

DEBATE FACT CHECK: The Truth Behind Scott Walker's Cherry Picked Economic Statistics

Written by Democratic Party of Wisconsin, Melissa Baldauff
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MILWAUKEE - In Friday's debate with Mary Burke, Scott Walker claims Wisconsin is a top job creator and leads in personal income growth amongst Midwestern states. What are the facts?

THE FACTS ON THE WISCONSIN ECONOMY UNDER SCOTT WALKER:

- Walker has created fewer than half of the 250,000 jobs he promised. [1]
- The longer Walker is in office, the worse the numbers get. 2013 was the worst year for private sector job creation in Wisconsin since the great recession, and 2014 is on pace to be considerably worse.
 - During Walker's time in office, Wisconsin's annual private sector job growth averaged 1.35% compared to 2.2% nationally. [2]
 - Walker's claim that Wisconsin is third in Midwest job creation is based on the Current Employment Statistics, a statistical metric Walker repeatedly dismissed as "unreliable" in 2011. [3]
 - According to the Quarterly Census of Earnings and Wages, jobs data described by Walker as the "gold standard", Wisconsin ranked dead last among states in the Midwest on job growth over his term - 10th out of 10 states. [4]
 - Wisconsin also ranked dead last in income growth among midwestern states over Gov. Scott Walker's full term. [5]
 - Had Wisconsin simply grown at the US rate over Walker's term, we would have 70,000 more jobs.

RESPONSE OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF WISCONSIN CHAIR MIKE TATE: "Four years ago, Scott Walker made a promise to the people of Wisconsin to create 250,000 jobs. Scott Walker failed and broke his central campaign promise. Now, Walker wants to cherry pick facts in order to paint a rosy picture of the economy which doesn't exist. The reality is Wisconsin is dead last in job creation since he took office in 2011 and the state currently lags behind most of the nation in job growth. Walker can't escape the cold hard truth about his economic record in Wisconsin."

BACKGROUND:

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[1] "It is now apparent that Walker cannot keep his promise to create 250,000 private-sector jobs in a single term" (State unemployment rate declines to 5.5% in September, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, [10/16/14](#))

[2] "The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics numbers, which Walker has called the "gold standard" for measuring jobs, is based on a survey of nearly every business in the state. The agency found that for the 12-month period, the number of private-sector jobs grew by 28,712 or nearly 1.3 percent, lagging behind the national average of just over 2 percent." (Wisconsin job growth ranks 33rd in nation, Appleton Post-Crescent, [9/18/14](#))

[3] " Walker's numbers are based on cumulative monthly estimates between July of last year and July of this year. These are the same monthly estimates Walker attacked as unreliable during his recall campaign. Department of Workforce Development Secretary Reggie Newson described them as numbers that are 'inaccurate,' and that 'cannot be trusted.' " (In New Ad, Walker Cites Jobs Numbers From Survey He Once Derided, WPR, [8/29/14](#))

[4] "Walker's ad goes a step further and accuses Democrat Mary Burke of trying to mislead voters by saying Wisconsin is dead last in the Midwest. Burke's ad, however, accurately quotes detailed quarterly census numbers covering Walker's first three full years in office." (In New Ad, Walker Cites Jobs Numbers From Survey He Once Derided, WPR, [8/29/14](#))

[5] "After Walker correctly pointed out that personal income growth is the best in the Midwest for the last year, commentators alleged that Wisconsin is "dead last in income growth" during Gov. Scott Walker's three-plus years in office. The quarterly figures do put Wisconsin at the bottom, based on the starting point endorsed by the agency that compiled the information." (Bloggers say Wisconsin ranks last in income growth since Scott Walker became governor, Politifact Wisconsin, [8/28/14](#))