

A new course for Wisconsin

**By Rep. Robin J. Vos
(R-63rd Assembly District)**

The Joint Committee on Finance is proudly setting a new financial course for the State of Wisconsin. When committee members cast their important votes on the 2011-2013 biennial budget, you'll finally see an honest and smart approach to our finances. No longer will state lawmakers balance the budget using accounting tricks or gimmicks, raiding segregated funds, borrowing billions, raising taxes or filling the gap with one-time federal stimulus money. Our goal is to set the foundation for future balanced budgets by eliminating the mountain of debt that was given to us from past legislatures. To guide us through the process will be three basic principals. First, we'll not spend ourselves to prosperity. We must make the tough decisions now and put an end to the governmental spending spree. Secondly, we refuse to raise taxes. Wisconsin families are struggling enough; they don't need a increased tax or fee to make their financial matters worse, especially when they're paying more than \$4.50 for a gallon of gas. Finally, we'll maintain the core government services that our citizens have come to expect. It won't be easy but with a \$3.6 billion deficit, nothing is.

Not only do we have this large debt, just like many households in Wisconsin, money is tight. Every new dollar that comes in goes directly to pay for medical assistance, an item in our budget that continues to increase. In fact, 22 percent of our budget goes to medical assistance. However, the biggest expenditure of the state budget is local municipalities and schools, which take 51 percent of state GPR dollars. Also, 7 percent goes to corrections, another 7 percent to the UW System and the final 13 percent is the rest of the state budget. Since we're holding the line on taxes, our only option is real spending cuts while still delivering core services to the people who truly need it.

The governor's budget put forth a 10 percent reduction to most state programs. Education remains a top priority and saw much less of a cut. It's why the governor and state lawmakers gave local governments and schools the flexibility they need by allowing them to finally fairly address wages and bene-

fits to offset the decreased revenue from the state. Many school districts and municipalities are finding the savings from the reasonable request to increase employee pension contributions to 5.8 percent and health insurance contributions to no less than 12.6 percent.

The Joint Finance Committee gathered public input on the governor's budget at public hearings around the state. More than a thousand people spoke directly to the committee about their concerns. Many state lawmakers held their own listening sessions on the budget in their districts. The committee also received thousands of e-mails through a special designated e-mail account. The members of the Joint Finance Committee will use this input along with their colleague's insights in order to make the governor's budget even better.

We heard strong opposition to the governor's proposal to do away with the recycling mandate. While we may not have the money to keep the funding at the same levels, there's great public sentiment and bi-partisan support to keep Wisconsin on the forefront of recycling efforts. Also, there are concerns about eliminating SeniorCare. It's a one-of-its kind program in the nation that helps seniors pay for their prescription drugs. It's now our job to figure out how we can afford to keep such programs while balancing the budget and eliminating our massive deficit.

As we craft the spending plan over the next month, I want to assure taxpayers that we have your best interests in mind. Taxes and fees will not increase. It's our promise that we won't break. We also must keep the governor's proposed property tax freeze which means taxpayers owning a median-valued home would be protected from the expected increase of \$736 over the next two years.

The Joint Finance Committee intends to finish voting on the budget within the next few weeks and the full legislature will approve the spending plan in June. We have a great deal of work ahead but we're excited to take on the challenge. We know we're right-sizing government and eliminating the structural deficit to an all-time low. We're setting the stage for future balanced budgets. It's time for us to finally get the state back on solid financial ground.

Jobs, not welfare

My families came from Europe in the mid 1850's for two reasons: First to get land to work, second to avoid the Napoleonic wars. In Europe, at that time, if you did not own land or have a trade you were destined to be serfs for life.

They came from Czechoslovakia and the Ukraine.

The Arios were Mennonites, who were persecuted at that time. The Dohnals were Catholics, the dominant religion in the Bohemian areas. They both settled on farms, raised big families on little bitty pieces of land, working from dawn to dusk, milking cows and farming 40 acres. Later on they enlarged the farm to 80 acres and scratched out a living. My Uncle Edwin, in Maribel, Wisconsin, got a job as the town clerk, to get through the depression. My father left home at 14 to go up to Virginia, Minnesota to work in my uncle's shoe store, living above the store for years.

The Arios settled in Mankato, Mn. as farmers.

All of them came here for work. Wisconsin and Minnesota, with its European heritage, captured a lot of very ambitious, hardworking people that built this state. It was built by farmers and workers with jobs, not as a welfare mecca. It will prosper when we get jobs, not as a magnet for welfare. Our people want jobs, even the illegals come here to work.

In the last few years, we have lost a lot of high income people, they moved from the north to the south, blue states to red states. Our growth, in this country, is in the red states because of their economic policies. Kimberly Clark went to Texas, not for the hot weather, but for the entrepreneurial climate.

Wisconsin has been burdened by eight years of liberal rule, losing hundreds of thousands of jobs to other areas, because of the antagonisms of the left, for profit making companies and our tax structure. Too many leftists, for some reason, believe that Wisconsin manufacturers are a cow to be milked instead of a cow to be fed so that manufacturing grows and expands. The rest of us should not be able to live off them unless we want more jobs. We need to harness the abilities of our entrepreneurs, not penalize them.

Education for our children has gone downhill. Now families seeking to get good educations for their kids have to look to private schools. Unions have destroyed the education system, sucking up funds meant for the kids into their salaries and benefits systems.

In Milwaukee and some surrounding areas, education is a disaster. Reading scores in our schools, by far the most important measure, have plummeted. If you can't read by third grade, what good does it do to give a student a book?

All of these factors are a direct result of union idiocy in our schools and left wing polices that discourage businesses and growth. Growth is the only way out of our dilemma. The more we raise taxes, the more that we destroy our economic base. Look at the cigarette tax. The more we raised it the less revenue we are getting.

It is a mystery to me why the democrats have adopted policies that discourage jobs. Milwaukee has not gone anywhere under Tom Barrett. They have turned down companies like Wal-Mart and the Four Seasons company, who went elsewhere. These are just the type of jobs that Milwaukee needs, starter jobs with chance for advancement, that teach people the need for accuracy, dependability, and hard work. Some benefits help the whole family. People can move up from there. According to the liberals, unless this is a "meaningful job" they don't want it. Silly, any job, I was a bus boy at 50 cents an hour, is important.

The old line democrats, from the 50's and 60's were very pro jobs. We worked hand in hand to bring jobs to the state.

George Meany, head of the old AFL-CIO was not a socialist. He was very pro capitalism, stressing that free enterprise worked and that the unions should work within that system.

Scott Walker has made the changes that encourage businesses with some good challenges in the tax system to create jobs. Already, another article in this Digest shows that we have jumped up in job creating ability.

We have seen a different outlook in our businesses. We have added 30,000 plus jobs just because employers feel that they will not be taxed off the map in the next four years.

But, the liberals are out for blood. They want to take back the Senate and insure that the featherbedding overpaid, over benefited public employees drag the rest of us down.

We are all in this fight for the future. Help Scott Walker and the legislature expand and improve our economy. Our futures depend on it.

Bob and Jean Dohnal, Publishers/Editors

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About this time of the year, after the elections, is when all conservatives go to sleep, zip up their billfolds and say: "we elected them do all of the hard lifting". That is why we win battles and lose wars. The campaigns must go on, Conservatives have to keep working and keep giving. Politics is a Blood sport, you can see that in Madison the last few weeks.

Ronald Reagan said once: "When you pull all of those snouts away from the trough you are going to get alot of oinking." That is what is happening. The left is apoplectic. They might lose 25% or more of their contributions. That can kill some of them. The left lives off the rest of us. Public employees and many public agencies depend on our money, tax money, to pay for their political activities. We Conservatives must go out and get money from hard working people. Most of the rich people have become liberals. Conservatives are the people that are out there every day busting their butts.

