

# DC Wrap: Baldwin says Republicans should raise the debt limit and stop playing political games

Posted on Thursday, Dec 2, 2021

*Welcome to our weekly DC Wrap, where we write about Wisconsin's congressional delegation. Sign up here to receive the newsletter directly:*

<https://forms.gle/YLYZtjWHPSt24HhZ7>

## **Quotes of the week**

*“And in that night, after dusk had passed, the area lit up; a symbol of both hope and unity as well as grief and remembrance.”*

*– U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, in a floor speech recalling a vigil recognizing those lost during the Waukesha Christmas parade.*

*“From that experience, I have no doubt that the citizens of Waukesha will recover from this tragedy, but it will take time and a great deal of effort. It will also be the responsibility of civil society to administer justice for this heinous act of evil because the victims and the community of Waukesha deserve justice.”*

*– U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, also in a floor speech referring to the vigil honoring parade victims and their families.*

## **This week's news**

**— U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, says Republicans' political games should not keep the country from paying its bills as Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen warns failure to raise the debt limit would “eviscerate” the country's pandemic economic recovery.**

But U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson's spokeswoman Vanessa Ambrossinni told WisPolitics.com the Oshkosh Republican does not support raising the debt ceiling. Johnson earlier this year said Dems have the power to raise the debt ceiling themselves and they are responsible for increasing that limit to pay for the trillions in Dem-backed spending provisions that require raising the ceiling.

Baldwin told WisPolitics.com Republicans should stop playing games and be responsible.

“The responsible thing to do here is for there to be a bipartisan solution to avoid a government default, but that takes Senate Republicans doing the responsible thing so it’s time for them to step up and do it.”

**— Johnson says conservative critics are wrong to paint his joint letter urging people not to politicize the Waukesha parade tragedy with Dem U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison.**

Johnson in a statement said some conservatives are incorrectly interpreting the statement as ignoring the “reality” that politically motivated low bail practices allowed Darrell Brooks to drive his Ford Escape through the Waukesha Christmas parade, killing eight and injuring dozens of others. He said the joint statement did not deny that “reality.”

“In fact, the release called for a thorough investigation, full due process, prosecution, and punishment to the full extent of the law,” he said.

He added his later comments to the press that the tragedy could have been avoided “and that the catch-and-release policies of the political left were resulting in more crime and greater violence.”

Johnson said he originally drafted the letter to respond to concerns from Waukesha community members over potential agitators “from the more radical ends of both sides of the political spectrum” stirring up trouble in the area.

“After what Wisconsin experienced in Kenosha, this was not a concern to take lightly,” he said.

Baldwin and Johnson attended a vigil shortly after the tragedy recognizing victims and their families.

Waukesha Police Capt. Dan Baumann told WisPolitics.com he and others appreciated the joint letter. He said the Waukesha community needs time to grieve and recover from the tragedy.

Baumann also said Waukesha Police have not encountered any neo-Nazi or other extremist political groups protesting in Waukesha following the Christmas parade.

See the Johnson [statement](#).

See the joint [letter](#).

**— The two senators also requested a moment of silence on the Senate floor to honor the victims.**

Johnson ahead of the moment of silence said the tragedy revealed the best in humans as first responders and Waukesha community members came together to help each other and heal from the destruction. He added a vigil in Waukesha he recently attended gave him hope for the future.

“From that experience, I have no doubt that the citizens of Waukesha will recover from this tragedy – but it will take time and a great deal of effort,” he said. “It will also be the responsibility of civil society to administer justice for this heinous act of evil, because the victims and the community of Waukesha deserve justice.”

Baldwin said politicizing the senseless act of violence is wrong because now is a time for healing and grieving. She praised first responders and other parade-goers who went above and beyond to help those injured, adding the candle lighting vigil she and Johnson attended is just the first step in the process to move forward.

“I think it’s simply wrong and disrespectful to the innocent lives that were taken away for anyone to play politics with this horrific tragedy,” she said. “We know this is not a political issue asking for division. It is a community standing together in unity asking for support to heal and asking for our love and support as we move forward together.”

Watch the Johnson [speech](#).

Watch the Baldwin [speech](#).

**— U.S. Rep. Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, led several of his Wisconsin House colleagues in calling for a moment of silence on the floor to honor the victims.**

The freshman House member and former Wisconsin Senate majority leader said the attack left a devastating impact on the Waukesha community. U.S. Reps. Ron Kind, D-La Crosse, Bryan Steil, R-Racine, Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, and Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, joined Fitzgerald on the floor.

“Anyone who regularly attends the Waukesha Christmas parade will tell you how joyous a celebration this parade typically is; it brings the community together,” Fitzgerald said. “It’s inconceivable that an individual would shatter lives and uproot our community in this horrific way.”

Watch the [speech](#).

See the [statement](#).

