

One Wisconsin Now: Desperate Scott Walker campaign criticizes Tony Evers for supporting a bigger tax break and better plan for student loan borrowers

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'We All Know Scott Walker is Willing to Do or Say Anything to Try to Win, But This Takes the Cake'

MADISON, Wis. — In his increasingly frantic campaign to save his quarter century long career in politics, Scott Walker is now criticizing his opponent Tony Evers for supporting a tax break for student loan borrowers and a common sense plan to help them refinance their student loans, just like you can with a mortgage. As part of a rambling attack on Evers, the Walker campaign attempts to call the tax savings for borrowers contained in the *Higher Ed, Lower Debt Act* spending. The plan would also, at no net cost to taxpayers, help borrowers refinance student loans at lower interest rates.

"Scott Walker is so desperate he's attacking Tony Evers for supporting a common sense plan to help hard working student loan borrowers in Wisconsin," said One Wisconsin Now Program Director Analiese Eicher. "Besides opposing help to refinance their loans at no net cost to taxpayers, Walker is claiming more tax savings for borrowers is increased state spending."

The Walker campaign document attacking Evers references a fiscal estimate prepared for 2017 Assembly Bill 143 prepared by his Department of Revenue. But the cost Walker cites is actually a decrease in state revenue because the *Higher Ed, Lower Debt Act* expands a current state tax break and would allow borrowers to deduct student loan payments and interest from their taxes.

Polling conducted in Wisconsin has found overwhelming and bipartisan support for provisions of the *Higher Ed, Lower Debt Act*. An overwhelming 79 percent supported "a plan to allow student loan borrowers to refinance their loans, just like you can with a mortgage." A mere 9 percent were opposed. Support was strong across partisan lines with 85 percent of those identifying as Democrats, 70 percent of Republicans and 82 percent of independents favoring the proposal. In addition, 79 percent of men and women supported student loan refinancing along with 74 percent of voters age 18-29, 71 percent of voters age 30-45, 87 percent of voters age 45-65 and 77 percent of voters age 65 plus.

Walker has made his own proposals that, while offering him a campaign talking point, provide little to no actual help for nearly one million state student loan borrowers with over \$24 billion in education debt. His attempts to address the issue consisted of telling borrowers to "call a bank" if they wanted relief from high interest student loans and calling for a tax change that would exclude from eligibility anyone who has graduated before its theoretical passage, at some future date.

In fact, under Walker, Wisconsin has risen to the top ten in the nation for percentage of college graduates with student loan debt and the average graduate leaves school with nearly \$30,000 in debt.

Eicher concluded, "We all know Scott Walker is willing to say or do anything to try to win, but this takes the cake. He is literally criticizing Tony Evers for supporting a bigger tax cut and a better plan to help student loan borrowers refinance their student loans, just like you can with a mortgage."