Please help us organize: Send us \$25 or send us a request to get 25 of the new Conservative Digests. Distribute them to libraries, coffee shops, organizations, meetings, and friends. Join our e-mail lists and get im-

mediate updates on what is happening in Madison and DC. Then you can help by hollering, sending letters, calling your local newspaper editors and talk shows. This is a fight for the future.

Do you want to see the future become that of the left-wing visions? Or do you want a future for our kids that includes, personal freedoms, property rights, low taxes, better jobs and salaries, homes and lives?

It is your choice: Help!!

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Union has negative effect on education

By Rep. Don Pridemore
(R-99th Assembly District)

Madison- State Representative Don Pridemore (R-Hartford) has conducted a survey of his constituents. The results, which paint a dismal picture of the public education bureaucracy in Wisconsin, are revealed here.

WEAC, the dominant state teachers' union, is looked upon with very little favor in the 99th Assembly District according to the latest survey of more than 2000 respondents. Its actions, policies, and tactics have succeeded in alienating them from the citizens in the very communities they operate in. An overwhelming majority of my constituents have stated that WEAC is a negative force in the education of their children. As your State Representative and the Chairman of the Education Reform Committee, I have surveyed the 99th Assembly district on issues affecting public education policy. One of the questions I asked was "Do you believe that the state teachers' union (WEAC) has had a positive effect on Wisconsin's public schools?" A full 85% of respondents answered NO. Interestingly, of the 15% who believe that WEAC has had a positive influence, 30% were public school teachers (and WEAC-benefit-recipients), and 30% of those declined to sign their responses. That is a significantly higher percentage of anonymous replies in comparison to a normal sample. Let me be clear: I am extremely concerned that WEAC has placed teachers and the community at odds. This trend of opposite and mutually exclusive priorities is harmful to the educational health of our communities, schools, and our teachers themselves.

The question is: Why?

The question to be asked is "Why is WEAC so unpopular?" The answer to that question is subject to speculation but will also be very controversial. From the responses and written comments to our survey, the one answer that stands out is that the public believes that WEAC is a self-serving entity which is not focused on excellence in education as a way of increasing teacher's value as educators but rather focuses only on increasing teacher salaries, benefits and working conditions. True, one might expect that a union that represents teachers would be "all about teachers" but it is also egregious that WEAC is spending millions of dollars per year from teacher's union dues and profits from WEAC's own health insurance program to try to convince us that their idea of "every kid deserves a great school." is actually benefiting education. I don't buy it and apparently neither does the general public.

Looking further into WEAC's agenda one will find that WEAC has opposed every effort to ward off competition and assure us that "every child can attend a great school." WEAC opposes choice schools, charter schools, virtual schools, private schools,

home-schooling, and any other alternative form of education which might infringe upon their monopoly on education dollars. Successful businesses offer consumers a wide variety of products, models, sizes, and styles to choose from, but our education system has no incentive to give consumers those types of choices. It cannot be denied that one size does not fit all. Regardless of how you look at it, the "every child deserves a great school" slogan is closer to reality when virtual schools are one of the choices for parents and consumers. As a matter of fact, the more choices parents and students have, the more likely every kid will attend a great school, or more importantly "a great school for them."

A second reoccurring theme derived from the survey results is recognition of the fact that teachers are only working with students 180 days of the year with some under contract for 190-200 days. However, teachers do work after hours correcting assignments and preparing lessons, sometimes bringing work home with them or participating in after-school functions. Teachers are also required to complete six credits of continuing education courses every five years (which they are allowed to do online, incidentally, benefiting from the same type of virtual class that WEAC wants to deny their non-teacher students).

I believe that most of the residents of the 99th district who responded to my survey share my utmost respect for hardworking teachers. It takes a special type of individual to enter the teaching profession, be able to instill a vast world of knowledge into brains full of mush and have as an outcome, a well rounded citizen of character ready to enter the job market. However, some of the frustration expressed by citizens and taxpayers is understandable, for most private sector jobs do not provide the types of benefits most public school teachers enjoy.

Now that we realize we have a problem, it is clear that we all must work together to find a solution. I believe that teachers have to "take back their union" and make sure their elected union officials represent their values. If a union is not serving their members well, then its members must "step up to the plate." One constituent who filled out my survey summed up this crucial issue like this:

"The teacher's union serves the purpose of allowing a teacher to be 'beyond the fray' while the union does their dirty bidding. This would allow a teacher to simply say, 'Oh, I don't agree with everything WEAC does,' and then think they cannot be held responsible for the union that they belong to."

Whether one agrees with the citizen's comments above or not, one thing is clear: any attempt to repair the damage WEAC has caused has to start with the teachers, and the teachers must have the support of the entire community, including their elected officials. I will be among the first in line to achieve this goal and support our great public school teachers!

"Walker's plan will put the state's finances in the best shape they have been in for more than 15 years."

—Legislative Fiscal Bureau

Walker's budget vs. Doyle's budget

By Sen. Mary Lazich
(R-28th District)

Remember the Democrat budgets? 2005-2007 \$54 billion, 2007-2009 \$60 billion, 2009-2011 \$65.8 billion. Gov. Doyle's last budget recommendation was \$64,573,587,300, and after the Democrats in the Legislature put their fingerprints on it, it was \$65,773,284,400.

Keep in mind that inflation has been relatively low. One may expect that Gov. Walker, elected as a conservative, would produce a budget with a smaller increase than the recent Democrat budget increases. Well, guess again! Building off the Democrats most recent \$65.8 billion budget, Gov. Walker's budget comes in at \$60,889,026,400.

That's right. The Walker version of the state budget comes in almost \$5 billion less than the prior budget crafted by Democrats! Unheard of! How can that be? How can any government have a budget that is less than the previous? And, less than the previous budget by 7.4 percent.

The Democrats in the legislature swung open the doors of government spending, requiring seemingly immense amounts of money from Wisconsin taxpayers. The Democrats treated the public trough as a bottomless pit.

The 2009-2011 Democrat budget-borrowing amount is \$3,581,172,100. Governor Walker's budget borrows \$1,427,714,600. While we must pay the debt collector for the Democrats \$3.6 billion borrowing, Gov. Walker is able to reduce the total budget.

The Democrat's final budget increased car insurance, electric and gas bills, telephone bills, garbage bills, and on and on. It seems there were not many fees and taxes that did not increase. The Walker and Doyle Legislative Fiscal Bureau Papers titled State Tax and Fee Modifications are a very interesting read. The Walker paper is 10 pages long with a total \$75,810,300. The Doyle paper is 30 pages long

with a total \$1,921,333,300. Even more interesting is that the Walker general purpose revenue portion of the paper is -\$33,872,000, yes negative, and the Democrats general purpose revenue portion of their paper is \$1,921,333,300, yes a big increase for us all, courtesy of the Democrats.

How many of the fees mentioned in the previous paragraph are increased in the Gov. Walker budget? Zero, zip, zilch, nada. The only real fee increase Gov. Walker proposes is tuition increases at the University.

The Medical Assistance program ballooned under Democrat control. So many people were invited to the program that even the Democrats had to slam the door shut on BadgerCare. While Republicans begged for an audit of Medical Assistance because we knew there were unsustainable expansions taking place, Democrats would not allow an audit. One of the very first things Republicans did was authorize the Legislative Audit Bureau to audit the Medical Assistance Program. The audit is underway.

The recently released Family Care Audit reveals auditors were unable to determine the cost-effectiveness of the nearly \$1 billion spent on Family Care because "the type and quality of services available under Family Care may be prompting enrollment by some individuals who would otherwise not seek public assistance." It is a disaster that nearly a billion dollars of taxpayer money would be spent annually on a program without knowing whether the money is spent wisely. Gov. Walker's budget caps Family Care enrollment.

