
WISCONSIN ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 19, 2016

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Assembly Democrats Call on Ethics Commission to Investigate New Corruption While Advocating for a Clean Elections Overhaul

MADISON—Today, Assembly Democrats called on the newly created Wisconsin Ethics Commission to investigate the actions of Governor Scott Walker, his campaign committee and various corporate donors for several potential campaign finance law violations. Previously secret documents recently released by *The Guardian* reveal Walker solicited secret, unlimited corporate money for various recall campaigns, including his own, and funneled it into a dark money group, the Wisconsin Club for Growth (WCFG), to evade complying with campaign finance laws.

This request is one of the first tests for the newly formed Ethics Commission, which was created after legislative Republicans disbanded the non-partisan Government Accountability Board to return to a partisan model previously ineffective at stopping government corruption.

The letter signed by 17 Assembly Democrats requests a formal investigation into these actions, including a pay-to-play scheme where corporations who gave big money to WCFG got big favors from the Republican legislature and Scott Walker, in addition to recent threats to the Milwaukee County DA's office by the Governor warning of funding cuts should they investigate corruption allegations.

At a press conference earlier today, Reps. Peter Barca, Katrina Shankland, Chris Taylor, Fred Kessler, Gary Hebl and Dana Wachs outlined the content of their letter and their vision for cleaning up Wisconsin's corrupt elections system.

"Just last week, the executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign declared that Wisconsin 'is now open for bribery.' The fact that this does not draw greater outcry tells me this is not the state I grew up in," Rep. Barca said. "In my judgement, there has clearly been unethical behavior and possibly illegal behavior. My colleagues and I will continue to pursue every avenue in the fight for clean, transparent and open government."

"Despite my GOP colleagues' best efforts, the people and policies of Wisconsin are not for sale. Corporations shouldn't be allowed to buy our elections. Our Clean Elections Act will bring Wisconsin government and elections out of the darkness and into the light by eliminating secret, corporate money from our elections, eliminating coordination between dark money groups and candidates and regulating these phony issue ads so the donors are disclosed. We need less corporate money in our elections and more public disclosure," Taylor said.

"We believe the Walker administration and the Legislative Republicans violated, at least, the spirit of the law if not the law itself in a quid pro quo scheme. In close proximity to massive corporate donations, it appears that the Republicans changed mining and civil immunity laws. We believe this conduct to be unethical and illegal," Rep. Wachs said.

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