

WisDems: ICYMI: Ron Johnson caught using thousands of taxpayer dollars for vacation travel

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MADISON, Wis. — A new [report](#) from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel highlights Ron Johnson spending up to \$18,781 of taxpayer money to pay for his vacation travel.

Key Points:

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: [Sen. Ron Johnson uses tax dollars to travel between Florida family home and the U.S. Capitol](#)

- U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson has been using taxpayer dollars to cover the cost of flights between [a Florida family vacation home](#) and Washington, D.C., including nine such trips last year, federal records show.
- Federal records show that Johnson, a Wisconsin Republican, has been reimbursed for 19 flights from Fort Myers, Florida, to Washington between 2013 and May 2021.
- JFT Investments LLC bought [a 3,400-square-foot waterfront house in Fort Myers](#), near [Sanibel Island](#), for \$1.6 million in October 2013. [JFT Investments](#) is an affiliate of the Johnson family trust, which was set up by the senator and his wife, Jane Johnson, for their three children, Johnson's office confirmed.
- The limited liability corporation, [a holding company for various properties, used to share the same address with Pacur](#), an [Oshkosh plastics company formerly](#)

[owned by Johnson](#). Ben Johnson, the senator's son, [had been listed as the company's registered agent](#), and Jane Johnson once signed a notice for repairs to the house.

- Johnson's adult children also own a private business jet that [he used to travel between Wisconsin and Washington](#) during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.
- Johnson, first elected in 2010, took no trips to or from Fort Myers before the Florida house was purchased by JFT Investments in 2013.
- By contrast, Wisconsin's senior senator went to Fort Myers at least nine times between Jan. 1, 2021, and May 10, 2021. Those flights between Florida and Washington cost taxpayers anywhere from [\\$227](#) to [\\$1,152](#).
- Johnson then billed taxpayers \$565 to fly to Washington two days later to vote on certifying the results of the 2020 presidential election. Johnson was among those who voted in favor of certification, after [first indicating that he planned to join with 10 other Republican senators](#) in objecting to the certification.
- He returned to Florida on Jan. 7, the day after the attack on the Capitol by supporters of then-President Donald Trump.
- It is impossible to determine the exact cost for Johnson's jaunts from Florida because many of the reimbursements were lumped in with expenses from other trips, including some within Wisconsin.
- **But Senate records show the trips cost taxpayers at least \$5,418 and no more than \$18,781.**
- **Johnson and his wife recently listed [assets worth between \\$16.55 million and \\$78.3 million](#) at the end of last year, about the same as the previous year. Johnson wasn't required to report his annual**

\$174,000 salary as a U.S. senator.

- Jacquelyn Lopez, a partner with the Elias law firm in Washington, said tax dollars are intended for official business, not personal trips.
- “The rules are clear,” Lopez said. “A senator may not use taxpayer dollars to fund personal travel to or from a family vacation home. As a matter of federal law and Senate ethics rules, senators may only use official funds for travel that is essential to the transaction of official business.”