Wisconsin government is at a crossroads. We can continue the Democrat path of lots and lots of programs, and lots and lots of government spending and taxing to pay for the programs; or, we can adopt Gov. Walker's budget that reduces runaway spending, and saves this state from the path of the federal government's obscene debt and deficit levels.

Ability to negotiate insurance nets big savings for Baraboo

School districts are already reaping the rewards of sweeping changes created by Gov. Scott Walker that have empowered districts with never-before-had cost-saving tools.

Last week, the Baraboo School Board voted to replace the Wisconsin Education Association (WEA) Trust, the current health plan provider, with Dean Health Plan. The move will result in a savings of \$660,000 next year. WEA Trust is an arm of the state teacher's union while Dean Health Plan is part of SSM Health Care.

Dean Health Plan operates St. Clare Hospital in Baraboo and St. Mary's Hospital in

Madison. The plan also provides access to 2,100 doctors and 160 health clinics in the area. Some teachers were upset because UW Hospital is not part of the Dean network as it is with WEA.

As with any insurance change, even when you switch between comparable plans, there will be some differences in facilities and physicians affiliated with the insurer. That's simply a fact of life and business.

Currently, a family plan with WEA Trust costs the school district (a.k.a the taxpayer) \$1630. Under the Dean plan that will drop to just under \$1400.

Conservative Budget Education Forum summary

By Steve Welcenbach
The Reality News

At 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 30, 2011, many conservatives gathered to the Bluemound Gardens Restaurant, located at 117th Street and Bluemound Road in Wauwatosa. Approximately 90 people attended the event which lasted into the early afternoon. Bob and Jean Dohnal hosted the event in conjunction with Reality News, CRG Network, the Wisconsin Grandsons of Liberty, Bob Spindell, Brad Courtney and the Pax Americana Institute.

The event began with a simple buffet breakfast of scrambled eggs, sausage, hash-browns and coffee. People mingled and networked with during that first hour while eating.

At 8:30 a.m., Pastor Josh Waldosh of Muskego commented on the basis of God in the concept of America, the formation of our government and its corresponding documents enshrining the Judeo-Christian value system. He led a prayer for our country, leaders and defenders of our nation and for all of the American people to return to embracing these values.

State Senator Alberta Darling lauded the courage embedded in Governor Walker's leadership and the honor she feels in supporting his proposals. Alberta conveyed confidence that the ideas she has supported with her votes in the Senate reflect the majority of her constituents and that they will reelect her in the upcoming recall election.

A panel of three well-known Wisconsin Conservatives discussed various aspects of the current aspects of social issues. Sue Armacost of Wisconsin Right to Life reiterated the importance of defunding Planned Parenthood at all levels of government including the hundreds of millions provided by the Federal government. She demonstrated the lie that Planned Parenthood acts as a conduit for women's health services, citing that not a single mammogram or adoption referral originated from Planned Parenthood in Wisconsin last year.

Attorney Mike Dean from the First Freedoms foundation gave us a moving talk on the importance of continually recognizing God as the basis of personal liberty and American government, and the traditional family as the building block of a free society. The nature of the marital relationship and parental make up of the family creates the pillar on which the survival of the society depends. And even the critics and people committed to the destruction of this premise couldn't help themselves in joining in the awe, mystery and importance of

marriage between a man and a woman on display in the British Royal wedding.

State Senator Glen Grothman provided many personal anecdotes regarding his commitment to reduce abortions and the government funding facilitating them. He also shared some of efforts to eliminate the government policies that encourage single parent families, out-of-wedlock children and the destruction of the traditional family.

State Assembly representative Don Pridemore summarized the latest developments in the pending Voter ID bill. The highly engaged group bombarded Pridemore with many questions about all aspects of this issue to which Don responded with some very informative commentary. Don planned to also talk about the legislative aspects of education reform, but the Voter ID issue consumed all of his stage time and then some.

The Dohnals continued their tradition of recognizing instrumental individuals within the Conservative movement. Winston Churchill awards were given to both the Ron Johnson and Scott Walker campaigns for excellence in electoral strategy. Justin Johnston, manager of the Johnson campaign, accepted the award. Overturning a long-term incumbent US Senator happens very rarely, evidence of the superlative job Justin and his team did in managing the message of now Senator Ron Johnson. Justin now manages the all of the state Republican recall efforts.

Joe Fadness accepted the award for the Scott Walker campaign. Electing someone as genuinely Conservative as Scott had never been done in Wisconsin.

Reince Priebus earned the Dwight D. Eisenhower award for his unique ability among state Republican Chairmen to welcome the input, enthusiasm and activism of the Tea Party, integrating this movement into an existing Republican electoral infrastructure without confining either. The electoral results realized in Wisconsin in November of 2010 speaks volumes of the brilliance of his efforts. Unfortunately, a last minute conflict did not allow Reince to accept the award in person as he had planned to do.

The Wisconsin Grandsons of Liberty (WGOL), the Tea Party group based in Franklin, was presented with the Reagan Freedom award for all of their rally and activist efforts of the past year. Tim Dake, one of the founding members, would not accept the award in that credit needs to go to the composite effort of all the Tea Party groups in the state, of which there are over 100. Pat

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Kohlmann of Manitowoc Tea Party, Ross Braun of Madison-based We the People of the Republic, and Dan Hunt of Kenosha Tea Party came forward to participate in the acceptance of the award and each gave a short synopsis of their past and current activities. Kim Simac's efforts with the Northwoods Patriots based in Eagle River were also acknowledged, though Kim was not able to attend the event.

WGOL also recognized the efforts of some other individuals that contributed greatly to the political turnaround in Wisconsin. Jay Weber, morning talk show host on WISN, received the Patriot Award for Media, citing his balanced reporting, thought-provoking in-depth political analysis and numerous local and state scoops Jay broke on his show.

State Senator Glen Grothman accepted his Patriot Award for Legislation for his continuous efforts to advance the message of the Tea Party and support its cause with legislative initiatives and advocacy in committee.

Dr. David Stein received the Individual Patriot Award for his selfless commitment to travel all across the state to speak to group after group about the realities of Obamacare and what it will mean to all of us specifically. Besides also supporting many of the patriot groups financially, Dr. Stein has taken on the task of forming a new group in his community with a very ambitious activist mission.

State Representative Jim Ott, a staunch Conservative and Tea Party favorite, provided a short summary of legislative initiatives in process. Being Wisconsin's own Climate Change guru, he fielded many questions on energy issues resulting from the climate alarmist assault on carbon dioxide and carbon-based fuels. He indicated that changes in siting requirements for wind turbines will effectively address the myriad of environmental, health and personal property problems these subsidized boondoggles create and kill off future efforts to build more. When asked about repeal of the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (REPS), currently at 10%, he indicated most utilities have already achieved this level and thus did not see the necessity of repeal. Many of us voiced our disagreement with this position, indicating that REPS are counterproduc-

tive in all cases, no matter how small.

Steve Welcenbach of Reality News outlined some of the alternative media sources that have developed over the past two years to counteract conventional media bias and falsehoods. These efforts have forced the conventional media to cover events and comment on issues that in the past they would have ignored. Conservative alternative media will continue to develop as long as conservatives utilize the information they are providing and support their efforts financially.

Bob Spindell followed with a succinct but comprehensive analysis of motor voter registration in comparison with same day registration. His conclusion - motor voter is the way to go and we should not fear it. It has worked well everywhere it has been tried and the liberals regret signing on to it.

Susan Mitchell discussed the current situation regarding school choice in Wisconsin and the Governor's initiative to expand the program, especially in Milwaukee County. She described how important and crucial it was to take advantage of this unique window of opportunity to implement these initiatives. The school choice concept can then finally grow into the system envisioned that will truly reform education for the kids and get the results we truly need.

