



Walker: A Pattern of Lies



The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel regularly takes statements made by state politicians, checks the facts and reports whether they've been honest or dishonest. You can check their sources and review links, related documents and articles online at politifactwisconsin.com. Their research reveals a disturbing pattern:

Scott Walker has a difficult time telling the truth.

Walker's claim: "I campaigned on (the proposals in the budget repair bill for Wisconsin) all throughout the election. Anybody who says they are shocked on this has been asleep for the past two years." (Scott Walker on Monday, February 21st, 2011 in a news conference) In the turbulent wake of his controversial plan to sharply curtail collective bargaining rights, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker has faced criticism that he gave no warning of such a dramatic plan during the long 2010 governor's race.

The truth: The first public hint Walker gave that he was considering eliminating many union bargaining rights was at a Dec. 7, 2010 Milwaukee Press Club forum, some four weeks after the election. "Walker did not go public with even the bare-bones of his multi-faceted plans to sharply curb collective bargaining rights. He could not point to any statements where he did. We could find none either. We rate his statement False." (**Milwaukee Journal "PolitiFact" Wisconsin**)

Walker's claim: "We're broke. We don't have any more money." (Scott Walker on Monday, February 21st, 2011 in a news conference and many other venues) "I don't have anything to negotiate," Walker said. "We are broke in this state. We have been broke for years."

The truth: In January 2011, a month before Walker's statement, Moody's issued a national report that combined state debt and pension liabilities, and showed Wisconsin fares well when compared with other states. A Moody's panel, including Kurtter, one of the most respected municipal finance experts in the country, discussed Wisconsin's dilemma and Walker's assertion and made these observations: "The state's debt has a very high credit rating of AA2 and that has not changed in years. That compares favorably with other states, including Illinois, that face far more severe budget crunches."

Then there is this perspective from within state government itself. "The state is no more broke than it was two, four or 10 years ago," said Frank Hoadley, capital finance director with the state Department of Administration. "There's always a huge gap" as budget deliberations begin, he said. "And it always gets hammered out." Other budget analysts responded with similar conclusions.

We rate Walker's statement False. (**Milwaukee Journal "PolitiFact" Wisconsin**)

Further Note—Governor Walker—in his first weeks in office—introduced several tax cut bills that increased the budget deficit by a total of about \$200 million. And yet he was saying "I don't have anything to negotiate. We are broke."

Walker's claim: He balanced the budget "without raising taxes." (A statement repeated almost daily by Walker and various supporters.)

The truth: Two taxes were increased on low-income working families. **Earned Income Credit:** Walker's budget reduced the earned income credit for low-income working families that have more than one child. Since a tax credit reduces the amount of tax you owe, this means higher taxes for those families. This increased the state's tax revenue estimates by \$56.2 million dollars over the next two years—a tax on the working poor. **Homestead Credit.** This is a property tax break that appears as a credit for low-income homeowners and renters. This means those taxpayers pay more in taxes. This increased the state tax revenue by \$13.6 million. A second tax on the poor. "Did Walker raise taxes? We say yes." (**Milwaukee Journal "PolitiFact" Wisconsin**)

Walker's claim: "My number-one priority is helping Wisconsin businesses create jobs." and "In Wisconsin, 98 percent of all small businesses will qualify for income-tax relief under my plan, freeing them to expand and create jobs." (Scott Walker on Wednesday, January 5th, 2011 in a news release.)

The truth: The overall average for all the 252,000 filers who could qualify for the credit -- \$145. More than two-thirds would get less than \$100 on average. It's apparent that -- for the majority of those small businesses that are eligible -- the tax credit is not nearly enough to create even a single job.

The problems don't stop there. Businesses that don't turn a profit in 2011 would not get a credit. So the no-profit issue means a large percentage of small struggling businesses won't be getting any credit.

"Even business advocates don't contend it would help recipients create jobs, as Walker claims. We rate Walker's claim False." (**Milwaukee Journal "PolitiFact" Wisconsin**)

Walker's claim: Two years ago we had "the largest structural deficit ever in Wisconsin." (Scott Walker on Tuesday, June 21st, 2011 in an appearance on national TV)

The truth: It's the third highest in the 14 years that the agency has compiled the reports. The worst: a \$2.867 billion structural deficit from the 2003-05 budget—under Governor Scott McCallum, a Republican. "He was off by seven years and a political party. We rate his statement False." (**Milwaukee Journal "PolitiFact" Wisconsin**)

Walker's claim: Concerning his budget-repair bill, "collective bargaining is fully intact." (Scott Walker on Friday, February 18th, 2011 in a radio interview)

The truth: In arguing the changes would be modest, Walker cited the civil service system and said "collective bargaining is fully intact." However, Walker himself has outlined how his budget-repair bill would limit the collective bargaining rights of public employees. Indeed, **this is the provision that provoked daily demonstrations at the state Capitol, national media attention, and the recall campaign.** To now say collective bargaining would remain "fully intact" is not just false, it's ridiculously false. And that means it is Pants on Fire. (**Milwaukee Journal "PolitiFact" Wisconsin**)

Walker's claim: "The overwhelming number of (school) districts saw that staffing was the same or greater," after the 2011-13 state budget. (Scott walker, Nov. 15 interview on WTMJ-AM)

The truth: When the survey used to support this statement—done by the Association of School District Administrators—was researched by the Journal Sentinel staff, it was found that Walker's method *doesn't count the retirements of staff as a loss in numbers.* In all, more than 4,700 school employees retired in the last year and none of them are counted as a loss in Walker's statistics. He cherry-picked the numbers in his favor. For example: Racine schools showed a net drop of 100 staff. Walker's method showed Racine had a net gain of 14. The reason for the difference: Walker didn't count the 114 retirements in the district.

When all the staffing numbers are included "the survey actually shows the opposite of what he said. We rate his statement False." (**Milwaukee Journal "PolitiFact" Wisconsin**)

Important note: "This all adds up to a loss of revenue to public schools of over \$1.6 billion—far and away the biggest cut to public education in state history" (from Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Budget Survey Analysis. November 10, 2011)

Walker's claim: When it comes to protesters in Madison, "almost all" are now from outside of Wisconsin. (Scott Walker on Tuesday, February 22nd, 2011 in a secretly-recorded prank telephone call.)

The truth: Several groups doing surveys showed the vast majority of people protesting are from Wisconsin and the largest numbers were actually from Dane County. We rate Walker's statement False. (**Milwaukee Journal "PolitiFact" Wisconsin**)

Note: Over half a million signatures for Scott Walker's recall have already been collected from people protesting his policies who live "inside Wisconsin."

Last but not least: Scott Walker has been lecturing that the notion of a recall election is preposterous. However, his argument is directly contradicted by Walker himself: In 1997, he was a vocal supporter of the "First Breath Alliance," a group that tried to recall Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold.

The truth: The people of Wisconsin do not deserve a leader who uses patterns of continuous falsehoods and outright lies to defend and hide the extremist policies that would not have gotten him elected in the first place. He is not working for the people of Wisconsin and "It's not working for Wisconsin."