

PRESS RELEASE

Bill Gardner, President of Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Co.

Today, the Government Accountability Board and the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office announced they are taking action against me, and the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Co., for improper contributions made to a number of political campaigns (primarily Scott Walker's). I made and asked others to make these contributions, and I am responsible for having the company reimburse some of the individuals. My actions were against the law and wrong, and I take full responsibility. The company will pay a large forfeiture to the GAB and I personally will plead guilty to criminal charges.

At the time the contributions were made, I did not realize I was violating the law. I never would have asked my employees, friends or family to break the law. However, this is no justification or excuse at all for what I did. Ignorance of the law is no an excuse. More importantly, I had the obligation to make sure what the law was before getting myself, the company, and others involved. But I didn't. My employees had every right to assume that what I was asking them to do was legal. But it wasn't. I failed them and everyone else miserably.

When I learned that my activities violated the law, I immediately asked my lawyers to report the matter to the GAB, District Attorney's Offices and all other interested agencies. We also notified the campaigns involved. I told our attorneys to make all of my and the company's records regarding these contributions

available, which they did. Neither I nor the company ever tried to hide the contribution reimbursements. Copies of expense requests and backup documents were kept with all of our other business records. I made certain that we answered fully and honestly all questions that we were asked.

I would like to apologize to all Railroad employees, including those involved. All of our employees have worked very hard to make the company both a good place to work, and a positive economic force in the state. I have now left a black mark on the company that each of you have worked so hard for, and I am deeply sorry.

I also apologize to the people of the State of Wisconsin, and those parts of the government who had to investigate and deal with my wrongdoing. I have tried to be a good citizen, and truly believe that the Railroad has provided jobs and economic opportunities for not only its own employees, but for hundreds of other Wisconsin residents. But the primary responsibility of a good citizen is to obey the laws, and I did not.

So there is no question, neither Scott Walker nor his campaign ever offered, suggested or even intimated that I or the company would get anything in return for my support. And I never asked, suggested or even thought I would. My sole aim, which I went about in an illegal, wrong and stupid manner, was to support candidates I thought would do a good job. In the end, my actions both hurt and embarrassed all of the candidates I supported.

To the extent possible, I have tried to right my wrongs. When campaigns returned improper contributions, they were given to charity (the American Cancer Society). I directed my accountants to file amended state and federal tax returns and pay additional taxes, even in cases where I was not legally required to do so. I have fully cooperated with all law enforcement agencies.

Once again, I would like to say this is my fault, and I am entirely responsible. No one asked me to do this. The Railroad employees involved were only doing what the boss asked, and had every right to expect the boss would not ask them to do anything illegal. I am truly sorry, and accept every consequence of my actions.

Please direct all inquiries to Robert H. Friebert, at (414) 271-0130.