Chris Kleismet of Citizens for Responsible Government (CRG) updated everyone on the recall efforts undertaken against the fleeing Democrat senators. Enough signatures had been submitted to substantially exceed recall requirements for Senators Holperin (Conover), Hanson (Green Bay) and Wirsch (Kenosha). Six (6) Republican senators have had enough signatures submitted to initiate recalls pending review by the Government Accountability Board (GAB), including Senator Alberta Darling (River Hills).

The forum concluded with the showing of the compelling and disturbing video production "Iranium" produced by the Clarion Fund. This production documents the efforts of radical Islamists to gather all means available including nuclear weapon technology to wage Holy Jihad, which has been manifest most blatantly by the activities of Iran and the Mullah hand-picked president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

***Listen to Jay Weber weekdays
6 to 10 a.m. on WISN 1130.***

What does Wisconsin Tea Party want now?

**By Tim Dake
Tea Party Activist**

The national media has begun to comment on the drop in turnout at tea party events nationwide and in Wisconsin in particular. It is being reported that the tea party movement is losing both steam and favor with the public. Nothing could be further from the truth. The movement has continued to morph from predominantly protest oriented to one dedicated to political activism.

In the last year, the number of Patriot groups in Wisconsin has grown from 72 known groups on Tax Day 2010 to well in excess of a hundred by Tax Day of 2011. The majority of the new groups have focused from their inception on activism often adopting specific issues and bills to champion. There are still groups that focus primarily on protest but they are, one by one, beginning to make the conversion.

The budget repair bill and the collective bargaining bill proved to be major distractions that have now been overcome allowing the tea party movement to return to the legislative agenda that has driven the movement for the last half year. So what does the tea party movement in Wisconsin want now? In two words: legislation passed. The movement is looking for long term, substantive change in areas such as comprehensive election reform and Photo ID, constitutional concealed carry and castle doctrine, eminent domain reform, protection of choice in healthcare, unelected board reform, and significant financial reform of both state and local government as found in the budget repair bill.

Despite the plaintive lamentations of the left leaning liberal Democrats and unionistas, the tea party movement believes the financial crisis affecting the state to be real and catastrophic. To achieve the necessary change, several things will need to be done including a repeal of combined reporting, tort reform, right to work passage, reform of Chapter 111, repeal of the minimum markup law, ending of ethanol mandates, end set-asides for art work in construction projects, and an end to administrative law making. Wisconsin must become not just business friendly, but the preferred location for new and expanding businesses, especially manufacturing. Our state economy's long term health and viability is completely dependent on the ability of our 100th Legislature to make and carry out difficult financial decisions. Like our legislators, we realize that many of the fixes required will not bear fruit for some time and that the likelihood of re-election for many of these legislators will be small—unless they understand that we will indeed stand behind them if they will exhibit the fortitude to act with boldness.

A major problem to date has been the many competing versions of the bills on each topic in lieu of a concerted, unified effort to pass these

pieces of legislation by our legislators. As a second example, for concealed carry, there have been at least three suggested versions that vary by the inclusion of a permit system and/or training versus constitutional concealed carry. The baton has been passed to various legislators who had discussed but did not present a bill until early May. The tea party movement overall has been clear in its support of constitutional concealed carry - the operative word being constitutional.

Thirdly, the Photo ID bill has been bandied about and multiple versions discussed and debated as Jeff Stone focused on his run for Milwaukee County Executive. The tea party movement has preferred a much more aggressive, comprehensive election reform bill that includes terminating corroboration or vouching, eliminates perpetual absentee ballot delivery and require a reason for absentee voting, secures provisional ballots, ends same day registration, increases the required period for residency to 30 days, stops the use of Special Registration Deputies (SRDs), requires state issued ID for registration, and requires proof of citizenship to register to vote. Since the November 2010 election, Wisconsin has had three additional elections without the benefit of the reforms needed. Conversations with legislators regarding the components of such a bill indicate that there are two issues that must be resolved; first, the schedule of implementation and second, resolution of the motor voter versus same day registration option. We want to see this piece of legislation moved up in importance and addressed immediately after the passage of the Photo ID bill. Without integrity in our elections, the people will lack confidence in all that follows.

A fourth area of great concern is that of the principle of limited government. Three key pieces of legislation reflecting this principle are the eminent domain reform bill sponsored by Sen. Lazich, SB-83; the Healthcare Freedom Amendment authored by Sen. Leibham, SJR-21; and the reintroduction of Sen. Lazich's 2007 bill to reform unelected boards. The first bill seeks to restrict the power of the state and local governments and the second bill will restrict the power of the federal government and the third bill will restrict the power of local government. The three bills taken together act to restore the badly distorted balance of power between the federal, state and local governments and to enhance freedom.

The Wisconsin branch of the tea party movement has many more items on its "wish list" of legislative action items, but those listed here are enough for now to keep our legislators engaged and focused. The national focus on Wisconsin as the hottest political battleground is exactly what the movement wants – we are all excited and eager to be on the forefront of political change and to set the tone of the national political discourse.

Wisconsin jumps 17 spots in business ranking

Madison—Earlier this month a ranking of the best and worst states for business was released by Chief Executive Magazine, which was based on a survey of more than 500 CEOs who considered a criteria ranging from taxation and regulation to workforce quality and living environment. This annual ranking shows that Wisconsin, who in 2010 was ranked the 41st best state to do business in, jumped more than any other state in the nation to the 24th best state in 2011.

"I am glad that our Open for Business message is resonating," said Governor Scott Walker. "From our special session to the budget, we are focused on helping our economy grow and letting the world know that Wisconsin welcomes job creators. Despite our progress, we still have a lot of work ahead of us to make sure our state's private sector can create 250,000 new jobs by 2015. Two of our most immediate needs are making sure the Department of Commerce's transition to a public-private partnership goes well, and that Wisconsin is able to attract more venture capital."

According to Chief Executive Magazine:

Wisconsin and Louisiana posted the two biggest gains since 2010...By contrast, Illinois has dropped 40 places in five years and is now in a death spiral. Its bond ranking is 49th, ahead of only California. The state may play host to fugitive state senators from nearby Wisconsin and Indiana who avoid voting in their home legislatures, but businesses are heading for the exits. Doug Oberhelman, CEO of Peoria-based Caterpillar, is raising the specter of moving the heavy equipment maker out of Illinois. In a letter to Gov. Pat Quinn, he wrote, "The direction that this state is headed in is not

favorable to business, and I'd like to work with you to change that."

Business leaders graded the states on a variety of categories grouped under taxation and regulation, workforce quality and living environment. "Do not overtax business," offered one CEO. "Make sure your tax scheme does not drive business to another state. Have a regulatory environment and regulators that encourage good business—not one that punishes businesses for minor infractions."

Not surprisingly, states with punitive tax and regulatory regimes are punished with lower rankings, and this can offset even positive scores on quality of living environment. While state incentives are always welcome, what CEOs often seek are areas with consistent policies and regulations that allow them to plan, as well as intangible factors such as a state's overall attitude toward business and the work ethic of its population...

Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels slowed state government payrolls to the point where Indiana has the nation's fewest state employees per capita. In addition, while at least 35 states raised taxes during the recession, Indiana cut them.

These are some of the actions that encourage business leaders. As another CEO respondent remarked, "We need some political backbone to control spending, address out-of-control debts, and use common sense on environmental and other governmental regulations. Quit demonizing businesses. Who do they think provide real jobs?"

The entire article can be accessed at: <http://chiefexecutive.net/best-worst-states-for-business>.

Time to limit government unions

By Sen. Frank Lasee
(R-1st District)

President Franklin Roosevelt (D) supported private collective bargaining. He signed the first labor relations law creating unions. He also said government unionization wasn't in the people's best interest. He understood the fundamental difference between private and government unions.

Labor unions exist to get the best possible deal for their workers, as a counter balance to the power of large corporations. In the private sector, there is a natural balance. If employees get too much, the company suffers. If the company loses money, fails or moves, the union members lose jobs or wages. Unless you're Boeing and the National Labor Relations Board says you can't move. Government Unions don't have to worry about the government going out of business or moving.

