

WisDems: State of the State FACT CHECK: Walker's rhetoric doesn't match his record

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MADISON — During Walker's State of the State, he has said he will discuss jobs, health care, education and corrections reform. This makes it clear that this speech will be almost entirely untethered from his seven year record of governing Wisconsin. During his last re-election bid he promised the people of Wisconsin he was committed to our state and did not plan to run for president. That lasted just long enough to get re-elected before he immediately pushed an extreme agenda to appeal to Republicans' farthest right-wing primary voters and wealthy mega-donors nationwide.

Below is a topic reminder of how Walker has governed Wisconsin when not starting down the barrel of a building and unified blue wave that threatens to sweep him from office due to his utter failure to listen to the people of Wisconsin.

Where Wisconsin Was Eight Years Ago

Before Walker began his first term, eight years of failed Republican economic policy at the national level had plunged our nation into the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. It was thanks to President Barack Obama's careful stewardship of the economy that the situation was ultimately reversed. Unfortunately, Wisconsin's recovery from the recession lagged behind the rest of the nation in key indicators like creating jobs because Walker was more interested in opposing President Obama to enhance his own national profile than he was in being governor or Wisconsin.

The following is a quote from Martha Laning, Chair of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin:
"Scott Walker's attempt to take credit for the national recovery from the Great Recession is ludicrous. The trickle-down economic policies of the Republican party brought so many families in the United States and Wisconsin to financial ruin, and a Democratic president brought our nation back from the brink of catastrophe. Scott Walker played no role in this recovery and actually put Wisconsin behind the country in jobs, health care, education, broadband and infrastructure like roads. Walker taking credit for recession recovery when he actually hurt the working people of our state is disgraceful."

Walker has failed to Deliver Good Paying Jobs for Wisconsin
During his speech, Walker bragged about putting Wisconsin back to work, but his record on jobs and the economy is anything but strong. During his tenure as governor, Walker:

- Failed to meet his original jobs promise from eight years ago

- Passed a tax credit that should have helped businesses and farmers, but instead gave [almost \\$1 billion dollars to Wisconsin's millionaire elites](#).

- [Kept Wisconsin below the national average](#) of job growth - we rank 33rd

- Had Wisconsin managed to keep pace with the national average, [we would have 110,000 more jobs than we actually do](#)

- [Kept Wisconsin dead last in the midwest](#) for new startup activity for three years in a row

- [Utterly failed to revitalize the middle-class](#) in Wisconsin

- Handed Foxconn, a foreign corporation, \$4.5 billion rather than investing in Wisconsin businesses and Wisconsin entrepreneurs.

- "Rather than invest in Wisconsin entrepreneurs all over the state, Walker has thrown \$4.5 billion at a foreign corporation and given more than \$1 billion in tax breaks primarily to some of the richest people in Wisconsin," said Martha Laning. "Much smaller amounts Walker is now claiming he will set aside for rural communities pales in comparison to what he's given away to the wealthy elite. It's unfortunate that Walker's focus on employment is primarily on his own job."

Walker Cut Classrooms to the Bone

In recent months, Walker jaw-droppingly claimed to prioritize education in Wisconsin. These words actually came from the mouth of a governor, who with his right-wing Republican legislators, has gutted funding for our public K-12 schools, our great University of Wisconsin System and our vital job-training technical colleges.

This stands in stark contrast to the Republican record governing the state. Walker and his GOP legislators have reduced the quality of Wisconsin's education by:

- [Pursuing bad policies](#) that devastated Wisconsin's education workforce by:

- Cutting teacher compensation by over \$10,000 dollars per year

- Increasing the number of teachers who left the profession by almost 10%

- Drastically reducing the experience level of our teachers, which research shows has a harmful effect on students' educational outcomes

- [Cutting education funds](#) more than any other governor in America during his first term

- [Slashing over \\$2 billion dollars](#) from K-12, tech colleges and the UW System

- [Bringing Wisconsin below the national average](#) in per-pupil spending for the first time in recent memory

- "Rather than invest in Wisconsin entrepreneurs all over the state, Walker has thrown \$4.5 billion at a foreign corporation and given more than \$1 billion in tax breaks primarily to some of the richest people in Wisconsin," said Martha Laning. "He is trying to trick Wisconsin voters and he will fail. Families with crumbling schools, and those being forced to fund their schools with referenda, know Walker is to blame."

Walker Spent Seven Years Attacking our Health Care

Walker has taken to emphasizing the importance of affordable health care, which stands in opposition to his record of opposing the expansion of quality, affordable health care in Wisconsin. Throughout his tenure as governor, Walker:

- [Cruelly rejected the expansion of Medicaid](#) under the Affordable Care Act, which:

- Cost 79,000 Wisconsinites access to health care

- Cost Wisconsin over \$1 billion of our own tax dollars that could have been used to fund schools or infrastructure

- Cost Wisconsin 10,000 health-care jobs

- Backed President Donald Trump and Speaker Paul Ryan's plan to repeal Obamacare and [rip health care from over 20 million Americans](#).

- [Stood silently by health insurance premiums](#) to spike by 36% due to the chaos of the Trump administration

- Walker's own insurance commissioner admitted Trump was to blame for the increase.

- Walker did nothing to denounce Trump for these massive premium hikes.

- [Floated the callous idea of allowing insurers](#) to charge people with pre-existing conditions more for insurance before [strong backlash forced him to abandon this idea](#).

- "When given the opportunity to expand care, create jobs and save money all at the same time, Walker rejected the health-care expansion to appeal to right-wing presidential voters," said Martha Laning. "His rejection of health-care expansion was crass pandering to national conservatives in advance of his run for president. Instead of helping struggling Wisconsinites, Walker thought only about himself."

Walker Has Utterly Neglected our Corrections System

Walker now is open to closing Lincoln Hills, but this sudden talk of action obfuscates his clear record of ignoring and neglecting the years-long crisis at Lincoln Hills.

Walker:

- Got a letter from a judge stating Lincoln Hills was a crisis on Feb. 10, 2012.

- It has been 2,176 days since then and Walker's administration has yet to take significant steps to address this crisis.

- During that time, Walker has ignored cases of:

- Sexual harassment and assault of workers

- Sexual assault of youth at Lincoln Hills

- Severe physical abuse, including an inmate who had their arm broken and another inmate who had several of his toes sliced off by a slamming door

- Physical abuse of teachers, workers and guards

- These individuals, both the workers and inmates, were under Scott Walker's protection and he failed them for almost six years.

- [Walker closed down the internal affairs team](#) investigating Lincoln Hills because they were doing too good a job of exposing his colossal mismanagement of the facility.

- 63% of juveniles at Lincoln Hills go on to reoffend — the facility is not doing its job of rehabilitating the youth housed there and re-integrating them into society. Scott Walker has failed the children at Lincoln Hills.

- "Lincoln Hills has been in a state of crisis for years, yet Walker has taken no significant action," said Laning. "Walker's neglect has allowed children and state employees under his protection to be physically and sexually abused for at least six years - his talk of action now does not change that fact."

- In closing Laning added: "Wisconsin cannot trust Scott Walker. It's too late for him to pretend to change his stances on these vital issues. It's time we had a governor that served the needs of Wisconsinites, rather than using us as a stepping stone for his own career."