

# Sen. Cowles: WEDC Continues to Disappoint

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MADISON – Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) released the following statement after the nonpartisan Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) published [Report 23-11](#), a biennial evaluation of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation:

“Ever since its inception, I’ve been keeping a close eye on WEDC, given the opportunity for mismanagement and fraud that their broad mandate presents. While it was a bit rocky in their early years, I had recently felt that WEDC may be moving in the right direction. I’m disappointed to say I don’t feel that way anymore.

For a third report in a row, WEDC continues to use Enterprise Zone tax credit written procedures which allow employers to claim credits for jobs created outside of Wisconsin. Potentially hundreds of jobs fall under this category. LAB found numerous other problems which led to 26 recommendations, including to post board meeting minutes online, award financial assistance only to eligible applicants, verify information submitted by grant recipients, and not award tax credits when recipients don’t meet their contractual obligations.

This Administration needs to take a hard look at the management of WEDC and ensure that swift changes per LAB’s recommendations are implemented. Ensuring statutory compliance, fiscal prudence, and transparency should be values at the forefront of WEDC’s mission. This evaluation shows that WEDC’s leadership is not displaying these values to the hardworking business owners and consumers of Wisconsin.”