

Sen. Felzkowski: Special Committee on Oversight of the Wisconsin Department of Justice concludes questioning of Attorney General Josh Kaul

Posted on Wednesday, Feb 25, 2026

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Madison, WI – Today, the Senate Special Committee on Oversight of the Department of Justice heard testimony from Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul about Special Assistant Attorneys General (SAAGs) within the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) whose salaries and benefits are paid for by the Michael Bloomberg-funded New York University State Energy & Environmental Impact Center. The committee questioned Attorney General Kaul at length, probing the history, ethics, and legality of the DOJ's relationship with the center and the work that these privately-funded SAAGs did using the power of DOJ.

During questioning, Attorney General Kaul admitted that the DOJ entered into an agreement with the Center to employ special assistant attorneys general in the DOJ's Environmental Protection Unit (EPU). DOJ's EPU hosted "volunteer" attorneys that wielded the full powers of an AAG while being fully funded by the Center. These attorneys defended the DNR and prosecuted individuals and businesses across the state. During Kaul's time as Attorney General, DOJ has never requested additional position authority or funding for an EPU position and currently has numerous fully-funded unfilled positions.

The committee issued the following statement:

We are deeply troubled by the Department of Justice's practice of allowing

volunteer attorneys paid by out-of-state interest groups to prosecute Wisconsinites. Rather than seeking legislative approval or funding for additional staff, Attorney General Kaul brought in progressive, billionaire funded attorneys who do not answer to the taxpayers of Wisconsin. The lack of transparency is astonishing, and the taxpayers of Wisconsin have a right to that transparency. The Department of Justice is not for sale in Wisconsin.

The Committee will issue a final report and recommendations by April 14, 2026.