

Palzewicz campaign: Sen. Fitzgerald leadership turning Wisconsin into failed state

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Brookfield, WI – Wisconsin is becoming a failed state. In the midst of a pandemic and pending economic disaster, Scott Fitzgerald, the most powerful Republican in Madison, has taken ten specific actions that are significantly harming Wisconsin, and many believe are causing Wisconsin to become a failed state.

Democrat Tom Palzewicz, running against Fitzgerald for the Fifth Congressional District, wants to stop the Fitzgerald train-wreck from moving to Washington and hurting Wisconsin even more. Palzewicz has outlined Fitzgerald's actions on ten key issues and why these actions have been so harmful to all Wisconsin residents.

“Wisconsin will not recover quickly from Fitzgerald's destructive behavior,” Palzewicz said, “and we must do everything possible to stop him from going to Washington and continuing to cause such huge harm. Here are ten reasons why Wisconsin deserves better...”

Scott Fitzgerald's political career is colored by a personal quest for power, abuse of taxpayer dollars to defend purely partisan policies, and a complete disrespect for the will of Wisconsinites. Fitzgerald's track record on gerrymandering, government secrecy, Machiavellian legislative tactics, and proclivity for dark money reveals his utter disregard for the well-being of Wisconsin and the will of the voters.

At the helm of the heavily gerrymandered, Republican-controlled state legislature, Scott Fitzgerald has led the expenditure of over \$4.5 million on legal fees defending partisan, power grabbing policies at the expense of Wisconsin taxpayers. Fitzgerald led the effort to redraw electoral maps to deliver an overwhelming majority for the

Wisconsin Republican GOP in the state legislature. He oversaw the hiring of political consultants to ensure precision in calibrating these red-leaning electoral maps. Fitzgerald oversaw \$3.5 million in legal defenses paid for by taxpayers to defend maps drawn in secret which fundamentally and deliberately skew the balance of power in Wisconsin in favor of Republicans.

After Democrats won every Wisconsin executive election in 2016, Fitzgerald led over ten initiatives during the lame-duck period to limit the incoming Governor's power. According to a Marquette Law poll, 55% of Wisconsinites disapproved of the lame-duck laws to limit democratically elected officials prior to assumption of office. Rather than respecting the will of the people, Fitzgerald and the Wisconsin GOP spent \$1 million in legal fees on the taxpayer's dime to defend their partisan, autocratic powerplays during the lame-duck period. The most controversial legislation with questionable consequences for the public was written in secret without public review and were fast tracked to the floor by Fitzgerald for swift votes.

Scott Fitzgerald's contempt for basic democratic practices exemplifies zero-sum, partisan politics of the worst kind. The voters and our democratic system suffers as a result of Scott Fitzgerald's self-serving agenda. Here is a [compilation of Fitzgerald's anti-democratic behavior](#).

1. DENYING CONSEQUENCES OF COVID-19

COVID-19 is the single biggest threat to public health and national security we are facing as a nation. Fitzgerald and the Republicans wanted to open up the state, regardless of the consequences. They went against the Governor's mandate, and bars and restaurants opened their doors. Since then, the rise in Covid-19 cases has put Wisconsin in serious jeopardy. We are one of the top states in Covid cases.

2. GERRYMANDERING DISTRICTS TO ENSURE REPUBLICAN CONTROL

Wisconsin is one of the most gerrymandered states in the nation. So much so that in 2018 Democrats won 65% of the vote yet lost seats in the legislature. This political deck stacking isn't a democracy; it's authoritarianism.

3. COMMODITY PRICES PLUNGE BECAUSE OF TRUMP TARIFFS

Trump and the Republicans talk a good game and say they are the farmer's friends. But commodity prices for corn and soybeans have plunged because of Trump's

tariffs with China. The best way to help farmers is to open up markets and allow them to do business.

4. NON-EXPANSION OF MEDICAID HURTING HOSPITALS AND PATIENTS

The non-expansion of Medicaid has cost Wisconsin millions of dollars in federal aid. Tony Evers tried to expand Medicaid as one of his first acts as Governor, Fitzgerald blocked it. With the Medicaid expansion, the federal government foots 90% of the bill for many of the working poor. This saves the state money while also ensuring healthcare for those people. For example, Michigan saved \$153 million in 2019 and will save more in 2020 during the pandemic. The action was short-sighted and served no purpose except as a political talking point.

5. SUPPORTING REPEAL OF AFFORDABLE CARE ACT(ACA, Obamacare)

Here we are in the worse public health crisis in 100 years, and the Republicans want to take away people's health insurance. They say they have a better plan, but in the four years of Donald Trump's regime, we have seen nothing, not a scrap of information about a better plan. Moreover, some 20 million people will lose coverage if Republicans get their way. Fitzgerald approved a law to prevent Wisconsin from getting out of Obamacare cases, the courts agree with Evers, and Wisconsin is no longer fighting the ACA.

6. STOPPING THE WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE FROM DOING ITS JOB

The full-time legislature is not allowed to do its job. Republicans, under Scott Fitzgerald's leadership, have turned away from democracy in favor of authoritarian rule and use the judicial system as a weapon against Governor Tony Evers. There has been no debate in the Wisconsin Legislature for months. Democracy thrives on a healthy debate of the issues. Fitzgerald doesn't believe in this principle.

7. TAXPAYERS PAY FOR LEGAL FEES TO FIGHT GOVERNOR'S ACTIONS

When Governor Evers takes any action, Fitzgerald and the Republicans sue to stop him, using taxpayers' dollars. That's how you become a failed state. According to the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, the taxpayers have paid nearly \$2 million for lawyers hired by the Republicans. Democracy, according to Scott Fitzgerald and the Republicans, is not legislative debate, bipartisan fact-finding, or even an argument over a cup of coffee. The legislature doesn't do its job because Fitzgerald won't let

them.

“Taxpayers have spent more than \$400,000 on lawyers hired by Republican legislators to fight parts of Democratic Gov. Tony Evers’ COVID-19 response plan.” The article states that most attorneys are paid \$500 an hour, but some get as much as \$850 an hour.

8. STOPPING BADGER BOUNCEBACK FUELED SPIKE IN COVID CASES

When Governor Tony Evers mandated the safe at home plan, it was intended at the time to flatten the COVID-19 curve and give us a chance to curb the spread of the disease. It was working. Wisconsin was turning the tide, but then Fitzgerald and the Republicans sued, saying that the Governor had overstepped his authority. They had no plan to replace his action, no vision of how to fight the pandemic. It was all about power, and Fitzgerald knows it. He won’t support the Governor because Republicans, for some reason, aren’t supposed to allow collaboration. It doesn’t make any sense. We were on the right path, but Fitzgerald and a Republican court stopped it. The people paid the price, not Fitzgerald. The costs of this failed choice are immeasurable.

9. USING TAXPAYER FUNDS TO SUPPRESS VOTES

Republicans have a reputation for voter suppression. Look at the south. Those Republicans used to be Democrats, that is, until the Civil Rights Act of 1964. That was a significant turning point, as the old conservative Democrats became Republicans. Voter suppression against people of color has been a part of the Republican playbook. Here in Wisconsin, they used the courts, at taxpayer expense, to stop Governor Evers’ request to postpone the April election because of the obvious public health concerns. It didn’t work because they still lost a Supreme Court seat by 130,000 votes. They are also suing to prevent counting ballots mailed by election day.

10. FOXCONN

According to the Associated Press, the state and local governments will spend up to \$764 million on Foxconn even if nothing is actually built. Fitzgerald said, “Not a dollar would be paid out until jobs in the Foxconn development were created. The incentive package is based on fulfilling the contract.” The Associated Press reported Fitzgerald’s statement as misleading because tens of millions have already been

spent on the project. So far, \$190 million has been spent by Racine County and Mount Pleasant, and the state has given a \$15 million grant to Mount Pleasant. \$20 million has been spent on financing and legal costs.”

Palzewicz wants to restore integrity and transparency to the political process. The consequences of these ten actions by Fitzgerald have already cost Wisconsinites countless millions of dollars. Without change, Wisconsin will continue to decline and be viewed by many as a failed state.