



DEMOCRATIC PARTY of WISCONSIN

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TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Martha Laning, Chair, Democratic Party of Wisconsin

RE: The State of Wisconsin's Republican U.S. Senate Primary

Right-wing outside groups have already spent nearly \$5 million against Senator Tammy Baldwin, making her the top target for big money outside spending last year. In fact, Tammy has so far [faced more spending than every other Democratic Senator up for election in 2018, combined](#), according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Republicans see Tammy as their final statewide target in Wisconsin, but their historically weak group of Senate candidates have embraced D.C.'s corporate special interest corruption, putting them far out-of-step with Wisconsin values. On issues ranging from health care and tax reform to attacking earned benefits, the Republican U.S. Senate field is championing Washington corruption by embracing hardline positions that would inflict real harm on hardworking Wisconsin families.

Republican Senate Field Championing Washington Special Interest Agenda

Right-wing state Senator Leah Vukmir, out-of-state billionaire puppet Kevin Nicholson and Wall Street hedge fund manager Eric Hovde (whose [drawn-out flirtation with a Senate run](#) is a testament to Republicans' frustration with their field) have enthusiastically embraced out-of-touch policies that protect the big corporations and the wealthy at the expense of Wisconsin. Working families across Wisconsin understand that this agenda is a giveaway to big donors and corporate special interests, but the Republican candidates have nevertheless continued to stand by their megadonors' toxic priorities.

On health care, more than [half of Wisconsinites want Congress to fix the Affordable Care Act](#) and just 27 percent of Wisconsinites back a full-on repeal and replace plan. Yet [Vukmir, Nicholson and Hovde](#) continue to champion Trumpcare repeal bills that would gut protections for Wisconsinites with pre-existing conditions and strip care away from tens of millions of Americans. Vukmir and Nicholson also [flat-out opposed a bipartisan fix to stabilize health care markets](#) after Trump's decision to end cost-sharing reduction payments — a de facto endorsement of [the 36 percent premium hike](#) Wisconsinites are expected to face as a direct result of Trump's actions.

[Vukmir, Nicholson](#) and [Hovde](#) are also running on the Republican tax law that [hikes taxes for more than 53 percent of Americans](#) — including millions of working families — while gifting 83 percent of the cuts to the richest one percent. Voters see through Republicans' spin and know the tax law is a massive transfer of wealth to corporations and billionaires: [only 26 percent approve](#)

[of the legislation while 50 percent believe they will face a tax increase.](#)

Americans know that [the Republican tax law is a giveaway to the wealthy few](#). And they disapprove of Republicans' plans to use the tax law as an excuse to [slash earned benefits](#). Embracing Speaker of the House Paul Ryan's [plan to pursue cuts to earned benefits programs](#) in 2018, Vukmir and Nicholson have already [endorsed a broad approach to gutting](#) Wisconsinites' Medicare, Medicaid and even Social Security, along with other vital programs. In 2012, [Republicans up and down the ticket in Wisconsin](#) — including Eric Hovde — were soundly defeated after running on a similar platform of cutting Wisconsinites' earned benefits. Millions of Wisconsinites would be impacted by the Vukmir, Nicholson, and Hovde-endorsed cuts — [including](#) one in three kids, half of people with disabilities, and three in five Wisconsinites that live in a nursing home.

Millions of Outside Spending Won't Overcome Weak Wisconsin GOP Field

Republicans are desperate to defeat Tammy Baldwin — that's why she was their top target in 2017, and it's why she will continue to be the priority for national Republicans and out-of-state big money special interests throughout 2018. But no amount of spending from out-of-state billionaires can make Leah Vukmir, Kevin Nicholson and Eric Hovde's right-wing — and extremely unpopular — Washington special-interest agenda palatable to Wisconsin voters.