Written by Citizen Action of Wisconsin Press
Friday, 30 April 2021 09:32

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But misses an opportunity on prescription drug affordability, says Wisconsin Healthcare advocacy group.

MILWAUKEE - Following President Biden's speech to a joint session of Congress outlining his new American Families Plan, Robert Kraig, Executive Director of Citizen Action of Wisconsin issued this statement:



"President Biden outlined a plan that includes many of the key priorities and policies that will really help Wisconsinites take the next step toward meaningful health and economic recovery from COVID. The American Families Plan also makes historic investments in child care, paid leave, education, and tax fairness that will increase economic security and opportunities for all in Wisconsin.

The creation of a new national paid family and medical leave program is particularly exciting. For too long, Americans have had to choose between caring for their family's well being - like having time to recover from childbirth and bond with a new infant - and needing income to pay bills. The new paid leave program will guarantee twelve weeks of paid parental, family, and personal illness/safe leave (for people escaping domestic violence or recovering from assault) by year 10, and ensure workers get three days of bereavement leave every year within the first year of the program. The program will provide workers up to $4,000 a month, with a minimum of

two-thirds of average weekly wages replaced, rising to 80 percent for the lowest wage workers.



It is disappointing, however, that the American Families Plan omits any significant reforms or investments related to prescription drug affordability. It is encouraging to hear the President reaffirm his commitment to lowering drug prices - a key component of access and affordability particularly for seniors, people with disabilities and people with chronic diseases like diabetes, asthma, and high blood pressure. However, the time is now to make the long-overdue reforms that will make prescription medicines affordable to everyone who needs them.

Congress took an important step forward last week by introducing the Lower Drug Costs Now Act which would allow Medicare to directly negotiate prices on behalf of beneficiaries for the first time, saving taxpayers more than $450 billion . These savings could fund investments in the economy, make healthcare more affordable, and finally end Pharma's monopoly power to price-gouge. Citizen Action of Wisconsin urges President Biden and Wisconsin's Congressional delegation to make affordable medicines a top priority by including this measure in the American Families Plan."

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"One cannot make clear division between the innocent and the guilty. We are all involved, more or less, in the human, especially social, wrongs of our time." James Luther Adams