

Rep. Taylor: Rep. Bernier continues her crusade to shut up Democrats

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MADISON – Tuesday, in the Assembly Campaigns and Elections Committee, chaired by Representative Kathy Bernier, the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) Administrator Michael Haas provided an update regarding WEC proposed cyber-security policies. Democratic Committee members had pressed Rep. Bernier to hold such a hearing in the wake of the Russian hacking scheme which targeted 21 states, including Wisconsin.

Rep. Bernier achieved some state-wide notoriety last year when she walked out of a meeting with her local school districts because of “vile political speech” by an attendee who compared Wisconsin to Minnesota. Though Rep. Bernier stated she was really “ticked off,” no one else appeared to be offended.

On Tuesday, during questions about funding needed election staff after Governor Walker vetoed five WEC positions in the budget, Rep. Bernier once again refused to allow Rep. Taylor to ask relevant questions, in this case about WEC’s efforts to obtain needed staffing for its security plans. Rep. Bernier then issued a false press release in her continued efforts to silence minority members’ speech.

In response, Rep. Taylor (D-Madison) issued the following statement:

“From limiting the number of questions democratic committee members ask, to cutting off obviously relevant questions, to shouting out and interrupting floor speeches, Rep. Bernier has consistently demonstrated an inability for and animosity towards listening to other viewpoints and allowing legitimate questions from Democratic committee members.

“The link to the Wisconsin Eye video (beginning at 27:30) demonstrates that my questions and conduct were appropriate and no different than in any other committee, including how I sit in my chair, to which Rep. Bernier also objects. Next it will be that I breathe too much. It’s perplexing that Rep. Bernier makes up assertions that are so clearly false. And it doesn’t take a genius to conclude that making sure WEC has the staffing they need to secure our elections is relevant and critical.

“Perhaps Rep. Bernier should spend some time in her district learning how to listen to diverse viewpoints without throwing a hissy fit rather than in Madison passing unconstitutional laws that discriminate against women, banging her gavel, and getting easily ‘ticked off.’ In the meantime, I will not stop asking the questions that need to be asked and doing the job my constituents elected me to do.”