

Walker Has Not Repaid Taxpayers for Campaign Debt

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Three months have passed since Governor Scott Walker said he would repay taxpayers for bills run up while he was running for President. Has he given himself a no-interest loan?

MADISON - Nearly three months have passed since Governor Walker ended his presidential campaign and the day he promised to repay state taxpayers for costs incurred during his presidential campaign. As homeowners and small businesses begin receiving their property tax bills, the outstanding debt racked up by Governor Walker's presidential campaign has largely gone unpaid.

The most recent news accounts suggest he still owes Wisconsin taxpayers nearly \$70,000 for expenses he charged to taxpayers during the first 6 months of 2015.



“Millions of Wisconsin homeowners and small business owners are in the process of paying their property tax bills while Governor Walker continues to ignore his responsibility to repay taxpayers for the costs they incurred for his presidential campaign,” said Senator **Dave Hansen** (D-Green Bay). “Essentially he is receiving a no interest loan from state taxpayers. It’s a sweetheart deal that he’s giving himself and it really does seem to straddle--if not cross--an ethical line.”



Hansen and State Representative **Katrina Shankland** (D-Stevens Point) introduced the Taxpayer Protection Act earlier this year that would require state elected officials running for federal office to report and swiftly reimburse taxpayers for campaign related travel expenses.

Said Hansen, "His lack of concern for taxpayers makes our case for why we need to pass the Taxpayer Protection Act, so this never happens again."

"So far he hasn't even repaid taxpayers what he owes for the first part of the year. And we don't even know how much he owes from the remainder of his campaign. Given his million dollars of campaign debt who knows if taxpayers will ever see a full accounting of what he owes them much less receive full payment from him," Hansen said.

Earlier this month Wisconsin homeowners and small businesses began receiving their property tax bills, many of them containing an increase. As they begin to pay those bills many might be wondering if it's time for the Governor to pay his as well.

"At this point I think they should go back and add on interest and penalties to his entire bill", says Hansen. "Most taxpayers don't get no-interest, sweetheart loans like he's getting."

"If he is looking for guidance he could consult the state tax code and pay the interest rate and penalties that are added on to the bills of those people who fall behind on paying their taxes", concludes Hansen. "Perhaps that would provide some incentive for him to make good on his promise to repay taxpayers."

Legislative Staffer Jay Wadd contributed to this story.

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