

Walker's WEDC: It's Worse Than We Thought

Written by Wisconsin Assembly, Laura Smith
Friday, 08 May 2015 14:24



Scathing audit reveals Walker's job agency didn't follow laws to protect taxpayers.

MADISON – Today Assembly Democratic Leader **Peter Barca** (D-Kenosha) responded to a scathing Legislative Audit Bureau report that unveiled egregious problems with Gov. Walker's Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC).



"The abysmal failure of Gov. Walker's job agency to follow state laws and its own policies is a serious issue that cannot continue," Rep. Barca said. "If Gov. Walker and his Republican colleagues paid as much attention to our jobs agency as they did on extreme and divisive social issues and catering to right-wing special interests, we would not be 40th in jobs and Wisconsin taxpayers, entrepreneurs and businesses would undoubtedly be better off."

The audit found that Walker's WEDC didn't follow state laws or its own agency policies. The agency also clearly continues to have serious transparency issues and, equally bad, has not provided clear and accurate information in terms of job creation and programs to address concerns brought up in past reports.

WEDC has been a mess from the start and the WEDC legislative board members have not been kept abreast of the agency's ongoing problems or been involved fully in addressing serious issues.

Instead of putting forward solutions to correcting our jobs failure or problems at WEDC, in the state budget Gov. Walker proposed removing oversight, transparency and even LAB financial audits and colliding WEDC with an unrelated state housing agency. Today the Governor announced he is abandoning that hasty idea, following the urging of Democratic lawmakers and stakeholders.

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"The problems with WEDC – improper awards, continuous turnover and not following the rules or even laws – are symptomatic of the Walker Administration and its record of financial mismanagement and jobs failures for Wisconsin," Rep. Barca added. "While I am glad that the Governor has heeded our advice to abandon a hasty agency merger, he must go further to take immediate steps to protect taxpayers by shoring up his agency's failures."