

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Local Wisconsin leaders call for more federal emergency funding for state and local governments to provide essential services

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin hosted a virtual roundtable with local leaders from across Wisconsin to call for more emergency relief 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. Senator Baldwin was joined by Green Bay Mayor Eric Genrich, La Crosse Mayor Tim Kabat, Marathon County Board of Supervisors Chair Kurt Gibbs, and American Federation of Teachers-Wisconsin President Kim Kohlhaas.

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 that legislation for more than four months and made a recent proposal that didn't include any federal funding to help states and localities with their budgets.

“Local governments in Wisconsin have been on the frontlines of our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. They’ve had to cover unanticipated expenses to respond

to the pandemic and provide a lifeline to families and businesses, keeping renters in their homes and businesses afloat,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “Mitch McConnell and Senate Republicans have not put forward a proposal that includes federal funding to help states and localities with their budgets. It is past time to take action in the Senate to pass bipartisan legislation that delivers more federal funding for schools to safely reopen, and helps local governments pay essential workers and provide essential services.”

Watch the full conversation with Senator Baldwin and local officials here:



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.

The full conversation with Senator Baldwin and local officials is available on YouTube [here](#).

“We really do need this sizable investment on the part of our federal government to stand us up and more importantly, to support our citizens, many of whom are

without employment. Nearly 20,000 people who are out of work here in the Green Bay Area and in desperate need of support. So I'm very thankful that Senator Baldwin is advocating for the policies that we really think are necessary in Washington," **said Green Bay Mayor Eric Genrich. Mayor Genrich's remarks begin at 5:30 in the video.**

La Crosse Mayor Tim Kabat said, "We are having to make reductions in personnel and we're doing everything we can to avoid reducing police and fire on our streets and those public safety positions. But the reality is, we're having to make those tough choices in those departments as well. The initial CARES Act funding was helpful, but we really need to be made whole when it comes to our revenues." **Mayor Kabat's remarks begin at 11:25 in the video.**

"In Wisconsin, the counties are charged with the responsibility of maintaining infrastructure throughout the state, including the county highways, the state roads and the interstate system. When our resources are stretched, some of those levels of services that are provided there are also cut. The demands that the county is receiving on its health department, as you're well aware with the pandemic, is huge. And the struggle is that we're getting through this year by not replacing individuals as they retire and using up reserves - that is going to be a huge impact come next year," **said Marathon County Board of Supervisors Chair Kurt Gibbs. Mr. Gibbs' remarks begin at 16:30 in the video.**

"These stories are real. What's happening in our communities is real. Every aspect of our system is struggling and the schools are no different. Our budgets reflect our priorities. And without funding to support schools reopening, it definitely doesn't feel like it's a priority. It doesn't feel like the safety of our students and our staff is a priority," **said Kim Kohlhaas, President of the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Federation of Teachers. Ms. Kohlhaas' remarks begin at 22:20.**

An online version of this release is available [here](#).