

One Wisconsin Now: Wisconsin Republicans standing with Trump on state visit also standing against student loan borrowers

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Top State GOP Elected Officials Silent as Trump and Administration Strip Consumer Protections From Student Loan Borrowers

MADISON, Wis. — Donald Trump is visiting Kenosha, Wisconsin today and Republican U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, Gov. Scott Walker and State Assembly Speaker Robin Vos will be standing alongside him on stage. The GOP trio is also standing by Trump, who settled a class action lawsuit by former students of his Trump “university” for \$25 million, and against 43 million Americans with student loan debt.

“Donald Trump and his administration are enacting despicable policies that punish student loan borrowers who worked hard to get an education and took on the personal responsibility to pay for it,” commented One Wisconsin Now Program Director Analiese Eicher. “And the Republicans like Ron Johnson, Scott Walker and Robin Vos who are standing with him and standing by and letting this happen are just as responsible for this outrage.”

Trump’s administration is repealing consumer protections for student loan borrowers by allowing debt collectors to charge borrowers exorbitant fees on top of their loan payments. In addition, rules requiring companies that service student loans to prioritize helping borrowers and abide by basic consumer service and protection standards in order to win federal contracts are being repealed.

The anti-borrower measures are being implemented by Trump's Secretary of Education, Michigan billionaire Betsy DeVos, whose financial portfolio includes ties to the student loan debt collection industry.

Eicher noted how the Republicans standing with Trump in Kenosha today have been standing against Wisconsin student loan borrowers for years. In the U.S. Senate, Ron Johnson has cast multiple votes against common sense reform that would allow borrowers to refinance their federal student loans, just like you can with a mortgage. According to estimates based on data from the federal government, over 500,000 Wisconsinites would benefit from being able to refinance.

Meanwhile, Wisconsin, under the policies of Walker and Vos, is in the top five in the nation in percentage of college graduates with student loan debt, and that debt is, on average, nearly \$30,000. Among the factors driving student debt higher are Walker and the GOP's cuts to the University of Wisconsin and technical colleges of nearly \$1 billion, double digit tuition hikes and woefully underfunded financial aid that leaves tens of thousands of eligible students without any help.

Walker and the state GOP cabal have also blocked state-based legislation that would help Wisconsin borrowers lower their student loan debt payments by helping them refinance their loans.

She concluded, "There are common sense solutions like allowing student loan borrowers to refinance their loans, just like you can with a mortgage, that could help millions of hard-working Americans. But instead, as Trump strips consumer protections from borrowers, Wisconsin Republicans stand by silently and put their partisan loyalty before doing what's best for our country and our state."

One Wisconsin Now is a statewide communications network specializing in effective earned media and online organizing to advance progressive leadership and values.