George Meany, former president of the AFL-CIO, in 1955 said "It is impossible to bargain collectively with the government." He thought government unions would hurt the private unions over the long run, because they would take too much, hurting his private sector union members.

Unions have found a home in the Democratic Party. They send help and big money to get democrats elected. In return, Democrats on the "management" side of the table sign off on huge benefit packages, all the while publicly complaining about the difficult negotiations.

This has given us bus drivers and prison guards making more than the Governor—more than \$144,000

a year. In Oshkosh, teachers get 90 sick days a year. In Green Bay, retiring teachers work six weeks more and get a year's pay. This has to stop!

Government workers want to keep their sweet deals, so they had a temper tantrum at the Capitol. Prison guards can call in sick and work the next shift for time and a half. They get 16 paid sick days a year, they get to bank all of them, this costs the state more than 60 million dollars a year, creating a 600 million dollar unfunded liability. Union bosses convince them they are underpaid and over worked. And they believe them.

Limiting government unions is a major step towards balancing the budget without raising taxes. There are states with no government unions and Wisconsin's government employees retain more ability to collective bargain than Federal employees in the Obama administration.

Liberals don't care how far we go into debt or how high taxes go, how much we pay for gas or electricity or how much bureaucracy and government we have, as long as they get what they want. "Tax the rich," is their only answer. Wisconsin Taxpayer Alliance (<http://www.wistax.org>) reports that the number of Wisconsinites who make more than a million dollars fell from 3,400 in '08 to 2,900 in '09. Even if the state took all of their earnings, we couldn't close our 3.6 billion dollar deficit.

It's time we reform our entire government, so our government can do the most for the most people with the money we already have. We need to create a 21st Century government, a government that works for and serves the people, instead of the other way around.

The opinion piece the New York Times didn't want you to read

By Gov. Scott Walker
Published on WisOpinion.com

NOTE FROM GOVERNOR'S OFFICE: In the weeks since Gov. Walker introduced his reforms to balance the budget and protect middle-class taxpayers the New York Times has repeatedly used its editorial pages to opine on the reforms. All told there have been at least seven editorials, op-eds or columns in the paper about the Wisconsin reforms.

Below is the op-ed that Governor Walker wrote that the New York Times chose not to run:

In nearly every state across America, Governors are facing major budget deficits. Many, Democrat and Republican alike, are cutting state aid to schools and other local governments - which will force massive layoffs, massive property tax increases or both.

In Wisconsin, we are doing something progressive in the best sense of the word. We are implementing reforms to protect middle class jobs and middle class taxpayers. While our idea may be a bold political move it is a very modest request of our employees.

We are reforming the bargaining system so our state and local governments can ask employees to contribute 5.8% for pension and 12.6% for health insurance premiums. These reforms will help them balance their budgets. In total, our reforms save local governments more than \$700 million each year.

Most workers outside of government would love our proposal. Over the past several months, I have visited numerous factories and small businesses across Wisconsin. On these tours, workers tell me that they pay anywhere from 15% to 50% of their health insurance premium costs. The average middle class worker is paying more than 20% of his or her premium.

Even federal employees pay more than twice what we are asking state and local government workers to pay and most of them don't have collective bargaining for wages or benefits. These facts beg the question as to why the protesters are in Wisconsin and not in Washington, D.C. By nearly any measure, our requests are quite reasonable.

Beyond helping to balance current and future budgets, our reforms will improve the quality of our governments. No longer will hiring and firing be done solely based on seniority and union contracts. Instead, schools—as well as state and local governments—will be able to make decisions based on merit and performance.

This concept works well in Indiana. In 2005, Gov. Mitch Daniels reformed collective bargaining. In turn, the government got more efficient, more effective and more accountable to the public. Gov. Daniels even encouraged employees to come forward with ways to save taxpayer dollars and they responded. Eventually, the state was able to reward top performing employees. This is true reform – making government work for the people.

A recent columnist on these pages opined that “common problems deserve common solutions” suggesting that Republicans and Democrats work together. In principle, that is a good idea.

Since January 3rd, we passed some of the most aggressive economic development legislation in the country. And on nearly every measure, many Democrats joined with all of the Republicans and an Independent to vote in favor of the various pieces of legislation. The Wisconsin legislature recognized that we are growing, not Republican or Democratic jobs, but Wisconsin jobs. Together, we worked to show that Wisconsin is open for business.

But sometimes, bi-partisanship is not so good. During several of the past budgets, members of both political parties raided segregated funds, used questionable accounting principles and deferred tough decisions. This, along with the use of billions of dollars worth of one-time federal stimulus money for the budget two years ago, left Wisconsin with the current \$3.6 billion deficit.

Our reforms allow us to take a new and better approach. Instead of avoiding the hard decisions and searching for short-term solutions, we make a commitment to the future. The choices we are making now in Wisconsin will make sure our children are not left picking up the pieces of the broken state budget left behind. Our reforms create the lowest structural deficit in recent history ensuring our budget is stable for decades to come. These changes will give businesses the confidence they need to grow and invest in our state.

We live in the greatest nation on earth because for more than 200 years we've had leaders who cared more about their children and grandchildren than themselves. Having the courage to make decisions in the best interest of the next generation – despite external pressures – is a concept that America has always admired, but is forgetting today. My hope is that Wisconsin will remind the nation what makes our country great.

Mending the gaping hole in Wisconsin's budget

**By Sen. Rich Zipperer
(R-33rd District)**

This month, Gov. Walker offered a step in the right direction with a budget proposal that will rectify one simple fact: our state budget is a mess.

Over the next two years, Wisconsin must fill a \$3.6 billion structural deficit hole. This massive shortfall has accumulated as a result of years of fiscal mismanagement and spending beyond our means. Fixing it is not an option, but a mandate. Constitutionally speaking, Wisconsin must pass a balanced budget, and morally, we have a duty not to pass the buck any further.

In the past, those in charge used trick accounting, billions in one-time stimulus funds, and millions more in segregated fund raids from the transportation fund, the Patients Compensation Fund, and other accounts to balance the budget. Even if this legislature wanted to irresponsibly kick the can down the road like this, these one time pots of money are simply no longer available. Instead, we must enact real reform.

A common suggestion by those who oppose Gov. Walker's budget bill is that instead of controlling spending, we should tax "the rich." True to form, those who espouse this view are many of the same people who supported taxing "the rich" in 2009 with Gov. Doyle's billion dollar tax hikes. One of those tax increases passed the legislature without a public hearing and the bill was rammed through within two days—a stark contrast to the extensive public hearing and lengthy debate Gov. Walker's Budget Repair Bill received. Even worse than the way the tax increases were passed was their impact on our state. In the midst of the recession, billions of dollars were pulled from the hands of job creators and families and spent by state government. That contributed to job losses across Wisconsin and did nothing to fix our budget hole. In fact, two years later, a huge deficit remains. Raising taxes on "the rich" didn't work two years ago, why would it work now?

Rather than raising taxes, we must get serious about reining in spending. The Governor's Budget Repair Bill was a good first step. It will help bring government worker's benefits in line with the private sector's benefits. In case you missed it, a recent report by USA Today shows that Wisconsin is one of 41 states where government workers receive higher average pay and benefits than their private sector counterparts—a fact deliberately ignored by the government employee union bosses.

As the fourth most taxed state in the nation, Wisconsin and its families simply cannot afford to pay higher taxes or higher fees, and Gov. Walker's budget proposal does not increase either. The items proposed in Gov. Walker's budget are not easy choices, but they are necessary steps to get Wisconsin back on the path to fiscal responsibility. This proposal paves the way for leaner, more stream-lined state government, rather than ever-expanding, burdensome bureaucracy. Wisconsin's current tax climate puts us at an extreme disadvantage, and real change is necessary to make Wisconsin truly competitive. This budget is all about creating jobs and creating an environment that will enable Wisconsin to have long-term, sustainable economic growth.

