

Bill Kaplan: Worst week for Wisconsin GOP and Trump

Posted on Monday, Dec 3, 2018

The column below reflects the views of the author, and these opinions are neither endorsed nor supported by WisOpinion.com.

On November 6, Wisconsin voters chose change. Wisconsin Republicans lost every statewide office on the ballot. However, Wisconsin GOP politicians have decided to disrespect voters. Acting like sore losers, they are scheming to limit the constitutional powers of Democratic Governor-elect Tony Evers and Democratic Attorney General-elect Josh Kaul. And, the Republican hacks want to stack the deck by manipulating voting regulations and changing a 2020 election date to benefit a conservative incumbent Supreme Court justice. These desperate moves demonstrate anew why voters tossed state Republicans out. It's time for former GOP state Governor Tommy Thompson to take this churlish bunch to the woodshed.

As Wisconsin Republicans hit new lows, the shining glitter on Trump's economic promises dimmed. Case in point. "General Motors (GM) said ... that it will close five factories and lay off nearly 15,000 ... a move that shows the economy may be starting to slow and dents President Trump's claim to be leading a renaissance for industrial America" (Washington Post). Remember Trump's extravagant phony rhetoric: "If I'm elected, you won't lose one plant, you'll have plants coming into this country, you're going to have jobs again, you won't lose one plant, I promise you that" (2016 Warren, Michigan - one of the factories GM is closing). Hot air.

Wisconsin knows what's coming for these GM workers. When the Janesville GM plant was closed under Bush 43, the city was devastated. Later, as President Obama moved to save the U.S. auto industry, Trump told the Detroit News that automakers should move to states that paid workers less! Can't GM Chief Executive Mary Barra show some heart and cut her \$millions in salary and stock awards? Will Trump do anything beyond bloviating as he does with his trade policies?

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or](#)

[access via desktop.](#)

Wisconsin has been hit hard by Trump's trade war against Canada, China, European Union and Mexico. Retaliatory tariffs have Wisconsin manufacturers facing catastrophe. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (MJS) headline blared: "As tariffs continue, panic beginning to sink in among Wisconsin manufacturers". Similarly, Wisconsin farmers are fighting for their lives. The New York Times headline was blunt: "A \$12 Billion Program to Help Farmers Stung by Trump's Trade War Has Aided Few". And, the MJS reported: "Dairy farms are receiving about 80 percent of the \$10,4 million coming to the state, with an average of \$2,390, not much for some farms losing thousands of dollars a month from low milk prices".

A showman presidency. As economic reality intrudes, so does Special Counsel Robert Mueller. He accepted another guilty plea from Michael Cohen, Trump's longtime personal lawyer and fixer. Cohen admitted lying to Congress about Trump's attempt to build a project in Moscow, while campaigning for the GOP presidential nomination. Remember Trump's 2016 tweet: "I have ZERO investments in Russia". So far Mueller has chalked up indictments against 33, with 7 convicted and/or entering plea deals. And, the GOP-led Senate Intelligence Committee has referred perjury cases to Mueller. The whole rotten Trump edifice is collapsing. The worst week for Trump and Republicans.

-Kaplan wrote a guest column from Washington, D.C. for the Wisconsin State Journal from 1995 - 2009.