**— U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, rallied in support of abortion rights outside the U.S. Supreme Court as justices heard arguments over a Mississippi law that could overturn Roe V. Wade.**

The Supreme Court heard oral arguments over a Mississippi law banning abortions after 15-weeks of pregnancy. The Roe V. Wade decision protects the right to have an abortion up until the fetus can viably survive outside of the womb, otherwise known as fetal viability. Moore told WisPolitics.com Republican justices are just following through on the larger Republican agenda.

“We know that Republican justices on the Supreme Court are going to turn their backs on the long-established constitutional precedent to carry water for the partisan GOP extremist agenda,” she said. “It’s time to enshrine the Women’s Health Protection Act in law to guarantee every American has access to the reproductive care they need.”

All Wisconsin Dems in Congress support the WHPA, which aims to increase abortion rights and eliminate roadblocks to abortion procedures such as mandatory waiting periods, biased counseling, two-trip requirements and mandatory ultrasounds.

See Moore’s [tweet](#).

**— But her GOP colleagues U.S. Reps. Tom Tiffany and Glenn Grothman argue the Supreme Court should protect unborn children.**

Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, in a tweet said justices should rule in favor of protecting all Americans’ lives whether they are born or unborn because they are also protected by the Constitution.

“An unborn child is a human life, meaning they are granted the essential rights to life and liberty under our Constitution,” he said. “It is time for the Supreme Court

Justices to side with life and protect all Americans — born or unborn.

Tiffany, R-Minocqua, in a tweet said he will always support anti-abortion laws.

“I will always stand for life and support legislation that protects the unborn,” he said.

See Grothman’s [tweet](#).

See Tiffany’s [tweet](#).

**— U.S. Rep. Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, introduced a bill to prohibit the Small Business Administration from issuing direct-to-borrower loans under the 7(a) program.**

The legislation is aimed at ensuring local banks continue to play an important role in the loan process. Fitzgerald said the bill prohibits the SBA from usurping local banks’ role and stops potentially high default and fraud rates.

“As history indicates, when the SBA previously chose to engage in direct lending, they were met with high rates of default and fraud,” he said. “Local banks, on the other hand, possess regulatory safeguards that prevent these high rates of default and fraud.”

See the [release](#).

**— U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, D-La Crosse, introduced a bill he says would increase homebuyers’ access to low down payment mortgages.**

The bill would expand eligibility for and make permanent a deduction for mortgage insurance premium payments. Kind in a statement said the move would provide much needed economic relief for Wisconsinites.

“Making this deduction on mortgage insurance premium payments permanent and giving hard-working Wisconsin families some breathing room is long overdue,” he said. “I’m proud to introduce this bipartisan legislation to make sure we stop kicking the can down the road on this important deduction.”

See the [release](#).

## ***Posts of the week***

Happy to join the team at Compeer Financial in Johnson Creek to talk about the key issues affecting the Farm Credit System—an important benefit to Wisconsin agriculture. [pic.twitter.com/3s1OI3IPDr](https://pic.twitter.com/3s1OI3IPDr)

— Rep. Scott Fitzgerald (@RepFitzgerald) [December 1, 2021](#)

This Military Family Month, we recognize the sacrifices and challenges families make in support of their loved ones in uniform.

To all of our military families — thank you, this month is for you. [pic.twitter.com/M1R1oUO50I](https://pic.twitter.com/M1R1oUO50I)

— Sen. Tammy Baldwin (@SenatorBaldwin) [November 30, 2021](#)

Nice meeting with the team at [@alrosteel](#) in [#Oshkosh](#) yesterday! Thank you for giving me a firsthand look at what makes [#WI](#) a worldwide leader in manufacturing. [pic.twitter.com/WQKUMlpjDG](https://pic.twitter.com/WQKUMlpjDG)

— Rep. Glenn Grothman (@RepGrothman) [November 30, 2021](#)

Yesterday's staff-led mobile office met with constituents in Pierce County at the village hall in Elmwood.

Fun fact: It's the only village hall in Wisconsin with a bowling alley! [pic.twitter.com/ER7TBaXcsc](https://pic.twitter.com/ER7TBaXcsc)

— Senator Ron Johnson (@SenRonJohnson) [November 30, 2021](#)

Happy Hanukkah to all those celebrating here in Wisconsin and across the nation. May this be a time of joy for you and your family.

[pic.twitter.com/OilWf0BZDH](https://pic.twitter.com/OilWf0BZDH)

— Archive: Rep. Ron Kind (@RepRonKind) [November 28, 2021](#)

## ***ICYMI***

[‘We’re just not holding people’s feet to the fire’: Infrastructure, spending bills prompt call for transparency from watchdog group](#)

[Labor secretary expresses confidence ahead of critical holiday shipping season](#)

[Democrats Blast Wisconsin Supreme Court Redistricting Decision](#)

[Baldwin touts infrastructure bill](#)

[Wisconsin Democrats speak with La Crosse’s black community during town hall meeting](#)