

Nelson Campaign: ICYMI: Nelson OpEd in The Cap Times: “Time to end corporate welfare for billionaires and failed corporations”

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APPLETON, Wis. – Outagamie County Executive and pro-labor populist U.S. Senate candidate Tom Nelson is calling out fellow Senate candidates for the obscene taxpayer subsidies they endorsed to build the Fiserv Forum which has caused the Bucks to quadruple in value and fatten the wealth of the billionaire owners. .

Nelson is fighting to end Foxconn-Fiserv Forum scams that earn bipartisan support from politicians who give into to wealthy and corporate interests. We can't trust Alex Lasry and Mandela Barnes when both think it's appropriate to spend \$250 million of taxpayer subsidies on stadiums that mostly benefit the owners

Nelson spoke about these tax breaks that took away from the people of Wisconsin:

“Why is this all relevant now to bring up again as we embark on another exciting playoffs? Because one of the out-of-state billionaire owner's sons, Alex Lasry, is now running for U.S. Senate. He has spent over \$5 million of his father's wealth to fuel his bid, trading on the popularity of the Bucks, a team and state he adopted thanks to his father buying the team. Another candidate for Senate, Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, played along while serving in the Assembly, even though there was stiff bipartisan opposition from both Republicans and Democrats, including some within Milwaukee who stood up to the corporate pressure.”

The full article appears below:

The Cap Times: Opinion: "Time to end corporate welfare for billionaires and failed corporations"

Tom Nelson | May 7, 2022

As a lifelong fan of the Milwaukee Bucks who fondly remembers visits to the old Bradley Center growing up, I am feasting on this new golden age and the excitement of defending our NBA championship on a path that goes through the hated Boston Celtics. I grew up in Wisconsin with the likes of Sidney Moncrief, Terry Cummings and Alton Lister. Now we have a new stable of beloved stars like Giannis Antetokounmpo and Khris Middleton (get well soon).

But while I will always root for the Milwaukee Bucks, one thing I will never root for is using taxpayer dollars to enrich billionaires unwilling to spend their own money for investments that they expect taxpayers to pay for instead. And what's even more infuriating is when politicians from both parties are then bamboozled into giving them what they want at the expense of the rest of us. It's why we definitely need to pass H.R. 6806, the ["No Tax Subsidies for Stadiums Act."](#)

Recall that the new owners of the Milwaukee Bucks blackmailed the state and threatened to move the team unless taxpayers ponied up at least \$250 million for their new arena. Besides the \$250 million spent in the initial bill, the total taxpayer burden for the Fiserv Forum is probably [more than \\$800 million](#), according to independent journalist Bruce Murphy. The result of the deal has [more than quadrupled the value](#) of the Bucks, enriching its three billionaire owners on the backs of Wisconsin taxpayers, especially the poorest in Milwaukee who suffer from underfunded essential services such as schools, mental health care and public safety. The deal was so bad that the Koch-brothers right-wing Americans for Prosperity [opposed it](#), stating, "Government shouldn't be in the business of financing private sports stadiums."

The Fiserv Forum ripoff had a lot in common with another boneheaded and disastrous public investments for private benefit: the Foxconn disaster which Sen. Ron Johnson [enthusiastically backed](#). The overall package was [valued at \\$4.5 billion](#), with localities and the state on the hook for a historically corrupt and bad investment that has shown little to no value and has resulted in a string of broken promises. Has anyone found those 13,000 jobs yet?

The Foxconn deal was being negotiated at the same time I was desperately pleading with then-Gov. Scott Walker, Johnson, and the Legislature to help me stop the closing of the Appleton Coated paper mill from the big banks wanting to shut it down, which would have cost us hundreds of good union jobs. Luckily, we still managed to [succeed in saving the mill](#).

Every dollar spent on Foxconn and Fiserv didn't merely serve to enrich private interests. Those dollars were taken away from real investments in public goods. Police and fire. Schools. Roads and bridges. Tax relief. Health care. It's not a coincidence that Walker [cut \\$250 million from our beloved UW System](#) right before he got the Legislature to then give \$250 million to the billionaire Bucks owners.

Why is this all relevant now to bring up again as we embark on another exciting playoffs? Because one of the out-of-state billionaire owner's son, Alex Lasry, is now running for U.S. Senate. He has spent over \$5 million of his father's wealth to fuel his bid, trading on the popularity of the Bucks, a team and state he adopted thanks to his father buying the team. Another candidate for Senate, Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, played along while serving in the Assembly, even though there was stiff bipartisan opposition from both Republicans and Democrats, including some within Milwaukee [who stood up to the corporate pressure](#).

I believe judgment and values matter in our public officials. Democratic voters need to know whether Lasry's and Barnes' judgment about the use of public resources is still so warped as to justify these ripoffs. If they truly want to show voters they understand the folly of these deals, I invite them to join me in calling for the Bucks ownership to repay taxpayers for our investments that added to billions to their net worth while leaving us taxpayers with crumbs.

I am excited to root for the Bucks on their 2022 journey. I'm also running for U.S. Senate because we have to stop these Foxconn-Fiserv scams that starve local communities and primarily benefit billionaire plutocrats. We need to truly return government of, by, and for the people, and when the Senate is comprised of two-thirds millionaires, you understand why so many Americans feel their representatives aren't fighting for them.

But in case I don't make this clear enough, BUCKS IN SIX!