While it is true that in order to balance the budget without raising taxes we must reduce state spending to local governments and schools, these reductions are offset by the flexibilities provided in the Budget Repair Bill and through mandate relief. The Repair Bill allows local governments to save \$724 million annually to spend at their discretion. School districts save \$488 million, municipalities save \$98 million, and counties save \$64 million according to the Governor's estimates.

It is time for Wisconsin to face reality. Sugarcoating the facts and offering half-truths in an attempt to win public sympathy can only harm our state. The reality is that our state budget is a mess, and Gov. Walker and the State Legislature are taking the necessary steps to prevent future budget disasters. These are not the easy steps to take, but they certainly are the right ones.

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Ethanol: More welfare for farmers

By Steve Welcenbach
The Reality News

When people speak of welfare reform, images of single inner city mothers with lots of out-of-wedlock children with able-bodied men lazing around enter many people's minds. Other people think of giant corporations receiving lots of government subsidies, tax breaks or rules made especially for them to eliminate competition, prop up a mismanaged or out of date operation, or attempt to force a product upon the public that otherwise people won't buy. I see, sadly, the American Farmer.

Agricultural subsidies have been with us for a very long time. Farmers made up the largest single voting demographic prior to World War II. So politicians have been at work stealing money from the rest of society for the express purpose of directing it to farmers to buy their votes.

We have paid farmers extra money (price supports) for growing certain crops we don't need as evidenced by the low prices resulting from oversupply and lack of demand. We allow farmers special privileges to public lands, exemptions from regulations, pay them to site wind turbines or put in a retention pond. We routinely pay farmers not to grow crops at all.

And in the last decade our political class came up with a new scheme to fleece the public to buy off agrivotes: Ethanol.

Ethanol is a wonderful, very useful product when used in the confines of a synthetic organic chemical research lab, manufacturing facility or contained in a bottle of Dewers Scotch Whiskey. It can even be used productively as a fuel in some specific applications such as drag racing, portable burners or fire-starting fluids. But attempting to utilize ethanol as a transportation fuel has become the unmitigated disaster anyone with a smidgen of scientific prowess and economic sense would predict it to be.

Automobiles were developed to run on hydrocarbon fuels. Hydrocarbon fuels have the highest ratio of energy per unit weight of any chemical that exists as a liquid in almost all operational temperature ranges, somewhere between 18,000 and 20,000 BTU per pound depending on the type of fuel. This fact allows an automobile to go the maximum amount of distance with the minimum amount of added fuel weight. Ethanol has a BTU value just under 13,000, or about 2/3 of the value of hydrocarbon fuels.

Hydrocarbon fuels are manufactured in the Earth from methane according to Abiogenic Petroleum Theory. Methane exists throughout the crust and mantle from primordial sources as well as being continually manufactured in tectonic plate interfaces from carbonate rock subduction. Petroleum formation has been occurring throughout the entire history of the Earth. The amount of petroleum contained within the Earth is so enormous we truly cannot fathom just how much there is.

So there is no shortage of petroleum resources. In fact, the United States has more known hydrocar-

bon resources than the entire rest of the world minus Russia. Check out the Energy Tribune on the web to verify what I say.

The handling issues associated with ethanol add to its inefficiency and ineffectiveness for transportation fuel applications. The polar molecular structure of ethanol allows it to fully mix with water in all ratios. This chemical property of ethanol precludes it from being transported by pipeline, a huge economic disadvantage as compared to hydrophobic hydrocarbons, which do not mix with water at all. In addition, this chemical property causes the damage in engines and machinery widely attributed to ethanol.

The energy required to manufacture hydrocarbons from methane comes from internal heat within the Earth which is stored in the chemical bonds of the petroleum extracted from the ground. So when we burn petroleum, coal or natural gas, we are utilizing stored internal energy from the Earth. Ethanol requires a huge amount of electrical energy from the grid in its manufacture from corn or other biosources. If that grid electricity comes from coal or natural gas, you'd have been better off manufacturing hydrocarbons directly from those sources. One could justify the production of ethanol if the electric power came from nuclear, hydroelectric, wind or solar production, but as a chemist I would argue that manufacturing hydrocarbons from carbonate rock with this power would be a much more productive alternative.

In addition to all of these concerns, the environmental footprint of ethanol is enormous and ugly. Its carbon footprint, initially thought to be substantially less than hydrocarbon fuels and used as justification for its widespread support, turns out to be several times larger than that for hydrocarbons. Of course, since we have boatloads of data proving carbon dioxide has little impact on the Earth's constantly changing climate, this comparison again demonstrates the economic disadvantages of ethanol.

Corn and other biofeedstocks used to make ethanol require land. The price of corn has doubled in the last six months. Whether the farm lobby wants to acknowledge it or not, the fact that 30-40% of the corn crop is used in ethanol production certainly impacts the demand for corn and raises the price. The increased price gives farmers more incentive to grow more corn, which comes at the expense of other displaced crops like soybeans, wheat and cotton. This reduction of supply also results in higher prices for these commodities.

In addition, artificially inflated prices provides incentive for farmers to till marginally productive land, turning what was biodiverse animal habitat into agricultural production. Sugarcane farming for ethanol production in Brazil is one of the largest factors in the loss of tropical forest habitat. Many acres of woodland and prairie fields have been lost in the United States due to ethanol production.

Because ethanol cannot be pipelined, truck and rail transportation comprises its distribution. Besides being comparatively inefficient and costly, we pay

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an additional environmental price. Ethanol discharges to the environment from transportation accidents many times result in disastrous acute damage. For example, ethanol discharged into a waterway will immediately kill all fish in the area since it completely mixes with water. There is no way to contain such a spill or retrieve the spilled material. One such incident occurred in Illinois just south of Rockford on the Kishwaukee river in the summer of 2009. Hydrocarbons, on the other hand, float on the water surface and thus can be contained with booms and retrieved from the environment. No fish are killed. Animals such as waterfowl which may get caught in the spill can be washed off and returned to the wild.

So ethanol has proven to be an substantially inferior transportation fuel. Petroleum reserves continue to increase, though Federal drilling restrictions continue to multiply. What prompts such madness?

Command-and-control government philosophy as implemented by the Obama administration and promulgated by the socialist Left has brought us here. But ethanol was also embraced by both radical environmentalists and many Republican politicians like President George Bush and our own Brett

Davis. The reason? To win the votes of farmers. Which brings us back to welfare.

Farmers, like all of the rest of us, must have a come to Jesus moment. Most proclaim themselves to be highly conservative in all aspects of their lives. And they are—except for their government handouts.

Now many farmers I know protest saying that they don't want these subsidies including the ethanol mandate. Great! This is exactly what we need. Unfortunately I'm still hearing commercials on talk radio stations advocating the contrary.

Are you people involved in agriculture going to stand with us in trying to eliminate this enormous waste of economic resources? Or are you content with raking in the big bucks while it lasts, the rest of us be damned? Remember, all subsidies and mandates are welfare. And all result in the enslavement of the one receiving the welfare from the "benevolent" entity providing the payment. And always, eventually the "benevolent" entity will no longer be able to fulfill its promise, for it has killed off the capacity of its targeted victims to produce.

People outside of the cities are quick to say how welfare to inner city recipients have destroyed the family and created a self-replicating culture of dependency. Is it really any different in the world of the farmer?

Liberalism's death croak

WASHINGTON—While inspecting the body politic, one encounters one clear sign that Liberalism is dead. It is the condition of our political discourse. Polite commentators note that the dialogue is "rancorous." Some say toxic. Actually it is worse than that. It is nonexistent.

