http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/wisc-leaving-s5.jpg



False promises and overblown estimates of business expansion have been hallmarks of our Governor Scott Walker for years and now President Trump has taken that tune to new heights. Here is a fact check from a County Commissioner in our neighboring state, Minnesota.

DAKOTA COUNTY, MN - I recently posted a comparison between Wisconsin with Minnesota, using only documented figures and rankings. A couple Iowa friends suggested both Minnesota and Wisconsin would pale in comparison to the Hawkeye State. So I checked. Below are the results.

TAXES. For 2018, an average family with a median annual income of $55,754 would pay $7,593 in state and local taxes in Wisconsin, $7,202 in Iowa, and $6,453 in Minnesota. Source: wallethub.com/edu/best-worst-states-to-be-a-taxpayer

PROPERTY TAXES. Minnesota residents pay $2,155 in property taxes on a median value home of $184,700 home. Iowa residents pay $2,762 on the same-priced home. Wisconsin residents take the prize for the highest property taxes; they pay $3,602 on the same $184,700 home. Meanwhile, in Dakota County, a typical household will pay the least of all - $1,965 on a $184,700 home. This is $1447 less in property taxes than a family in Wisconsin, $797 less than a family in Iowa, $365 less than a family in Ramsey County, and $376 less than a family in Hennepin County. Source: wallethub.com/edu/best-worst-states-to-be-a-taxpayer

INCOME. The average household income in Iowa is $54,736, while an average Wisconsin

household earns $55,638, and an average Minnesota household earns $63,488. Dakota County residents earn an average annual wage of $77,321. Source: businessinsider.com



JOB GROWTH. Job growth since December 2010 has been noticeably stronger in Minnesota than in Wisconsin or Iowa, with Minnesota experiencing 10.1% growth in employment, compared with 8.7% growth in Wisconsin and 3.9% growth in Iowa. Source: www.bls.gov

BEST STATE FOR BUSINESS. Minnesota ranks as the 6th best state for business, with Wisconsin coming in 17th and Iowa 18th. Source: cnbc.com/2018/07/10/americas-top-states-for-business-2018

FORTUNE 500 COMPANIES. Minnesota is now home to 19 companies on the Fortune 500 list, up from past years, according to fortune.com/fortune500 . Wisconsin is down to nine, having previously been home to 10; and Iowa is down to two, having previously been home to three. Notably, Minnesota is also home to the nation's largest privately-owned company: Cargill. In Dakota County, Mendota Heights-based Patterson Companies recently made the Fortune 500 list, joining CHS of Inver Grove Heights, which is in the Fortune 100 with over $31 billion in annual revenues. CHS, alone, is bigger than any company in Wisconsin or Iowa.

DEBT. The State of Minnesota's debt equals $2,768 per resident, while the State of Wisconsin's debt equals $4,278 per resident. The State of Iowa's debt is $1,821 per person. Source: cnbc.com/2018/07/10/americas-top-states-for-business-2018
. Dakota County has zero debt, which is unusual in Minnesota and across the country.

BEER CONSUMPTION. Wisconsinites annually consume 34.3 gallons of beer per person, placing them at #5 in the nation. Iowans consume 31.7 gallons of beer per person, ranking #11 nationally, and Minnesotans bring up the rear, at 28.4 gallons of beer per person, which places us at #21. Source: usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance

GAS TAX. The gas tax is 15% higher in Wisconsin than in Minnesota. At 32.9 cents per gallon, Wisconsin has the 19th highest gas tax in the nation. Minnesota's gas tax is 28.6 cents per

gallon, ranking #28 in the country. Iowa is in between at 30.5 cents per gallon, ranking 23rd highest in the country. taxfoundation.org/state-gas-tax-rates-july-2018

MURDERS. There were 186 murders in Wisconsin in 2017. Minnesota had 113 and Iowa had 104. Source: statista.com/statistics/195331/number-of-murders-in-the-us-by-state

FARM PRODUCTION. Minnesota ranks #5 nationally. Wisconsin farmers come in at #9. Iowa leads all three states, second only to California. Dakota County farmers held their own among Minnesota's yield-leading counties in bushels per acre of oats, corn and soybeans. Source: ers.usda.gov/faqs/#Q1

QUALITY OF LIFE. Wisconsin ranks 24th. Iowa is 7th. Minnesota is 3rd. Source: cnbc.com/2018/07/10/americas-top-states-for-business-2018.html

CHEESE. Wisconsin farmers make 2.8 million pounds of cheese annually, earning them the #1 ranking in the nation, while Minnesota ranks #6 and Iowa is 8th. Wisconsin was second only to California in milk production, with Minnesota ranking #9 and Iowa well back. Source: worldatlas.com

OBESITY. At 28.4%, Minnesota again has the lowest rate of obesity in the Upper Midwest, according to 2017 figures released recently by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For the first time, it also has the lowest rate among 12 Midwestern states. Wisconsin falls in the middle of the pack, at 32.0%, and Iowa leads the way at 36.4%. Source: twincities.com

LIFE EXPECTANCY. Hawaiians rank #1 with an average life expectancy of 81.3 years, with Minnesotans coming in second at 81.1 years, Wisconsinites are 11th at an even 80.0 years, and Iowans 16th at 79.7 years. In Dakota County, life expectancy is 83.6 years. Sources: en.wikipedia.org

AARON RODGERS. The Packers have one. The Vikings don't, but they do have Inver Grove resident Kirk Cousins. And Iowa has a guy named Eric Mueller who looks like Aaron Rodgers.

Source: totalpackers.com/2014/10/aaron-rodgers-lookalike-eric-mueller

BOND RATING. In late July, Minnesota earned the gold standard of bond ratings - AAA - from both Standard & Poor's and Fitch. Iowa also has a AAA rating. Wisconsin trails with a AA rating from Standard and Poor's and a AA+ from Fitch, though the Badger State's ratings are up from prior years. Source: twincities.com/2018/07/25/standard-and-poors-fitch-minnesota-aaa-bond-rating-highest/ , fitchratings.com/site/pr/1030927 and treasurer.ca.gov/ratings

EDUCATION. In states where all students take the ACT, Minnesota ranks #1. Wisconsin ranks #4. Not all students take the ACT in Iowa. Source: blog.prepscholar.com/act-scores-by-state-averages-highs-and-lows

THE AXE. The Gophers beat Wisconsin 37-15 yesterday to bring Paul Bunyan's Axe back to Minnesota and even up the longest-running rivalry in Division I football history (FBS). The 128-game series is now tied 60-60-8. Oh, and Iowa beat somebody, too.

With lots of family and friends in both Wisconsin and Iowa, I wish our neighbors to the east and south nothing but the best. Except when their teams play ours.

*****

Joe Atkins is a County Commissioner in Dakota County, Minnesota. None of the sources cited have been independently verified for accuracy.