

‘UpFront’: Johnson says Dems’ COVID-19 package contains ‘grotesque level of spending’

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U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, said the Dems’ plan for a new COVID-19 relief package contains a “grotesque level of spending.”

In an interview aired Sunday on “UpFront,” Johnson said at least \$1 trillion is still unspent from a previous COVID relief bill, and Congress should target that first. “UpFront” is produced in partnership with WisPolitics.com.

“So, what we should be doing is, we should be doing oversight, find out what worked, what didn’t work. And we passed this fast. We knew this would be far from perfect. So, let’s try and fix some of those things, and let’s spend the additional \$1.2 trillion better, more targeted, more efficiently, before we even think about authorizing another dime,” Johnson said.

Federal COVID-19 jobless benefits ran out Friday. “UpFront” host Adrienne Pedersen asked Johnson how quickly another package would be passed.

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“Not anytime soon,” he said.

Johnson has offered his own plan to extend COVID-19 jobless benefits in a range from \$200-\$500 per week. The plan that expired Friday gave people out of work because of coronavirus \$600 per week.

Johnson also addressed a report from the new, Dem-backed Congressional Integrity Project that said the lawmaker has put his own “personal interests before the needs of the American public, covering for (President) Trump’s corruption” and ignoring

oversight responsibilities.

The group claimed Johnson has increased his wealth anywhere from 50 percent to 100 percent since he took office.

“It’s completely false. My net worth has not grown by that amount,” Johnson said, adding that some of his assets were double-counted.

Johnson said when he took office, he converted many of his holdings to cash because “there’s no conflict of interest with cash.”

As a result, he said he has lost “huge sums of money by staying in cash and staying out of the market, by and large.”

“They are using false information, and they know it’s false, yet they still push it,” Johnson said.

“That’s why not enough good people actually run for office, and it’s such a vicious process. It’s so dishonest, but that’s the way it is. I accept that.”

Johnson chairs the Senate’s Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, which has been investigating activity surrounding the 2016 presidential campaign, the transition between the Obama and Trump administrations, and former Democratic Vice President Joe Biden’s son Hunter, who served on the board of a Ukrainian energy company.

Top Democrats recently suggested Johnson is being used by the Russians for disinformation in a foreign influence operation targeting lawmakers. Johnson denied that.

Pedersen asked Johnson why he thinks Democrats are launching attacks against him.

“Because I am investigating corruption in the Obama administration, and they are afraid of what the results of that investigation is, so what they are doing is they are targeting me, trying to destroy me, so that any results of my investigation will be marginalized,” he said.

“My question is, what are Democrats afraid of in my investigation?” Johnson said.



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