

Gov. Walker: To Unveil Ambitious Agenda for Wisconsin in 2018 State of the State Address

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MADISON – Governor Scott Walker will unveil his Ambitious Agenda this afternoon in the 2018 State of the State Address at 3:00 p.m. in the Assembly Chamber. To watch the address live, visit Governor Walker's [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), or [Periscope](#) page.

The Ambitious Agenda focuses on education reform, workforce development, improving health care, welfare reform, and much more.

Excerpts of Governor Walker's 2018 State of the State Address are below:

State of the State: We are Getting Positive Things Done for the People of Wisconsin

Today, I am proud to declare that the state of our state is historically strong!

In Wisconsin, employment is at historic highs and unemployment at historic lows. We invested more actual dollars into schools than ever before in our history. The state property tax is gone. Wisconsin received a bond rating upgrade from three national agencies. Our health care systems are ranked number one in the nation for quality. And we announced the largest economic development project in state history. It has been quite an amazing year! A historic year.

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

2010 to 2018: A Clear Contrast

Eight years ago, in January of 2010, the unemployment rate was 9.2 percent. Today, the unemployment rate is down to 3.0 percent. That is well below the national rate of 4.1 percent and, as I mentioned, it is tied for the lowest unemployment rate in the history of Wisconsin!

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Eight years ago, things were not very good in our state. There were double-digit tax increases, billion-dollar budget deficits, and record job losses. State aid to schools and local governments were cut with no new tools provided. UW tuition was continuing to go up faster than inflation. And Wisconsin consistently ranked in the bottom ten states for business.

We don't want to go back to those days. That would be a giant step backwards. Thankfully, many of us in this chamber today had the courage to make some tough decisions. The results from those tough decisions helped turn our state around.

Those results now allow us to invest record amounts into our schools and into other priorities while still making Wisconsin more affordable for the hard-working taxpayers of this state. Now, we want to keep moving Wisconsin forward.

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

An Ambitious Agenda for 2018: These are Wisconsin Issues

Education

Today, we have made the largest investment of actual dollars in K-12 education in history – an increase of \$200 for every student in every school across the state this year and a \$204 increase on top of that next year. Plus, we gave schools extra resources to cover transportation costs, to add mental health services, and to put new technology in the classroom.

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A good school equals a great life, and we have some of the best schools in the country. We will build off of our historic investments into K-12 education.

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Looking ahead, we need to continue to help rural schools keep more money in the classroom. Many of these schools have unique needs related to transportation and to the size of the district. I want to ensure educational excellence everywhere. With that in mind, we have a plan that will increase Sparsity Aid and help out low revenue school districts.

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Welfare Reform

We want able-bodied, working age adults to work at least 30 hours a week or enroll in job training to get assistance. We want to expand welfare reform statewide. And we want to ensure that everyone getting public assistance can pass a drug test. If someone fails, we set aside resources to get them into rehabilitation because we understand that if we get them healthy, we can find a job for anyone in the state.

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Since we started requiring employment and worker training, more than 25,000 people have gained employment.

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With more people working than ever before, we cannot afford to have anyone on the sidelines.

Health Care

Our citizens are crying out for a stable health care system. Washington has failed to act, so it is time for us to lead in Wisconsin.

That is why, today, I propose the Health Care Stability Plan.

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The biggest concern I hear about is from those who are worried about pre-existing conditions. With that in mind, I propose that we enact a law in Wisconsin that will guarantee coverage of pre-existing conditions. That way someone who has cancer

or another serious disease or ailment will not have to worry about obtaining or keeping coverage.

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Since it was first approved in 2002, the state has asked for an extension of SeniorCare four times. It is time to make this a permanent and stable program.

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For the small number of people who seek coverage through the individual market, and not through their employer or through Medicaid or Medicare, I propose that the state provide assistance to keep those premiums from making health care coverage unreachable for many of our fellow citizens.

Moving Wisconsin Forward: We're Not Done Yet

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.