

Legislative Review Should be Required for Foxconn Contract

Written by Wisconsin Senate Democrats, Jay Wadd
Wednesday, 18 October 2017 16:18

<http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/walker-terry-gou-foxconn-s5.jpg>



Deal puts taxpayers on the hook for up to \$3 billion, or over \$500 for every man, woman and child in this state. Legislature should step in to make sure the people aren't getting fleeced.

MADISON - Responding to reports that the contract with Foxconn contained a “nuclear bomb” that would have left taxpayers unprotected, State Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) said that the Legislature should reassert its authority and require that before any contract between WEDC and Foxconn is signed it first be approved by the State Senate and Assembly.



“Since its inception we have seen problem after problem with WEDC, whether it’s been giving taxpayer dollars to corporations that ship Wisconsin jobs overseas, failing to require that companies create jobs in exchange for taxpayer assistance, or failing to protect taxpayers in this latest mistake involving Foxconn,” said Hansen a vocal critic of the troubled economic development corporation. “This is simply more evidence that WEDC is not up to the task of protecting Wisconsin taxpayers and the need for this agreement to receive even greater scrutiny by the Legislature.”

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The original agreement with Foxconn was worked out between Foxconn's billionaire owner Terry Gou and Governor Walker on the back of a napkin. Since then media reporting has revealed any number of troubling incidents with the Taiwanese corporation from mistreatment of its workers to ignoring critical environmental protections to firing 60,000 low-wage workers so they could be replaced with robots.

"We are talking about an agreement that puts state taxpayers on the hook for up to \$3 billion. That's over \$500 for every man, woman and child in this state. The details of the agreement are crucial and if WEDC can't be trusted to protect the taxpayers then the Legislature should step in and make sure the people of this state aren't getting fleeced."

During the floor debate and vote on the Foxconn legislation Senate Democrats tried to amend the bill to require that any contract with Foxconn be approved by the Joint Finance Committee. The amendment failed along a party line vote.

"It's not too late to correct the mistakes that have been made both during the vote on the Foxconn bill and WEDC's handling of the contract. The Legislature should be called back into session to do something that should have been done when this deal came up in the first place, require legislative approval of the contract between the state and Foxconn."