From the right, from the sophisticated right, there is an attempt to engage the Liberals. Budget Chairman Paul Ryan just did it by presenting a budget that cried out for intelligent response. President Barack Obama's response was to invite Chairman Ryan to sit in the front row for Obama's "fiscal policy" speech at George Washington University. There, Obama heaped scorn on an astonished Ryan and his work. He did not even mention Ryan's name. This is what Obama calls an "adult" debate?

From the rest of the Liberals there is generally silence. They prattle on about Glenn Beck or Sarah Palin, but they pay almost no heed to the think tanks on the right, to their journals of opinion, or to the writers and figures of heft. The Liberals are dead.

There are the zombies out there. Well-known politicians such as Al Gore or writers such as the New York Times columnist Paul Krugman, who howls about the Heritage Foundation while fudging that think tank's findings or about the aforementioned Ryan, but there is no one capable of engaging the serious conservatives. None even tries. Their idea of dialogue amounts to hurling what are lines fit for a bumper sticker—"I Am a Citizen of the World" or "War Is Not the Answer." Or perhaps they hurl a slur—conservatives are "extreme," though by now the conservatives have been around for decades and running the country more frequently than not: the Reagan Administration, Bush Administration, and the

Gingrich Congress. Have the Liberals not noticed this? As I say, Liberalism is dead.

This has not always been the case. There was a time when Liberals, say, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, engaged conservatives quite brilliantly. They knew what conservatives thought. They could even find elements of conservative thought that they disagreed with without disfiguring that thought and pouncing on the resultant red herring. This is not the way it is today. There has been a change in the politically charged audience in this great Republic.

It is not in the vituperation. The vituperation was always out there. Sometimes it has been delicious. As early as the presidency of George Washington invecitive was eloquent of the political bad blood between the contending factions. In looking for a secretary of state to replace Edmund Randolph, Washington was turned down by five candidates, the last, Rufus King, explaining to Washington's agent, Alexander Hamilton, that he had rejected the offer because of "the foul and venomous shafts of calumny" then being heaved at public servants. Washington was disparaged as a monarchist, Hamilton as a lackey. Things have not improved in the public discourse since then.

Yet now something is different. I blame the Liberals. They do not engage their adversaries. They have been able to do this because they have controlled the public media, the Kultursmog. The smog reported their grotesqueries with the utmost seriousness. Thus if you were visiting from a foreign country you might think Glenn Beck a major force in American politics and you might be gravely frightened of Beck and of Fox News. But Beck is only an entertainer and he is

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Jay Weber listeners' GOP wish list

Compiled by Jay Weber
WISN radio show host

Earlier this month I asked my mostly conservative listeners to help build the agenda for Gov. Scott Walker and the newly elected Republican legislature. Here is the amazingly long wish list. I do not agree with and/or endorse all of these, but here is an update: Republicans in Madison completed or will completed about half of these by mid-June.

1. Pass voter ID. (soon)
2. Eliminate same day voter registration. (cannot, due to motor voter laws, but will deal with the fraud associated with it with other changes.)
3. Pass conceal carry.(soon)
4. Join the national lawsuit to repeal Obamacare. (done)
5. Repeal combined reporting and pass a package of pro-business legislation.(done)
6. Kill off the high speed rail project and all wasteful commuter train projects. (done)
7. Kill off the Regional Transit Authority Board. Don't create any boards that have taxing authority. (soon)
8. Bring back TABOR or some taxpayer bill of rights.
9. End the minimum markup law.
10. End all state mandates and subsidies for Ethanol.
11. Get rid of the mandatory emissions test for Wisconsin autos. (Kleefish working on it, vote not pending, though)
12. End the state tax on Health Savings Accounts.
13. Repeal the Planned Parenthood sponsored Sex Education bill.
14. Allow school districts to negotiate for health insurance on the free market. (done, as part of collective bargaining changes)
15. Create a rainy day fund from excess or unexpected revenues that pour into the state coffers during boom times. (only talk of this so far, so far as I know soon)
16. Eliminate the state income tax on retiree pensions to help keep them in Wisconsin.
17. Freeze the property taxes of retirees to keep retirees in Wisconsin.
18. Move on reasonable Tort reform. (done, but we could go further in the future)
19. Undo the mandatory car insurance law that Doyle and the democrats passed as a gift to the trial lawyers. (done)
20. Ten percent across the board pay cuts for all

state employees. (lets call this done, as part of collective bargaining changes)

21. Repeal the law that allows the state to kill off Indian team nicknames.(Very disappointing, but Rep. VanRoy of Green Bay is not allowing it to be done.)

22. Investigate and reform the state's child welfare system. (being done, but longer process)

23. Go after the fraud in the Food Shares program. (being done, but longer process)

24. End early retirement for public employees, so they can no longer live off of a state pension longer than they ever worked at the job.

25. Change the state law to make MATC and other tech school boards elected positions and accountable to the taxpayers. (Lazich, Darling are on it..vote not pending, though)

26. Reinststitute the QEO for teacher pay. (Again, call it done, Walker's fixes are better)

27. Eliminate the rule that has Wisconsin taxpayers paying for 2/3 of the cost for all school building projects.

28. Drop the residency requirements for Milwaukee school teachers and city workers. (pending vote, soon)

29. Negotiate new or different compacts with the Wisconsin Indian tribes.

30. Require Wisconsin cities to enforce immigration laws. No Sanctuary cities.

31. End any state funding of National Public Radio.

32. Stop the excessive building of roundabouts. (more are coming, if the DOT gets it's way)

33. Reform the DNR. End gimmicks like. Earn-a-buck and the wholesale slaughter of herds as a 'management tool' for CWD. (being done, soon)

34. Change the law to require DNR wardens to get search warrants before they can search cabins and property.

35. Repeal the statewide smoking ban.

36. End the ridiculous rule that says every state building project needs to set aside one percent of the total cost of the project for artwork. (in budget, soon)

37. Expand and/or allow for statewide School Choice. (soon)

38. Expand and/or allow for more Virtual Schools. (?)

39. Increase the reimbursement rate for doctors who see patients on welfare.

40. Review, reform and reduce the number of people on Badgercare. (It's been talked about, not sure what the status is)

41. Review and repeal the so-called 'smart growth' environmental requirements and restrictions, which have hit the point of absurdity.

...liberalism's death croak

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leaving Fox News. Some say under duress. Sarah Palin and her whole family might sound like the Marcos family of the Philippines, but she is from Alaska and out of office.

Or take the recent imbroglia between Krugman and the Heritage Foundation. Heritage recently ran Ryan's numbers through a perfectly mainstream, non-political, economic model, the U.S. Macroeconomic Model developed by Global Insight. Krugman

responded in a New York Times column by impugning Heritage's integrity, claiming Heritage used a model that would force the conclusions that Heritage wanted. Heritage's Bill Beach called Krugman out in an open letter. Now it has been over a week and not a peep of response from Krugman. As I say, Liberalism is dead, and its nigh unto totalitarian control of media has ended. Fox News, talk radio, and the Internet have arrived. Raise a toast to free speech.

In search of perspective

By Dale Kooyenga
(R-14th Assembly District)

Perspective is important. When perspective is absent, the vacuum is filled with ignorance and drama. The collective bargaining debate has now been dragging on for months and he lefts radical are occasionally still outside my first floor capital office window holding a “Stop, the attack on Wisconsin families” sign in one hand, and displaying the peace sign in the other. All the while, the Left’s ideological champion in the White House has started another war that so far resulted in the loss of life, hundreds of cruise missiles being launched, and \$550 million in additional debt.

The same protestors protested the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but at present, they show little concern over a war in Libya. They appear to be more concerned about thwarting Wisconsin’s budget repair bill, than ceasing the attacks on a nation that offers no immediate threat to the United State, or more directly, to the state of Wisconsin. I am not arguing the merits of any of these wars, but it is important to point out that the Iraq and Afghanistan wars were subject to much longer periods of public debate and America acted in unison with a significantly larger international coalitions. Why is there no outrage over Libya like we have seen over Iraq, Afghanistan or Wisconsin’s collective bargaining bill? Because the radical lefts theatrics are driven by politics not principles.

