

# Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin sings the praises of America

FROM THE MADISON ROTARY NEWS

After Tom Popp introduced Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, literally with a song, Baldwin figuratively sang the praises



Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin

of her country, democracy, and the opportunity to represent the people of the 2nd Congressional District. She spoke briefly of

Sept. 11 and the changes she has felt in Washington as a result of the terrorist attacks. Her offices were closed for two weeks, she just recently received her first piece of quarantined mail, and the government faces whole new challenges related to its war on terrorism and the issues of homeland security and civil liberties.

In addition to a report on the usual business conducted by her office, Baldwin told a story about a World War II veteran who had lost his combat medals. He asked for her help, and in researching his service she discovered that he had earned, but never received, a Bronze Star Medal. She was able to award that to him along with the other medals he had requested.

On the congressional budget, Baldwin described the Wisconsin projects she and her fellow representatives had secured in the final session of 2001, including:

- Revitalization of State Street
- Technological equipment for Madison Police Department squad cars

- Affordable housing in Madison
- Revitalization of the east Madison rail corridor
- Closed-caption broadcasters for Madison Area Technical College
- Techworks, a program that trains and places people with disabilities in technology careers
- The Ice Age Trail

Baldwin said her own interest and efforts in health-care reform, Social Security, and Medicare remain among the unfinished business, and she emphasized the importance of hearing from her constituents on these issues.

On the economic stimulus package, she said she hopes that certain guiding principles will facilitate prompt action in the new session. These principles include:

- Short-term action (for the duration of the economic trouble)
- A pay-as-we-go system
- A package targeted to those in greatest economic need, including those hurt by the terrorist attacks
- A package targeted to those most likely to put the money back into the economy. Only about 18 percent of the 2001 tax rebates were fed back into the economy, because most people were not living in dire economic straits.

In conclusion, Baldwin somberly reminisced about how government representatives came together on the Capitol steps the evening of Sept. 11, demonstrating that America was undaunted and undeterred by the events of the day.

"We have never entered a new year more united — or more uncertain of what the year will bring," she said.

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