will make a difference for our entire community’s economy as the community looks to rebound after the public health crisis is lessened,” **said Lori Luther, City Administrator for the City of Beloit**.

“While Kenosha County has been growing in recent years, the events related to this emergency could have serious consequences for us as well. We have seen a decline in sales tax revenue, interest on investments and are concerned about the potential significant increase in the amount of property taxes that may go delinquent at the end of July and how that will affect our ability to pay for increases we are seeing in the Health Department, Human Services and other areas,” **said Teri Jacobson, Kenosha County Treasurer**.

“This pandemic response finds an already fragile EMS system now facing new

financial and operational stressors that are likely to have long-term, and potentially disastrous, impacts on our industry,” **said Brian Donaldson, Director, Waushara County EMS and Vice President, Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Association.**