

Sen. Shilling: Walker jobs agency leaves taxpayers in the dark

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MADISON, WI – After years of corruption and mismanagement at Governor Walker’s Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), taxpayer watchdogs have expressed serious concerns that the troubled jobs agency is not acting in the best interest of Wisconsin residents. Amid growing calls for additional oversight and transparency, it was recently revealed that the WEDC came within hours of voting on a \$3 billion Foxconn contract that failed to address critical financial protections for Wisconsin families.

“Gov. Walker’s jobs agency continues to demonstrate its inability to manage the largest taxpayer-funded giveaway to a foreign corporation in U.S. history,” said Senate Democratic Leader Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse). “After six years of mismanagement, damning audits and scandals, Gov. Walker and WEDC officials have yet to prove they can be responsible with public dollars. This level of secrecy is unacceptable and the public deserves to know the details when a \$3 billion taxpayer subsidy to a foreign corporation is on the line.”

A recent audit revealed that “WEDC did not report accurate information on the number of jobs created and retained as a result of its programs.” It also found that the potentially uncollectable balance of loans with repayments more than 90 days past due increased nearly tenfold between 2015 and 2017, from \$1.3 million to \$11 million. Democratic efforts to increase transparency, accountability and oversight of the troubled agency continue to be blocked by Republican lawmakers.