

Vos strips Ramthun of lone staffer over election 'lies'

Posted on Friday, Jan 21, 2022

Assembly Speaker Robin Vos told WisPolitics.com he disciplined Rep. Tim Ramthun by taking away his only staffer for lying about fellow GOP members and using taxpayer resources to put out political screeds.

The move comes after Ramthun, R-Campbellsport, has put out a series of videos and releases from his office calling for rescinding Wisconsin's 10 electoral votes for Joe Biden even though Leg Council has said that's not possible.

That includes releases that Ramthun has dubbed "Let There Be Light." In the latest, he accused Vos and former Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, of approving the use of absentee ballot drop boxes.

Vos said in an interview Ramthun has also falsely accused him of signing a deal with Hillary Clinton's lawyer authorizing their use.

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

"Legislators have the right to their own opinion, but they don't get to use taxpayer resources to send out political screeds that lie about other members," Vos said.

Vos, R-Rochester, reassigned Ramthun's only staffer to the office of outgoing Majority Leader Jim Steineke, R-Kaukauna.

Ramthun declined an interview request while the Assembly was on the floor yesterday. After the session broke, he told a WisPolitics.com reporter, "There are some things I have to take care of first before I can get conclusive on where I stand in that situation."

Vos said in the interview he made the move following an Assembly Republican

caucus in which members expressed frustration at what they said were the lies Ramthun had told about them. But Ramthun was unfazed by the conversation, Vos said.

He said the caucus will revisit the staffing decision at some point.

“We can’t let people continue to put out things that are just bold-faced lies,” Vos said.

It is the second time this week Vos has taken aim at the two members of his caucus that have been the most vocal in pushing the charge that the 2020 presidential election was stolen.

On Tuesday, Vos questioned whether the contract Campaigns and Elections Committee Chair Janel Brandtjen, R-Menomonee Falls, had signed with a private attorney was valid. Joe Voiland appeared in court last month in Dem AG Josh Kaul’s lawsuit seeking to prevent former state Supreme Court Justice Michael Gableman from questioning Elections Commission Administrator Meagan Wolfe at his private office rather than before a legislative committee.

In a Facebook video, GOP gov candidate Jonathan Wichmann called on Vos to resign his position as speaker as well as his seat in the Legislature.

Vos was dismissive of the call during a media availability yesterday, saying the businessman claimed if elected he’d have control of the Legislature. Vos called that a basic misreading of the state Constitution, and said Wichmann had little support in his bid for gov.

“He has the right to say whatever he wants. I will stand with my colleagues,” Vos said.

As news spread of Vos’ decision to take away Ramthun’s staffer, Ramthun supporters drove around the state Capitol over the noon hour, honking their support for the representative. Cars were decorated with American and Gadsden flags, as well as written slogans including “toss RINO Robin” and “team Ramthun.”

See a video clip of Ramthun supporters driving around the state Capitol [here](#).

See an image of a vehicle with “TEAM RAMTHUN” written on the window [here](#).

Every member of Assembly GOP leadership and the six members of the Finance Committee backed Vos' move, issuing a joint statement accusing Ramthun and his staffer of spreading misinformation.

The GOP leaders refuted Ramthun's allegation about Vos and drop boxes and pointed out Ramthun co-sponsored a bill that would expressly allow them. The Legislative Audit Bureau found in its report last fall that state law neither allows or bars them. Meanwhile, a Waukesha County judge last week barred their use.

"No matter how much Rep. Ramthun and his staffer believe what they are saying is true, it does not make it so," they said. "Sending out communications full of lies is doing disservice to all voters. With so much information to parse through on the internet and in traditional media, we all must do a better job of listening and communicating."

See the release [here](#).