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Sen. Vinehout: Comparing Gov. Walker's high-speed rail decision to his Foxconn decision shows it's time for a change

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Madison, Wisconsin — Eight years ago, Governor Walker's signature issue during his election was his opposition to a bipartisan plan to bring a high-speed rail line to Wisconsin, connecting the Midwest. Eight years later, Scott Walker's signature issue of his reelection for next fall will be his Foxconn deal. Let's look at these two deals, and determine what would have been a better for Wisconsin:

High-speed Rail Deal:

- Taxpayers would have received $810M from the federal government to pay for a taxpayer-owned infrastructure improvement project.
- The construction, operation and maintenance of the line would have created an estimated 13,719 jobs – jobs that wouldn't be automated.
- Would have helped our environment by adopting mass transit options.
- High-speed rail would have alleviated interstate travel and potential wear and tear on our infrastructure system.

- In addition, breaking the train deal – sending the trains back to the company and paying punitive damages – cost Wisconsin taxpayers at least $50M.

Foxconn Deal:

- Taxpayers will pay $3B to a private company without breaking even, at best, until 2043.
- Governor Walker inaccurately claimed this was Wisconsin's largest jobs announcement in Wisconsin State history, saying Foxconn would create 3,000 jobs and potentially up to 13,000 jobs. Foxconn's CEO made no promises and other Foxconn facilities have been built so they are readily automated.
- Had to sacrifice environmental protections to woo Foxconn to Wisconsin
- The transportation funding crisis continues to loom over taxpayers.
- The deal will be signed this week by Walker's Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, which is arguably the most inept state agency in Wisconsin State history.

Senator Kathleen Vinehout (D-Alma) offered the following statement about Governor Walker's signature economic development deals: the one he turned down and the one he signed.

"The high-speed rail deal would have been much better for Wisconsin.

"If I were Governor Walker, I wouldn't want to own the Foxconn deal, or try to explain to the voters every day from now to next November why giving $3 billion to a private corporation is better than having high speed rail connecting our cities.

"We can do better. Spending $3 billion on expanding health care, funding our schools, fixing our roads, free tuition at our technical colleges, and broadband would do far more for our taxpayers and our economy."

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