

Gronik campaign: Andy Gronik: 'Wisconsin is falling behind Minnesota'

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MILWAUKEE – In 2010, Wisconsin and Minnesota embarked on two very different political paths. Wisconsin's new Governor, Republican Scott Walker, focused on cutting public funding, while Minnesota's new Governor, Democrat Mark Dayton, made public investments throughout the state. Yesterday, the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) [released a report](#) comparing the two states over their tenure as Governor, and the results are staggering; Minnesota won on virtually every metric. "According to the report from EPI, we've lost to Minnesota in everything except college football over the last eight years," said Democratic gubernatorial candidate Andy Gronik on Wednesday. "Scott Walker likes to paint a rosy picture about the state of our economy, but it's clearly not the reality most Wisconsinites face each day."

The report from the EPI, a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank, showed Minnesota besting the Badger State in nearly every economic metric. Since 2010, the Minnesota economy has had faster wage growth, stronger job growth, and seen the gender wage gap shrink at twice the rate of Wisconsin's. The report also shows hard-working Wisconsinites have gotten the short end of the stick under Scott Walker's extreme Republican policy agenda. From 2010 to 2016, Minnesota's median household outpaced Wisconsin's by 2.1%, and currently, Wisconsin's overall poverty rate (11.8%) is on par with Minnesota's overall poverty rate — in 2011 in the wake of the Great Recession.

"Wisconsin is falling behind Minnesota, and this report proves that families are

taking it on the chin as Wisconsin's economy continues to flounder. Wisconsin is dead last in new business start-ups because Walker has refused to see the value that smart investments can have on the economy. Investments, by definition, bring value for our future. Scott Walker's policies only bring value as short-lived election-year gimmicks,' said Gronik. "All the time, people tell me their story of how Minnesota is outpacing Wisconsin. I hear stories of great teachers leaving because they feel more valued in Minnesota, companies losing great workers because they found a better paying job in Minnesota, and people that moved just because they no longer recognize the state they grew up in and believe Minnesota aligns more closely with their values. That used to be how people viewed Wisconsin, but Governor Walker's policies over the past 8 years have flipped the script."

[EPI researchers concluded that](#) "it is possible to draw a straight line between a particular choice or set of policy choices and the effect it had on the state's economy and the welfare of its residents. For example, Wisconsin's Act 10 decimated the state's public sector, leading to a loss of both public-sector jobs and the private-sector jobs that those public dollars supported. The combination of Act 10 and the adoption of a so-called right to work law led to a dramatic decline in the share of Wisconsin workers in unions. This almost certainly dampened wage growth, and it likely contributed to the state's weaker income growth and slower progress reducing poverty." The report also finds that the rejection of funds to expand Medicaid, set up a federal health exchange, expand federal funds for unemployment insurance, and federal dollars for transportation projects has ["likely led to higher numbers of uninsured residents, higher rates of long-term unemployment, and more people dropping out of the labor force."](#)

"When I'm Governor, we will do what Minnesota has already proven will work. We will restore funding to our education system to set our children up for success. We will improve our healthcare system to ensure that no family goes bankrupt from a medical emergency. We will have a 20 year plan to create a 21st century infrastructure with investments in roads, rail, light rail, buses, ports, airports, high-speed Internet, and reliable cellular connections. And, I will fight for workers' rights by supporting unions and raising the minimum wage. These are just a few of the many things we need to change to keep up with our neighbors to the west. You can check out my website: AndyGronik.com to read more about what I will do to create a Wisconsin That Works."

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