

# WisDems: Support Wisconsin's health, support the badger bounceback

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(MADISON) — Today 10 organizations across Wisconsin sent a letter to Majority Leader LeMahieu and Speaker Vos calling on them to support the Governor's Badger Bounceback and expand Medicaid to cover 90,000 more of our residents.

[You can view the full letter at this link](#), and copied below.

**Senator Tammy Baldwin said:** "It's great to see this strong coalition calling on Wisconsin Republicans in the State Legislature to expand Medicaid and seize the full potential of the American Rescue Plan. This is why I worked in the Senate to pass this legislation — because we've seen just how important it is to invest in the health of our people and our economy. And now it's up to Wisconsin Republicans in the State Legislature to step up, listen to the people, and take this opportunity to expand health care coverage for 90,000 more Wisconsinites and save taxpayers money."

April 8, 2021

Support Wisconsin's Health, Support the Badger Bounceback

Majority Leader LeMahieu and Speaker Vos,

This past year made it undeniably clear: we can't have a healthy economy without healthy people.

And right now, you have a historic opportunity in front of you to strengthen both. By supporting the Governor's budget, you will invest in our people and our economy by

boosting our health care funding and expanding Medicaid to cover 90,000 more of our residents.

We are at a critical fork in the road that will shape the future of our state. If you choose the first path, and support the Governor's Badger Bounceback, you set our state up to seize the full force of the American Rescue Plan's potential. That's because the American Rescue Plan includes a provision to incentivize the expansion of Medicaid in states that have not yet done so — states like Wisconsin.

If you choose the second path, and reject the Badger Bounceback, you are rejecting \$1.6 billion in additional funding over the next two years we could have to expand our Medicaid program, BadgerCare.

Opening up access to BadgerCare has never been more important. The global pandemic has caused record unemployment, costing hardworking Wisconsinites their jobs and their health coverage just as they are at increased risk of getting sick and needing care. Nobody has been spared the pain of this crisis, but it has hit hardest in our low-income communities and communities of color. It is critical that we do everything in our power to rebuild Wisconsin's economy to be stronger and fairer for everyone—across race, class, and region—than ever before.

The American Rescue Plan is the boldest, most ambitious anti-poverty legislation in a generation, and Medicaid is one of the most effective anti-poverty programs we have. Supporting Governor Evers's Badger Bounceback agenda is the way we take full advantage of both.

The Republicans you lead in the House and the Senate have continually rejected Medicaid expansion over the past decade, not only hurting the Wisconsinites without health care coverage but also turning away millions in savings for our state and our taxpayers each year. After this past year in a global pandemic, we don't need to explain the stakes — our state can't bounce back if our people aren't healthy and strong.

There are only 13 other states that haven't already expanded Medicaid, and now even deep-red states like Alabama and Wyoming are gearing up to take advantage of this moment. Don't make Wisconsin the last to expand — and the last to recover.

Often, smart investments now can save a state money in the long-run. But expanding Medicaid is a rare case where expanding services for Wisconsin residents

will save us money right away. We can give 90,000 of our neighbors access to good, affordable health coverage and save \$1.6 billion, or we can turn down the money and leave hard working families to fend for themselves. It's a no brainer.

Please tell your members to support the Badger Bounceback because it's no time for playing politics with the health of our people or our economy.

Sincerely,

Wisconsin State AFL-CIO

AFSCME Council 32

AFT- Wisconsin, President Kim Kohlhaas

Wisconsin Building Trades Council, Executive Director Jake Castanza

Citizen Action of Wisconsin

Wisconsin Education Association Council

Fair Wisconsin

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin

SEIU Wisconsin State Council

WisDems