

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins bicameral group of lawmakers to champion Inclusion of life-saving Medicaid fix in reconciliation legislation

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Washington, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined a bicameral group of lawmakers to underline the critical importance of addressing the Medicaid coverage gap in the forthcoming reconciliation package.

The lawmakers, all co-sponsors of the [Medicaid Saves Lives Act](#) originally introduced by Senator Baldwin and Senators Rev. Raphael Warnock (D-GA) and Jon Ossoff (D-GA), highlighted the benefits of Medicaid, which in addition to [saving lives](#) has been proven to improve health outcomes, bolster health systems and strengthen public health. The news conference also follows Senators Baldwin, Warnock and Ossoff's [push](#) last week to Senate leadership urging them to address closing the coverage gap as negotiations on the reconciliation package progress.

Senators Baldwin, Warnock, and Ossoff were joined by Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), House Majority Whip James E. Clyburn (D-SC) and Representative Carolyn Bourdeaux (D-GA).

WATCH Senator Baldwin's remarks [here](#).

A transcript of her remarks can be found below.

Good morning!

I want to start by thanking my colleagues from Georgia, Reverend Warnock and Senator Ossoff, for being steadfast partners in this fight to save lives and expand necessary health care coverage to some of our most vulnerable citizens.

As many of you know, Republicans in 12 states, including Wisconsin and Georgia, have refused to fully expand Medicaid coverage through the Affordable Care Act.

For nearly a decade in Wisconsin, Republicans have rejected federal investments in BadgerCare, our health care coverage program for low-income Wisconsin residents, that would make 91,000 Wisconsinites eligible for high quality health care.

Wisconsin Republicans have turned away \$1.6 billion in federal funding that could provide BadgerCare coverage for some who are currently uninsured.

To put this into perspective, that means they are denying the quality coverage that BadgerCare provides to someone working and only making \$13,000 a year. \$13,000 a year.

That's just wrong.

I teamed up with my colleagues from Georgia so we could open the door to those who have been shut out and expand access to affordable health care, including preventive care, that people want and need.

Waiting for Republicans in Wisconsin and the eleven other states that have refused to do the right thing is no longer a viable option.

Our Build Back Better Budget is the best opportunity we have to make a federal investment to expand access to quality health care coverage for working families.

By closing the coverage gap, studies show we would save an estimated 7,000 lives each year and could reduce \$2 billion of medical debt.

Health insurance isn't just about coverage. It can improve so many different aspects of a person's life and right now we have the opportunity to get it right, guided by our belief that health care should be a guaranteed right in America.

In light of one of the greatest public health crises in the last century, a crisis that has had a disproportionate impact on our most vulnerable communities, the time to act is now. We must make sure that we provide affordable quality health care

coverage to 91,000 people in Wisconsin, and the millions more who have suffered under Republican obstruction.

The Build Back Better legislation that we are working to pass is focused on tax cuts for working families, lowering the costs of child care, health care, and prescription drugs, and creating good paying jobs.

Our budget legislation will make the wealthy and big corporations pay their fair share of taxes so we can invest in the economic security of working families. That includes making investments to expand health coverage.

We face an urgent choice: do we keep an economy that serves the wealthiest and biggest corporations – or finally give working families a fair shot? This is our moment to prove to the American people that their government works for them – not just those at the top.

I am grateful for the work of my colleagues here today and feel confident that we can get this done.

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