

Bill Kaplan: Baldwin-Bidenomics is working for Wisconsin

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In 2021, Wisconsin Democratic Senator Tammy Baldwin said: “I want to rebuild our infrastructure with strong ‘buy America’ standards that ensure we use American-made products and support Wisconsin workers and manufacturers. I want to make sure we equip our state and local communities with what they need to build stronger and more climate resilient infrastructure. That is why I look forward to passing legislation that invests in helping Wisconsin improve the resiliency of our infrastructure... .”

A recent White House press release said: “President Biden and Vice President Harris came into office determined to rebuild our economy from the middle out and the bottom up, not the top down – and that strategy is working. ... His plan – Bidenomics — ... is centered around three key pillars: Making smart investments in America, empowering and educating workers to grow the middle class (and) promoting competition to lower costs and help entrepreneurs and small businesses thrive.”

Biden has talked about a “blue-collar blueprint to rebuild America.” Baldwin agrees: “We now have the opportunity to create good paying union jobs and stronger growth for our ‘Made in Wisconsin’ economy. Let’s seize this opportunity.” Baldwin and Biden have kept their promises. From 2021 – 2022, a Democratic-led Congress, including Baldwin, passed and Biden signed into law 3 landmark bills: bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.

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The Baldwin-Bidenomics legislative plan is working nationally and for Wisconsin. Unemployment rates for the U.S. (3.8%) and Wisconsin (2.6%) are at historic lows. From 2021 — 2023 manufacturing jobs increased nationally (800,000) and in Wisconsin (20,000) with many more factory jobs to come as the above 3 bills are implemented. Additionally, inflation has sharply declined from last year.

Baldwin is crisscrossing Wisconsin to counties won by Biden and Trump to announce new infrastructure projects. It doesn't matter if they voted Democratic or Republican. Cities, rural areas and suburbs are each getting funding for bridges, roads, public transit, ports, airports, clean-safe water and access to high-speed internet. A senator for all Wisconsinites, Baldwin flipped 17 counties won by Trump in 2016.

Baldwin is also pressing the Biden administration to use funding from the CHIPS and Science Act to make Wisconsin a regional high-tech hub. That's more jobs and looking towards the future. And, the Inflation Reduction Act spending is bringing thousands of clean energy jobs to Wisconsin, lowering the cost of energy for Wisconsinites and meeting the challenges of climate change.

No member of the Wisconsin GOP congressional delegation voted for any of the three bills described above. It may be one of the most reactionary GOP delegations in the Congress today. In contrast, 19 GOP senators and 13 GOP representatives voted for the infrastructure bill. And, 17 GOP senators and 24 GOP representatives voted for the CHIPS and Science Act. No Republicans voted for the Inflation Reduction Act. Today the GOP-led House is a do-nothing legislative body, abetted by flat-earther Wisconsin GOP Senator Ron Johnson.

However, Baldwin-Bidenomics is still working for Wisconsin.

-Kaplan wrote a guest column from Washington, D.C., for the Wisconsin State Journal from 1995 - 2009.