There are 24 states that do not grant public employees the privilege of collective bargaining, or severely limit the employees who are eligible to collective bargain. The federal government, led by

President Obama, does not allow collective bargaining. In the Governor’s budget repair bill collective bargaining for wages, up to the level of inflation, is preserved for the majority of Wisconsin’s public employees. However, the Left continues to insist there is “an attack on Wisconsin families” as if Wisconsin conservatives have somehow redirected Obama’s cruise missiles from their intended Libyan targets to your living room.

In regards to the “Wisconsin families’ portion of the protestors” most popular sign, the fact is only 18% of Wisconsin’s households include a state or local government employee. Many of these households will not be affected because the aforementioned includes retirees, non-union represented employees and unions unaffected by the budget repair bill like police and fire. The families that are affected will continue to have a job, realize no reduction in their pensions and retain first rate health care insurance. At a minimum, 82% of Wisconsin families have no household income derived from state or local government. Private (and public) employee households will benefit from the state legislature’s recent changes as a result of property tax freezes, health savings account tax deductibility and policy changes that encourage the creation of better paying jobs. Instead of attacking Wisconsin families the Wisconsin GOP has stopped the state governments attack on Wisconsin’s family’s budget.

At this point in the debate, I do not expect the protestors, or senior leadership of the Democratic Party, to understand our rational as to why the budget repair bill was necessary to address our state’s fiscal crisis. I am asking them to apply their values consistently.

New direction for DNR

By Bob Welch

Given the new conservative tone in Madison, it is a great time to be following hunting in Madison. The legislature is filled to the brim with people practically waiting in line to support hunters. Even the Department of Natural Resources has had a changing of the guards. It seems like almost every day there is a new development or exciting piece of legislation.

The Department of Natural Resources has not historically been known for its common-sense leadership but that has all changed over these last few months. Cathy Stepp is the new Secretary of the Wisconsin DNR. Secretary Stepp is clearly committed to preserving Wisconsin’s hunting heritage while bringing accountability and transparency to the Department. Longtime Chairman of Wisconsin Assembly’s Natural Resources Committee Representative Scott Gunderson is the new Executive Assistant. Rep. Gunderson has a 10-year record of championing nearly every important hunting initiative in this state and shows no signs of stopping in his new position.

There is no better indicator of the changes at the DNR than the new rules passed regarding the upcoming deer hunting season. Secretary Stepp’s package of hunter-friendly rules we’ve been push-

ing for was passed unanimously by the Natural Resources Board. A direct response to complaints from hunting groups such as the Wisconsin Chapter of Safari Club International (SCI) and Wisconsin Hunters Rights Coalition (HRC), the new rules suspend both the Earn-a-Buck hunt and the October antlerless hunts, programs that have done nothing but undermine the culture of deer hunting.

On the same day that the Natural Resources Board passed the new rules, the first public hearing was held for the Deer Hunters Heritage Bill. The bill, proposed by Senator Terry Moulton (R-Chippewa Falls) and Representative Tom Tiffany (R-Hazelhurst), would permanently eliminate Earn-a-Buck and early October herd control hunts except for in disease control areas. The bill is long overdue and will provide hunters permanent relief from these intensely unpopular programs. If you’re lucky enough to see any deer, gone would be the days of having to pass on a nice buck opening morning because you haven’t yet bagged a doe.

There have been significant developments regarding stewardship funds as well. Governor Walker has initiated a full review of all stewardship fund purchases. Having spent the last two years battling to open as much stewardship land as possi-

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Public unions: A bad deal for the public

By Jack Kelly
Realclearpolitics.com

The violent imagery and uncivil rhetoric journalists have sought but rarely found at tea party rallies are in evidence in the protests in Madison, against Gov. Scott Walker's efforts to trim the power of public employee unions.

The New York Times likened them to the protests against Arab dictatorships. But Wisconsin is a democracy, not a Middle Eastern autocracy. Those who subvert democracy are those who would shut down the government to thwart the will of the people, as expressed at the polls in November.

Wisconsin is nearly bankrupt. There is a \$137 million shortfall in the fiscal year that ends June 30 and a projected deficit of \$3.6 billion for the two years after that.

The deficit cannot be closed without trimming the pay and benefits of public employees. In 2008, these accounted for half of all state and local government spending, according to the federal Bureau of Economic Analysis. If government workers were paid the same as equivalent private sector workers, no state would have a budget deficit, calculated blogger George Noga, a certified public accountant.

Gov. Walker wants public employees in Wisconsin to contribute roughly half as much, proportionately, to their health plans and pensions as do workers in the private sector. The governor also wants to restrict public employee unions to bargaining for wages only, leaving the health and benefit packages and work rules up to elected officials to decide. And he wants the state to stop collecting dues for the unions, and to require them to win recertification elections each year.

If local governments in Wisconsin could make changes in these areas, Mr. Walker says they could save about \$1.44 billion in the next biennium. That's critical, because the 57 percent of the budget that goes to aid to local governments already has to be slashed to close the \$3.6 billion hole.

Without such flexibility, the only way state and local governments can control costs is to lay people off. One Wisconsin school district has sent preliminary layoff notices to a third of its teachers. Mr. Walker estimates that if his bill doesn't pass, up to 12,000 state and local government workers would get the ax.

The protesting public employees in Madison now say they are willing to meet Mr. Walker's demands on wages

and cost-sharing for health care, but not on changes to collective bargaining aimed at keeping their wages and benefits under control down the road.

This is "an assault on unions," said President Barack Obama of Gov. Walker's plan.

That's true. But Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the president most favorable to industrial trade unions, would have stood with Mr. Walker.

"Meticulous attention should be paid to the special relations and obligations of public servants to the public itself," FDR said in 1937. "The process of collective bargaining, as usually understood, cannot be transplanted into the public service."

There's a critical difference between private sector unions and public employee unions, noted liberal Time magazine columnist Joe Klein: "Industrial unions are organized against the might and greed of ownership. Public employees unions are organized against the might and greed ... of the public?"

The primary reason public employee unions are a bad idea is because politicians pay them off with our money. These unions receive billions from taxpayers, who in return contribute millions to the politicians who gave them those billions.

This is a good deal for teachers in Milwaukee Public Schools, who this year will receive an average of \$100,000 in pay and benefits for nine months work.

Milwaukee teachers aren't getting the big bucks because they've been doing a crackerjack job. In its ranking of the 100 worst performing schools in America, NeighborhoodScout found that eight were in Milwaukee.

Students in Milwaukee public schools perform half as well as the state average in most measures of academic achievement. And the state average isn't so great. Two thirds of Wisconsin's eighth-graders can't read proficiently, according to the National Assessment for Education Progress. This despite the highest per pupil spending in the Midwest.

Public employee unions are now among the biggest spenders in our elections, which is a good deal for the politicians who hand them our money. But it's a terrible deal for the rest of us.

As Mr. Klein wrote, far too many state legislatures "have been cowed by the political power of the unions and enacted contracts that force state and city governments to be run for the benefit of their employees, rather than for their citizens."

...new direction for DNR

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ble to hunting, we expect this review to be a positive development. Representative Jim Ott also introduced a bill that would require the DNR to publish a directory of all state lands purchased with stewardship funds. The directory would also list any hunting restrictions on these lands. This will let hunters know where they can hunt, as well as showing any lands that aren't open to hunting so we can find out why. It would be a great tool in helping to insure these dollars are spent where they should.

The HRC and its member groups have been actively working to move forward legislation that will allow uncased guns in vehicles. Wisconsin has long had the most restrictive gun case law in the country, and it's time that gets fixed. At this point, it's questionably legal to even lean your gun against

your vehicle while you tighten your boots.

Currently, