

A Better Wisconsin Together: State big biz lobby supports a \$577 million property tax increase, keeping worker wages down, increasing health care costs ... and Rebecca Kleefisch

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MADISON, Wis. — The state special interest lobby for wealthy corporations, the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC), is touting their endorsement of right wing gubernatorial candidate Rebecca Kleefisch in a new campaign ad. A Better Wisconsin Together Executive Director Chris Walloch noted that in addition to Kleefisch, the WMC supports proposals – from higher property taxes and health care costs to lower wages – that are harmful to Wisconsin families.

“The WMC agenda is all about what’s best for the wealthy corporations they represent,” said Walloch. “That they are also endorsing Rebecca Kleefisch says a lot about whose side she’s on, and it’s not the side of Wisconsin families.”

According to state lobbying reports and the WMC communications about their agenda, they are:

- Lobbying in favor of legislation estimated to increase local property taxes by \$577 million a year. The tax hike scheme would have taxpayers picking up the tuition tab for millionaires to send their children to private schools and take funds away from public schools;
- Proposing an income tax scheme to help the wealthy avoid paying what they

owe while, according to a recent analysis by the Wisconsin Budget Project, the WMC endorsed plan would hike taxes on the lowest 20 percent of state income earners by over \$460 per year while slashing what the wealthiest 1 percent owe by over \$78,000 a year;

- Lobbying against increasing worker wages, opposing increases in the state or local minimum wages and undermining workers' freedom to join together in unions to negotiate things like wages, benefits and working conditions;
- Trying to repeal family and medical leave protections written in Wisconsin law;
- Opposing expanding the BadgerCare program to expand affordable health insurance coverage and bring back more federal funding so we can use state tax money for things like schools, roads, bridges and other community investments.

Most recently, Gov. Tony Evers introduced a plan to help Wisconsin families and use a portion of the current state budget surplus to provide a \$150 surplus refund to every state resident, expand child care and caregiver tax credits, continue to deliver property tax savings and provide more resources for public education, technical training and higher education.

For their part, the WMC and Kleefisch have refused to support the plan to provide immediate help for Wisconsinites and their families.