

Wisconsin State Senate Democratic Committee: Senate Republicans side with big-box stores over constituents

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During Wednesday's Senate floor session, Democrats brought forth Senate Bill 130, which would close the dark store loophole in Wisconsin. Senate Bill 130 is co-sponsored by a bipartisan group of 20 Senators. When Democrats brought the bill forward on the Senate floor, Republicans shut down debate and refused to allow the Senate to discuss or vote on the bill.

The dark store tax loophole allows big-box retailers to base their tax assessments on shuttered stores, giving them millions of dollars in tax breaks. This is shifting the taxes to already-strained homeowners and local mainstreet businesses.

"Once again, Senate Republicans had the opportunity to work for the people of Wisconsin and close the dark store tax loophole," said Katie Iliff, SSDC Executive Director. "And once again, they sided with big-box stores over their constituents. Rather than ensure tax fairness for Wisconsinites, Republicans are beholden to the special interests that spend millions to get them re-elected every four years. The taxpayers of Wisconsin are being put under further financial burden because of Senate Republicans refusal to act."

In November 2018, many counties and local municipalities had a referendum on the ballot asking voters what they think about closing the dark store loophole. Counties represented by Senators Dan Feyen, Pat Testin, and Luther Olsen were amongst the 17 counties that passed referendums to close the loophole.