

Gov. Walker: Hosts seventh annual Small Business Summit, announces small business agenda

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Madison, Wisconsin – Governor Scott Walker and Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch today hosted Wisconsin small business owners, executives, and entrepreneurs in roundtable discussions in Rothschild at the seventh annual Governor’s Small Business Summit. Governor Walker began hosting the event his first year in office to ensure business owners and government officials can directly engage each other and discuss opportunities for developing Wisconsin’s successful business climate. Governor Walker also announced his Small Business Agenda, a four-step approach to helping and strengthening Wisconsin small businesses.

“Our small businesses are at the core of Wisconsin’s economy, so it’s critical we listen to and address business leaders’ concerns and make sure they have the tools they need to succeed,” said Governor Walker. “Our annual Small Business Summit allows these key business leaders to gather together and network with each other while working with government leaders to keep our economy strong and moving forward.”

According to Chief Executive Magazine, Wisconsin is a top 10 state for business — up from 41st place in 2010.

The seventh annual Governor’s Small Business Summit includes the opportunity for attendees to “Ask a Cabinet Secretary Anything,” and attend breakout sessions relating to expanding international exports, developing their workforce, and working

with local legislators and agencies.

“The Governor’s Small Business Summit is a great opportunity for small business owners to let us know how best to keep Wisconsin one of the best states to do business,” said Lt. Governor Kleefisch, who helped to organize the summit. “Our administration is focused on supporting small businesses as best we can, and we’re excited for this key component of our economy to continue to expand and add jobs for hardworking Wisconsinites.”

Governor Walker, Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch, and cabinet members spoke with business owners about policy priorities that help small business owners, including broadband expansion grants and ongoing workforce development initiatives.

Governor Walker’s Small Business Agenda

Step One: Reduce business costs

- *Lower property taxes*
We eliminated the state property tax and reduced the personal property tax.
- *Stop unemployment fraud*
We need to increase penalties for people who knowingly make false statements to obtain unemployment insurance benefits.
- *Streamline regulations*
State governments should sunset all regulations every seven years and a standing committee should review each regulation so that elected representatives have the final say, not bureaucrats.
- *Reduce frivolous lawsuits*
Wisconsin should continue to enact lawsuit reforms to protect small businesses.

Step Two: Prepare the workforce

- *Invest in K-12 education*
Our budget invests a historic \$11.5 billion into K-12 education to drive student success and help build a strong workforce.
- *Increase worker training*
Our budget increases Wisconsin Fast Forward grants to help employers with customized worker training programs.
- *Expand opportunities in our technical colleges*

Our budget makes a significant investment in our tech colleges to create a highly skilled, dependable workforce.

- *Strengthen ties between the UW System and the workforce*

Our budget includes more financial support for the UW system to produce more graduates for high demand areas.

Step Three: Remove barriers to work

- *End public assistance benefits cliffs*

We eliminated the so-called “benefits cliff” for child care to encourage more people to work, take more hours, and advance into higher wage jobs.

- *Require able-bodied adults to work or receive employability training*

We are expanding public assistance requirements to include at least 80 hours per month of work or employability training to help individuals move from Government dependence to true independence.

- *Require able-bodied adults to pass a drug test before receiving public assistance*

We are expanding the areas where we require a drug test to get public assistance. Those who fail the test are offered rehabilitation so we can get them healthy and into the workforce.

- *Target specific populations to enter the workforce*

We are investing in training and accommodations for veterans, people with disabilities, and ex-offenders to get them back to work.

Step Four: Attract new talent

- *Market workforce opportunities within Wisconsin*

We need more workers in the state to fill our workforce needs – now and in the future. Part of our plan includes direct marketing to attract talent from outside of Wisconsin to live and work in our state.