

# Rep. Pope: Gov. Walker views K-12 funding as a political tool, not a priority

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Contact: Rep. Sondy Pope, 608-266-3520

MADISON, Wis. – Governor Walker recently delivered his annual State of the State speech touting ‘historic investments’ in K-12 education. Representative Sondy Pope (D-Mt. Horeb) ranking Democrat on the Assembly Committee on Education, released the following statement in response:

“Governor Walker has spent almost his entire career ignoring the needs of Wisconsin classrooms and has only responded to those needs as it has become politically expedient. Restoring Wisconsin’s reputation as a national leader in K-12 education is a generational commitment and a single year of boosted funding cannot undo the largest single cut in state history or the inadequate funding levels that followed.”

“In the span of a few months the governor has flip-flopped on his views of funding rural schools – vetoing sparsity aid increases in the budget – which he now publicly supports. Citizens of Wisconsin can clearly see this pattern of action based on political convenience. Our students and educators deserve leadership that is committed and steady.”

“If the Governor has \$4.5 billion to give away to a foreign corporation, he had enough to adequately fund all public schools. This includes restoring the state’s 66% funding commitment, increasing special education reimbursements and providing relief to impoverished districts without pushing the bill on to property tax payers. The FoxConn deal was yet another act of convenience to cover up his poor

economic record. Investing in the success of our children is the best way to solidify our economic future. If the governor better understood how to cultivate economic growth and stability, he would have committed to adequate, sustained funding to our public schools, not to reckless, shortsighted handouts to foreign billionaires.”