

One Wisconsin Now: Brian Hagedorn went to bat to protect the lead paint industry, is his campaign benefitting from their support?

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People Who've Profited From Lead Paint Have Shown They'll Spend Big Money to Support People Like Brian Hagedorn

MADISON, Wis. — While a top government lawyer, Brian Hagedorn personally lobbied for changes to Wisconsin laws that put big corporate profits before protecting kids from lead poisoning. Now, as a candidate for state Supreme Court Hagedorn is benefitting from well over \$1 million in out-of-state spending on behalf of his campaign according to media reports. One Wisconsin Now Research Director Joanna Beilman-Dulin said now the question is: are the same special interests who benefitted from Hagedorn's work on their behalf now paying him back with support for his campaign?

"Brian Hagedorn went to bat to protect manufacturers of lead paint, even at the expense of kids who have been poisoned by their products," said One Wisconsin Now Research Director Joanna Beilman-Dulin. "People who've profited from lead paint have shown they'll spend big money to support people like Brian Hagedorn who'll protect them from being held liable for what their product has done."

While the top lawyer for the governor, Brian Hagedorn personally lobbied on behalf law changes that provided protection from liability for lead paint manufacturers, identified as a contributing factor to lead poisoning in children. Follow up legislation adopted while Hagedorn was the governor's legal counsel made the lead paint liability provision retroactive.

The law changes proved to be a windfall for political allies of Hagedorn's boss, Scott Walker. Media reports uncovered the owner of a company that was a major manufacturer of lead paint directed \$750,000 to a group running ads on behalf of legislators whose support, along with the governor, was critical to passing the measures.

When directly questioned, Hagedorn has refused to give a straight answer and say he would not participate in cases involving legislation that he supported and helped craft as a government lawyer. He has also publicly said on the campaign trail that the Wisconsin Supreme Court was wrong when it acted to protect kids from lead poisoning.

The largest spender on Hagedorn's behalf to date is the Washington D.C. based Republican State Leadership Committee (RSLC), running a \$1 million plus campaign on his behalf, according to media reports. The RSLC is fueled by an unsavory roster of contributors, including significant support from the likes of tobacco companies, big drug companies, the National Rifle Association, and right-wing billionaires the Koch brothers.

She concluded, "Brian Hagedorn is out there waving his flag telling the special interests they have a friend in him. Some of them seem to be unscrupulous enough to open up their checkbooks in exchange."