

WisDems: Response to secret Ryan Zinke visit

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Today, Trump Administration Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is visiting Wisconsin. He is holding at least one off-the-record event in Sheboygan. This comes just days after Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and Health & Human Services Secretary Alex Azar visited the state.

Reaction from DPW:

“It’s no wonder Ryan Zinke is keeping a low profile during his trips these days given all the trouble he’s gotten into for abusing taxpayer money. Ryan Zinke is the epitome of the swamp — and he has a lot in common with Scott Walker.

“Walker has refused to stand up to Trump on just about anything. In return, the Trump administration is awarding him a parade of visitors.” — TJ Helmstetter, DPW spokesperson for 2018 gubernatorial election

Swampy Facts About Ryan Zinke:

- Zinke faces multiple investigations in the wake of [headlines](#) about potential abuses of taxpayer resources, conflicts of interest, and improper political activity — including a \$12,000 [charter flight](#) home in an oil executive’s plane.
- The Interior Department’s internal watchdog launched a conflict-of-interest [investigation](#) into a real estate deal between Zinke and the chairman of Halliburton that would result in a [significant](#) increase in value for Zinke’s personal property.
- Zinke faced a Hatch Act inquiry for [wearing](#) Trump campaign apparel while conducting official business.

- Zinke took photos with GOP donors for \$5,000 per couple at a fundraiser held during a [taxpayer-funded](#) trip to the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Zinke took a [security detail](#) on his family vacation to Greece and Turkey.
- Zinke [bizarrely](#) required the staff of the Interior Dept. to raise a special flag whenever he was in the building, and spent taxpayer money on commemorative coins with his name on them.
- The Interior Department under Zinke has been unwilling to cooperate with investigations by [multiple federal watchdogs](#).
- Even while spending [excessive](#) taxpayer money on himself, Zinke wanted to [hike](#) fees and reduce free-access days for national parks visitors.
- Zinke has repeatedly tapped [industry insiders](#) to serve on panels that oversee policy for their businesses, including at least three individuals that Zinke's own staff flagged for conflicts of interest.