

Walker Made it Harder for Schools to Use Clean Energy

Written by Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Ryan Billingham
Wednesday, 15 August 2018 14:22 -

<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/kewaunee-harbor-family-s5.jpg>



Seventh Entry in ‘Walker’s Wisconsin’ Series explains how the Governor axed school districts’ ability to exceed state-imposed budget caps in order to pay for energy efficiency improvements.

MADISON – As part of its [Field Guide to Taking Back Wisconsin](#) campaign, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters released its seventh entry in its [Walker’s Wisconsin](#) series today. The series recounts Gov. Scott Walker’s extreme anti-conservation agenda and outlines just how far he’s taken our state, once considered a conservation model, to somewhere that’s hardly recognizable.

To read more, visit the Field Guide at conservationvoters.org/field-guide .

[AIR](#)

Walker burns the ninth highest amount of coal in the U.S.

While Wisconsin’s neighbors invest in renewable sources of energy like solar and wind, Walker has kept his state beholden to the fossil fuel industry – particularly coal – despite the fact that Wisconsin has no fossil fuels in our state. Among its neighbors, Wisconsin is dead last in megawatts of wind-generated energy. Iowa generates 6,209 mega-watts of wind energy, Illinois

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3,842, Minnesota 3,235, Indiana 1,895 and Michigan 1,531. Wisconsin generates only 648 megawatts. Thanks to Walker's financial ties to billionaire fossil fuel tycoons the Koch Brothers – who the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign says donated nearly \$6 million to Walker as of 2014 – Wisconsin ranks its dependency on coal among West Virginia, Kentucky, Wyoming, and North Dakota – the biggest coal-producing states in the U.S.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Walker made it harder for school districts to use clean energy

In his 2017 budget, Walker axed school districts' ability to exceed state-imposed budget caps in order to pay for energy efficiency improvements. These improvements save schools money every year after they are implemented while creating a healthier environment by relying less on energy generated by coal and fossil fuels. One example of these types of improvements is replacing decades-old, unhealthy HVAC systems. Instead, Walker again doubled down on fossil fuel energy by only allowing these simple, money-saving projects to be approved by a community referendum.

Walker watered down renewable energy credits

In 2017, Walker signed legislation (SB 144/AB 204) that will keep Wisconsin among the states with the least amount of renewable energy. Currently, the state is meeting a ten percent renewable energy goal established in 2005 – one of the lowest percentage targets in the Midwest. This legislation continues to water down the effectiveness of the state's renewable energy portfolio by expanding the number of energy technologies that count towards it without increasing the overall percentage. As a result, there is likely to be even less incentive for Wisconsin to decrease its fossil fuel use and transition to cleaner energy sources.

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Walker helped Chronic Wasting Disease spread

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In 2017, Walker signed legislation (SB 68) that increases the likelihood of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) further spreading across the state. CWD is a transmissible disease that causes the spongy degeneration of the brains of infected animals including deer, elk, and moose. The legislation relaxes deer baiting regulations, which heightens the risk of transmission. Shortly after the law passed more counties tested positive for CWD. Deer hunting is not only central to Wisconsin's outdoor heritage and tradition, it also contributes an estimated \$1 billion to the state's economy each year, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to electing conservation leaders, holding decision makers accountable, and encouraging lawmakers to champion conservation policies that effectively protect Wisconsin's public health and natural resources.