

Vinehout says campaign registration not an announcement she's running for governor

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Sen. Kathleen Vinehout Wednesday downplayed as “just paperwork” her recent registering of a campaign committee as she weighs a potential run for governor.

The Alma Dem earlier this month registered what she called an “exploratory committee” to challenge Gov. Scott Walker in 2018. Still, she said it was only registered in anticipation of the expenses she would rack up as she considers a bid — not an announcement that she's running for office.

Vinehout said she doesn't have a timeline for her decision, but it wouldn't come until “after the budget passes,” when she'll have more time to devote to considering a campaign.

“A lot of it depends on what happens here in the Capitol,” she said. “It's difficult for me to be able to do the kinds of things I'm talking about and the exploration when I have to be here waiting for the budget to pass.”

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Vinehout won the WisPolitics.com straw poll at the state Dem Party convention earlier this month, where more than one-third of participating convention goers favored her for the party's 2018 gubernatorial nomination. She had also won the straw poll at the 2015 convention.

Vinehout is just one of a series of potential Dem candidates looking to unseat Walker next year. Others who have said they're considering a run, or whose names have been floated, include Jefferson County District Attorney Susan Happ, Milwaukee businessman Andy Gronik, former state Dem party chairman Matt Flynn,

Madison Mayor Paul Soglin and Rep. Dana Wachs, D-Eau Claire.

Republicans immediately hit Vinehout for Healthy Wisconsin, a Dem proposal from nearly a decade ago that sought to provide health care to all in Wisconsin through a payroll tax. The state GOP also launched a digital ad against Vinehout and a website focused on the proposal.

“While Gov. Scott Walker has fought to return authority back to the Wisconsin taxpayers, tax-and-spend Madison liberal Kathleen Vinehout wants to take us backward — to the days when she authored the largest tax increase in state history, and fled to Illinois to protect the big government special interests,” said state GOP spokesman Alec Zimmerman.

See her campaign registration statement:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/170628VinehoutRegistration.pdf>

See the state GOP site:

<http://vinehoutforgovernor.com/>