

Scott Walker Inherits \$2.2 Billion Deficit From ... Scott Walker

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MADISON – Wisconsin will face a staggering \$2.2 billion budget deficit going into the next biennium, a deficit of Scott Walker's own creation.

That's according to Scott Walker's Department of Administration, which today released agency budget requests and revenue estimates for the 2015-2017 biennium that show a \$1.09 billion deficit in fiscal year 2015-16 and a \$1.118 billion deficit in fiscal year 2016-17, for a total of \$2.214 billion over the biennium.

Earlier this year, Democrats called out Walker's plans to hastily spend a projected surplus, money the state didn't yet have, and cautioned the governor to focus on making sure that the deficit is reduced. The projected deficit only grew as the year went on; the \$2.2 billion deficit announced today is approximately three times the size of the structural deficit projected by the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau in May of this year and larger than the \$1.8 billion projected deficit announced in September.

Walker famously claims credit for correcting an inherited \$3.6 billion budget deficit, but this \$2.2 billion deficit is the result of Walker's fiscal irresponsibility during his first term. This \$2.2 billion deficit is derived in the same exact way as Wisconsin's \$3.6 billion deficit at the height of the national recession and stands in stark contrast to the economic picture in most other states that are actually running surpluses.

“More bad news for Wisconsin taxpayers in the wake of Scott Walker's re-election – first a nearly \$1 billion tax hike and now reports of a staggering \$2.2 billion budget deficit,” Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Mike Tate said Thursday. “The buck absolutely has to stop with Scott Walker. His top-down approach has failed miserably and there is no one, absolutely no one, to blame but him for this deficit. As Scott Walker campaigns for president talking about the deficit he inherited, honesty dictates it must be this one that he created.”