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***Audit reveals additional problems at persistently troubled agency. Can Walker continue to evade responsibility?***

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MADISON – A new audit of Governor Scott Walker's persistently troubled Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) released this month revealed another round of critical shortcomings.

Statutes require WEDC to develop and implement economic programs that provide support, expertise, and financial assistance to businesses that are investing and creating jobs in Wisconsin, as well as programs that support new business start-ups and business expansion and growth in the state.

Walker has held out the WEDC as the main tool of his administration to promote job development in Wisconsin. He claimed he could grow jobs by 250,000 in his first term. Instead, despite heavy outflows of taxpayer dollars to corporate friends and a huge income tax cut for the wealthy, Wisconsin continues to lag behind neighboring states as the nationwide economic recovery continues.

The Governor continues to claim ["Good news for all of us in Wisconsin"](#) with campaign style sunshine columns spread on the opinion pages of local newspapers. But the real record of the WEDC's failure is plain to see.



Can Walker continue to evade responsibility? In response to the WEDC audit, Senate Democratic Leader **Jennifer Shilling** (D-La Crosse) said:

## Governor Walker's WEDC Failure

Written by GBP Staff

Friday, 08 May 2015 10:39 - Last Updated Friday, 08 May 2015 12:09

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“How many more years of failure do we have to put up with before Gov. Walker and legislative Republicans get serious about fixing the deep-rooted issues with this horribly mismanaged agency? As Chairman of the WEDC, Gov. Walker must accept responsibility for the ongoing financial mismanagement issues and troubling news of tax breaks going to companies who outsource Wisconsin jobs. Instead of dealing with these serious issues, Gov. Walker continues to shirk his responsibilities as he jets around the nation in pursuit of his presidential campaign ambitions.”

The WEDC Audit findings show continued problems with the agency. In summary, they were:

- WEDC did not consistently follow statutes or its policies when making financial awards.
- WEDC did not comply with all statutory requirements related to program oversight.
- Staff did not consistently comply with policies established by WEDC's governing board.
- Additional efforts are needed to help ensure that WEDC administers its state-funded programs effectively.

The Governor's 2015-17 Biennial Budget Proposal would combine WEDC and the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) into the Forward Wisconsin Development Authority, a newly created organization that would begin operation on January 1, 2016, and administer economic development programs. That would provide the show of a reorganization, but little change to the underlining problems Walker faces in job development.

A copy of the audit report may be found [here](#) .