

Rep. Barca: “After six years of Walker, Wisconsin is lagging behind Midwestern states”

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Madison, Wisconsin—New state rankings released today reveal that Wisconsin is lagging behind other Midwestern states for job creation. In 2016, Wisconsin lost nearly 4,000 manufacturing jobs and created 10,000 fewer jobs than in previous years. That made 2016 the worst year for job creation since the great recession in 2009.

Wisconsin was 33rd for job creation in 2016. Since Gov. Walker took office, Wisconsin has continually underperformed its neighboring states for job creation. From 2011 to 2016, only Iowa was worse for job creation. Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota outperformed Wisconsin during Walker’s tenure.

The jobs report also revealed lower wages for Wisconsin workers. The average Wisconsin worker in the private sector earned \$624 less in 2016 than in 2015 based on reported fourth-quarter earnings. Manufacturing workers saw an average decrease in annual pay of \$2,652 a year also based on fourth-quarter earnings.

“When I look at this report, I’m astonished that Gov. Walker doesn’t see how desperately we need to work together to create an economy that works for everyone. This report shows that Wisconsin is still in the bottom third in the nation for job creation. We’ve lost nearly 4,000 manufacturing jobs. We’re dead last in the nation for entrepreneurship. Wages are falling at a time when they should be

rising,” said Assembly Minority Leader Peter Barca. “Weeks ago, I called for Gov. Walker to ask the legislature for a special session to address these challenges, but the governor did nothing. I don’t understand how Walker and the Republican legislature can look at these facts and praise each other for their successes. It’s time for a bold plan to jumpstart the economy.”

While Gov. Walker touts low unemployment rates, his data neglects to consider individuals who have dropped out of the job market and residents who have left Wisconsin for work in other states.

Wisconsin has fallen behind neighboring states on a number of measures, including:

- Wisconsin has some of the worst roads in the nation. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation said roads have gotten worse since Walker has been in office from 2010 to 2015.[\[1\]](#)
- Wisconsin has risen to fifth highest in the nation in the percentage of college graduates with student loan debt according to the Institute for College Access and Success.[\[2\]](#)
- Wisconsin is dead last in start-up activity according to the Kauffman Index.[\[3\]](#)
- Wisconsin also continues to lose residents to other states. In 2015, Wisconsin lost more than 15,000 residents to out-migration.[\[4\]](#)