

Taxpayers Foot the Bill for Walker's Campaign Travel

Written by Democratic Party of Wisconsin, Melissa Baldauff

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MADISON – Two months after a rolling blunder of a trade mission to the United Kingdom that saw Scott Walker “punt” on basic questions about science and refuse to talk to reporters, records indicate that taxpayers paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for the trip that was a thinly-veiled attempt for Walker to bolster his credentials on foreign policy as he campaigns for president.

Records obtained yesterday by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel show that Walker's flagship jobs agency, the [scandal-plagued](#) Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, paid a total of \$138,000 for Walker along with officials from [WEDC](#) and several state business leaders to travel overseas.

While Walker has defended his use of taxpayer funds, the Journal Sentinel writes of the trip, “For any potential political candidate, a trip abroad requires substantial resources both in dollars and in staff time setting it up. When those resources can be provided by taxpayers, it frees up political staff and funds for other priorities.”

In February, Wisconsin Democrats filed a [complaint](#) against Walker and his presidential campaign, Our American Revival, alleging that their use of state resources to fund what is essentially political travel constitutes an illegal political contribution of services belonging to the State of Wisconsin. The multiple violations alleged in the Party's complaint carry both criminal and civil penalties; some penalties are as high as \$10,000 per violation, imprisonment not more than 3-1/2 years, or both.

Details on the cost of Walker's first taxpayer-funded trip overseas came as Walker is again leaving the state for Europe on a trade mission to Germany, France, and Spain. Despite the trip being billed as an opportunity to “provide state companies with opportunities to establish and develop new partnerships overseas,” the [Associated Press](#) is reporting that Walker is ending his participation in the trade mission early to attend a political event in New Hampshire with other likely Republican presidential candidates.

“Scott Walker spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxpayer funds on a trip abroad to

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promote his presidential campaign under the guise of job creation and now he's doing it again," Democratic Party of Wisconsin Communications Director Melissa Baldauff said Friday.

"Meanwhile, Wisconsin has dropped to 40th in the nation in job growth on his watch, our middle class is shrinking faster than any other state's, and his flagship jobs agency still can't comply with the law. Instead of spending taxpayer money on an overseas trip he's ditching early for a presidential campaign event, Scott Walker should be here in Wisconsin doing the job he promised to do last November."