Lt. Gov. Barnes' attendance at talks in Madrid will highlight his work on equity and sustainability in Wisconsin.

MADISON — Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes announced today he will join American leaders at the U.S. Climate Action Center at the upcoming UN climate talks in Madrid. These leaders from state, city and tribal governments, businesses, colleges and universities, healthcare and other institutions, are stepping up as the federal government steps away from global climate leadership.

"The time is now for leaders across our country to step up and show the world that we're serious about combatting climate change," Lt. Gov. Barnes said on the call. "Despite our President's ill decision to formally withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord, we will continue to do this work urgently and diligently."

This delegation of over 70 American leaders will be larger than the official U.S. government delegation. Collectively, coalitions of U.S. institutions taking action in support of the Paris Agreement represent nearly 70% of U.S. GDP and nearly two-thirds of the U.S. population.

Lt. Gov. Barnes' attendance will highlight his work on equity and sustainability in Wisconsin. Currently, the lieutenant governor serves as the Chair of Gov. Tony Evers' Task Force on Climate Change , as well as co-Chair of the NewDEAL Forum Climate Change Policy Group, a national network of rising state and local elected leaders.

In August, Gov. Evers signed Executive Order #38 , creating the Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy, with the goal of moving Wisconsin to 100-percent clean energy by 2050.

In a joint statement, the delegation vowed to continue making progress towards meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement and outlined what they hope to accomplish by attending the U.N. climate talks. Several organizations, including Climate Action Reserve, The Climate Registry and Georgetown Climate Center, worked together to host and coordinate the delegation. At COP25, Lt. Gov. Barnes will meet with foreign governments, businesses and local leaders to share their efforts to meet the United States' Paris climate targets and explore opportunities for collaboration to jointly raise their ambition further.