

One Wisconsin Now: State Supreme Court Candidate Brian Hagedorn a no-show at State Big Business Gathering

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Is Absence at Traditional Stop on Campaign Trail Another Sign Hagedorn's Anti-LGBTQ Extremism Too Much For Even Staunch Conservatives?

MADISON, Wis. — An annual gathering of the state big business lobby has been a must make stop on the campaign trail for conservative candidates for the Wisconsin Supreme Court. According to One Wisconsin Now Research Director Joanna Beilman-Dulin, the curious no-show of right-wing court candidate Brian Hagedorn looks like another sign his extremism is proving too much for even staunchly conservative organizations.

“Big business interests have looked the other way on the distasteful writings and actions of right-wing judicial candidates in the past,” said Beilman-Dulin. “Brian Hagedorn’s vile, discriminatory views and actions are at another level that’s proving to be too much to ignore, even for the staunchest of conservatives.”

In recent weeks in bombshell reports the Wisconsin Realtors Association rescinded their endorsement of Hagedorn and requested the return of their large campaign contribution and the U.S Chamber of Commerce is refusing to fund efforts to help

boost Hagedorn's campaign. Two high-profile conservative campaign consultants have also publicly supported the Realtors' decision to drop their support of Hagedorn in the media.

Hagedorn losing support among conservatives comes after revelations of his extreme, discriminatory anti-LGBTQ views and actions, including helping to found and run a school whose official code of conduct policy calls for the firing and exclusion of LGBTQ teachers and students.

Based on information compiled by One Wisconsin Now, media reports revealed between 2015 and 2018 Hagedorn was compensated with over \$3,000 in cash and gifts by the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) for speeches he delivered at their conferences. The group has been deemed to be a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. In making the designation, they cite the ADF's support for criminalizing homosexuality.

During law school, Hagedorn interned with the Alliance Defense Fund (now called the Alliance Defending Freedom) and described the group as "formed to fight the culture wars" in his own writings. He also often commented on court decisions on a weblog he maintained and in articles he submitted to newspapers and other conservative websites. For example, he compared a U.S. Supreme Court ruling on gay rights to legalizing bestiality.

Hagedorn has also used the court to try to impose his agenda. While working as legal counsel in the governor's office, he tried to undermine a Wisconsin law providing basic rights for LGBTQ couples like hospital visitation and inheritance. He petitioned the court for then-Gov. Scott Walker to withdraw from a case because they agreed that the Wisconsin domestic partnership registry violated the state constitution. The State Supreme Court unanimously disagreed, upholding the law in their decision.