

## Wisconsin Economy Flounders Under Scott Walker Plan

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***Wisconsin drops to 35th among the 50 states in the pace of job creation in the full four years of Gov. Scott Walker's first term, has consistently lagged behind under Walker's "Open for Business" strategy, bad press over failures at his flagship jobs agency, the WEDC, to follow state and federal law.***

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GREEN BAY - While the rest of the country has made a huge recovery from the economic crash of 2008, the State of Wisconsin has consistently lagged behind with Gov. Scott Walker's "Open for Business" strategy.

According to a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [report](#) today, in the four years from 2011-'14, when the United States posted a 9.3% gain in private-sector jobs, Wisconsin created jobs at a rate of 5.7%, an increase that gives Wisconsin a rank of 35th among the 50 states in the pace of job creation in the full four years of Gov. Scott Walker's first term.

The data released last Thursday morning from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics are based on a quarterly census of American employers that makes them the most accurate and definitive figures available. The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, which tracks jobs and wages in rolling 12-month increments, is published every three months.

The U.S. hit its lowest point of the recession early in 2010, meaning the four-year period of 2011-'14 effectively encompasses most of the economic recovery from the worst national downturn since the Great Depression.

By the end of 2014, Wisconsin had failed numerically to return to its pre-recession employment

peaks, before the financial market meltdown in mid-2008. By contrast, the United States had regained and exceeded its pre-recession employment peaks by the end of 2014.

By December 2014, Wisconsin posted 2,400,139 private-sector jobs, still below 2,412,898 in December 2007. By contrast, the U.S. had 117.7 million private sector jobs in December 2014, higher than 115.1 million in December 2007.

Walker continues to campaign outside of the state touting his "Wisconsin Comeback" which portrays his business development policies as a huge success, despite all the evidence to the contrary.

To compound his credibility problems, Scott Walker has been plagued with bad press over the failures at his flagship jobs agency, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), to follow state and federal law.

A series of non-partisan audits beginning in 2012 show WEDC lost track of \$56 million worth of taxpayer funded loans and found that the agency lacked basic internal accounting controls. The quasi-public agency has also written off [more than \\$7.6 million](#) in loans, to include a \$500,000 loan to a troubled company owned by a [major donor](#) to Walker's campaign.

The [Wisconsin State Journal](#) investigation also revealed a forgivable taxpayer WEDC loan of nearly \$700,000 to a Sheboygan company planning to build a combination helicopter and corporate jet, even though they had no experience in aircraft manufacturing and underwriters hadn't reviewed the company's finances.

Walker's "Open for Business" strategy has mainly consisted of giving huge tax breaks to the very wealthy to make "Wisconsin attractive" to new business development. Unfortunately for Walker, Wisconsin dropped to dead last among the 50 states in the latest business startup index published by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

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Journal Sentinel report By John Schmid and Kevin Crowe. Journal Sentinel reporter Craig Gilbert in Washington, D.C. contributed.

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