

Scott Walker Slams Using Federal Funds to Balance Budgets

Written by Democratic Party of Wisconsin, Melissa Baldauff

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MADISON - Speaking Sunday on NBC's [Meet the Press](#), presidential candidate and part-time Wisconsinite Scott Walker defended his decision to turn away \$360 million in federal funds to strengthen the state's successful BadgerCare program, while criticizing states that took the money – but he left out the part where he balanced his Milwaukee County budgets with federal funds.

Dozens of states – including several with Republican governors, like Iowa, Ohio, and New Jersey -- have accepted federal money authorized under the Affordable Care Act for the expansion of Medicaid.

Walker on Sunday commented that “relying on the federal government for your balancing your budget is really, I think, a fool's bet.”

As a result of four years of irresponsible budgeting under Republican leadership, Wisconsin is faced with a self-inflicted \$2 billion budget deficit. Instead of doing the responsible thing for our bottom line and what's best for Wisconsinites, Scott Walker and his Republican legislature are rejecting \$360 million in federal funds to strengthen BadgerCare -- a politically-motivated decision designed to further Scott Walker's personal ambitions at the expense of working Wisconsin families.

Because Scott Walker is putting politics before our middle class, Wisconsin taxpayers will pay \$360 million more to insure 85,000 fewer people, and our public schools are facing another round of education cuts.

But while Walker's rhetoric about shunning federal funds might appeal to his Tea Party supporters as he campaigns for president around the country, it's not in line with his past reliance on stimulus funds and federal money to balance his budgets in Milwaukee County.

“The only ‘fool's bet’ is thinking that Scott Walker makes any choices based on what's best for Wisconsin's middle class and not what's best for his political career,” Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Mike Tate said Tuesday. “He's relied on federal funds in the past when it was convenient for him politically or when his own incompetence and mismanagement ruled out any other option – it's incredibly hypocritical for Walker to now turn down \$360 million that would help balance the budget and help more Wisconsinites have access to affordable healthcare.”

Background:

Scott Walker Advocates for ‘Politically Difficult’ Changes in State, Federal Law to Spend Federal Stimulus Funds in County Budget: In 2009, then-Milwaukee County Executive Walker proposed using federal stimulus aid as part of his budget to pay for a sales tax holiday, property tax rebates, and new business tax cuts, “based on the assumption the county might

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otherwise get as much as \$500 million or more in federal stimulus aid." Walker "acknowledged that redirecting federal money to state tax cuts might require politically difficult changes in state and federal law." ["Walker wants state to use share of stimulus money for sales tax holiday,"

[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#)

, 2/15/09]

Walker Spends Federal Funds, Relies on Borrowing to Balance Election Year Budget in Milwaukee County: When Scott Walker officially presented his 2010 budget, he tried to sound a fiscally conservative theme. That rhetoric did not match the reality of the budget that he presented. Not only would the spending for 2010 grow by more than 6% but Walker also planned on frontloading three years of borrowing for capital projects into one year - an election year. Much of that borrowing and spending relied very heavily on the same federal stimulus funding to which he originally said "no thanks."(*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

, "Walker seeks across-the-board wage cuts in budget,"

[9/24/2009](#)

;

Milwaukee County

, "Recommended 2010 Budget," 2009;

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

, "Walker says no thanks to federal stimulus dollars,"

[1/6/2009](#)

)

Scott Walker Failed to Manage Milwaukee County Transit System: Walker's gross mismanagement of Milwaukee County's transit system ultimately required federal stimulus funds to address massive fiscal problems. ['Milwaukee County bus system to get one-third of stimulus transportation funds,' River Falls Journal, 3/9/2009]

Because of Walker's failure to control transit costs, Milwaukee County residents were forced to shoulder huge fee hikes, reduced routes and fewer services, all while faced with fare increases, including fares for seniors, students and the disabled, with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel noting in 2010 that, 'County officials have cut service, raised fares or both every year for 10 straight years.' ['County transit ridership falls 9%,' [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) , 3/7/2010]