

WisDems: U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Pence can't distract from Trump's stunning failure

Posted on Wednesday, Apr 22, 2020

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(MADISON, WI) — On the day of Mike Pence's visit to Wisconsin to exploit the coronavirus pandemic for a photo-op and distract from Donald Trump's failure to properly address the crisis, Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) called out the administration for putting Wisconsinites and the American people in harm's way.

Trump downplayed the threat of COVID-19, and has gone so far as to push for an in-person election in Wisconsin and has incited anti-stay-at-home order protests. After sending 18 tons of PPE to China, he has refused to mobilize the federal government to create the PPE and testing capabilities needed to battle Coronavirus.

Read about the repercussions of Trump's failure below.

[CAP TIMES: U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin: Pence can't distract from Trump's stunning failure](#)

During a time of national crisis and a global pandemic, the people of Wisconsin ought to be able to look to the White House for strong leadership. They should be able to tune into a briefing from the president and get reassurance, sound science, and fact-based answers.

But that's not what Wisconsin families have gotten from President Trump. They've gotten a botched federal response, late-night tweetstorms, and chaotic briefings chock-full of misinformation. The White House is projecting chaos — not competence.

And today, after denials and delays that are still costing lives and livelihoods across

Wisconsin, the Trump Administration is using Wisconsin as a political backdrop for a photo op in my hometown of Madison as this public health and economic crisis still rages on and ravages communities.

Let's be clear — Vice President Mike Pence is no stranger to damage-control duty on the part of this Administration. But dropping by in Madison today isn't just too little too late, it's downright disrespectful to the health care and long-term care workers on the front lines of this ongoing crisis, just as it is to the food-service and grocery workers keeping our communities going. And it won't change the fact that this Administration's failure to adequately handle the coronavirus crisis has cost both Wisconsin lives and jobs.

The facts speak for themselves. President Trump dismantled and diminished our country's preparedness by closing the White House pandemic office. When health experts and our intelligence agencies were sounding the alarm about the coronavirus pandemic, Trump dragged his feet and instead chose to trust China — and even praised China's authoritarian government for their "transparency." He continually downplayed the threat of the coronavirus — calling it a "problem that's going to go away" and inaccurately comparing it to the seasonal flu. He failed to make sure the United States could conduct the widespread testing for the coronavirus that experts said would be essential for containing the spread of this pandemic.

And when states like Wisconsin faced shortages for critical medical supplies, Trump instead attacked governors and refused to use his authority to unlock the full power of the Defense Production Act to support a robust national testing plan and massively scale up production of the testing supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) our health care workers need to protect themselves, test and treat patients, and save lives.

Now, Wisconsin families are facing the dire and dangerous consequences of Trump's failure to prepare for this pandemic. Our communities are hurting — and this pandemic has taken a particularly large toll on communities of color in Milwaukee. Now we face an explosive outbreak in Green Bay.

Our small businesses are suffering and struggling to pay the bills. Our health care workers who put their lives on the line have struggled to get the PPE they need from the federal government to keep themselves safe and healthy. And hundreds of thousands of Wisconsin workers have filed for unemployment.

It didn't have to be this way. That's why we need a president who can lead us through these tough times — and that person is Joe Biden. Joe is strong and steady — he and President Obama were tested by the H1N1 outbreak and the Ebola virus. They led with science, listened to public health experts, and therefore protected the American people. Instead of taking cues from Beijing, Joe repeatedly spoke up early and urged Trump to demand more transparency and access from China for our own CDC investigators.

If this crisis has taught us anything, it's that leadership, experience, and judgment matter. We saw it right here in Wisconsin when the Republican majority in the state Legislature forced folks to choose between their health and their sacred right to vote. And we're seeing it every day with the president's erratic and divisive response to this pandemic.

Donald Trump didn't cause the coronavirus — but his dangerous, delayed, and inept response exacerbated the spread of the pandemic. Every administration is tested. Trump-Pence Administration has been tested by this coronavirus pandemic — and they've failed to deliver the leadership that Wisconsin families deserve.