

Gov. Walker: The state of our State is historically strong

Posted on Monday, Jan 29, 2018

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 29, 2018

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**Governor Walker: The State of our State
is Historically Strong**

MADISON - Governor Scott Walker released the following column discussing his Ambitious Agenda for 2018 after his State of the State Address on January 24th, 2018. Governor Walker is calling on the Legislature to act on his agenda. This column is for your consideration to publish.

The State of our State is Historically Strong

By Scott Walker

The state of our state is historically strong!

More people are employed in Wisconsin than ever before in the history of our state. And recently, the Department of Workforce Development announced that our unemployment rate had dropped to 3.0 percent. The only other time it was that low was in May, June and July of 1999, when Tommy Thompson was our governor. Things were pretty good back then, they're pretty good now, and they're only getting better. We are getting positive things done for the people of Wisconsin.

Students in our schools have some of the highest ACT scores and some of the best graduation rates in the country. And we just invested more actual dollars into K-12 education than ever before - an extra \$200 for every student in every school in every part of the state this year and another \$204 increase for every student on top of that next year. Our children deserve a great education that prepares them for college, careers, and real life.

Health care systems in our state rank number one in the nation for quality, according to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Plus, everyone living in poverty is now covered under BadgerCare for the first time in the history of the state. And according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the percentage of people with access to health coverage in Wisconsin is one of the best in the nation.

Today, both property and income taxes are actually lower than they were in 2010, according to the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau. Through the end of this budget, the cumulative impact of our savings to the hard-working taxpayers will exceed \$8 billion. And, for the first time since 1931, there is no state property tax. In fact, property taxes as a percentage of personal income are the lowest they have been since the end of World War II.

We are getting positive things done for the people of Wisconsin.

Moving forward, I am laying out an Ambitious Agenda for 2018 to keep us headed in the right direction.

This Ambitious Agenda includes more resources for our rural schools, a plan to stabilize health care premiums, making SeniorCare a permanent state program, protections for those with preexisting conditions, additional investments in worker training, welfare reform, and returning the state's budget surplus to the hardworking taxpayers through a Child Tax Credit. For more information on our Ambitious Agenda for 2018, visit our website, <http://walker.wi.gov>.

Just like families all across the state have had to do, over the past 8 or 9 years, we have made tough decisions. They paid off. Our reforms are working. The economy is growing. And Wisconsin has a sizable surplus.

As I promised, when we have a surplus, we will give it back to you, the hardworking taxpayers. This is your reform dividend. You deserve it.

So, we are proposing to create a child tax credit in Wisconsin.

Families across the state will receive \$100 for every child, under 18, living at home. A couple hundred dollars more in the family budget could really make a difference, particularly when getting ready for the next school year.

It could be a new pair of shoes, a winter coat, activity fees at school, or a co-pay at the doctor or dentist. We know sometimes Wisconsin families face challenges when making ends meet, and this new child tax credit can help.

And I ask you, the people of Wisconsin to talk to your lawmakers, and ask for rapid action on this Child Tax Credit and our entire Ambitious Agenda for 2018.

One of my great joys as your Governor is traveling the State of Wisconsin and visiting with so many of our wonderful citizens. Through our visits, I see how proud you are of your families; of your homes; of your work; of your small businesses and farms; of your schools; of your churches and places of worship; of your communities; of your state. We are Wisconsin Proud. And I am proud that we are getting positive things done for the people of Wisconsin. But we're not done yet.

So, let's get going.

Let's keep working together. Let's keep moving Wisconsin forward.

Scott Walker is the governor of Wisconsin.