

# Baldwin says federal bill aims to bolster U.S. supply chains

Posted on Friday, Jun 10, 2022

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin says pending federal legislation aims to bolster U.S. supply chains for critical products such as microchips.

Speaking at a WisPolitics.com event this week in Washington, D.C., the Madison Dem discussed the latest iteration of the bill, now called the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act. Originally touted as a way to keep the United States competitive with China through measures aimed at advanced manufacturing and technology research, it now has a focus on addressing pandemic-related supply chain issues.

“The pandemic really showed if there is a global demand, and we do not produce it ourselves, that we can be left in short supply and that’s indeed what happened,” Baldwin said.

She explained that at the start of the pandemic, major vehicle manufacturers estimated consumers wouldn’t be buying as many cars and reduced their orders for microchips. But when that prediction turned out to be wrong, “you were seeing car lines closing, plants on hiatus because they didn’t have the microchips they needed,” she said.

She added that U.S. inventors created the first microchips, but the United States currently doesn’t produce them on an appreciable scale. Baldwin said that needs to change.

Challenges like these led to the legislation going through changes — both in substance and name — as lawmakers saw a greater need for producing certain components and products without relying on other nations, Baldwin said. She's part of a conference committee that oversees the bill's development.

"We've learned so many lessons, that we need — for critical components — to be able to produce our own," she said. "If it concerns our nation's security, safety or public health, we've got to be able to stand on our own two feet and produce it here."

Baldwin confirmed about \$50 billion is included in the bill's latest form for domestic production of semiconductor chips, which are used in a variety of household appliances and devices, agricultural equipment and vehicles. They're also crucial for the medical field, defense applications and other industries that rely on advanced technology.

She said federal lawmakers aim to get the bill passed by July 4.

"It's going to be a challenge but I think we can do it," she said. "June 21 is the announced date by which we hope to have a conference report and then go through the floor process in each house, and hopefully pass it before we break for the holiday recess."

Listen to the event here, with Baldwin's remarks on the bill between 5:50 and 16:00 in the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/wispolitics/us-sen-tammy-baldwin-headlines-june-7-dc-breakfast>

*-By Alex Moe*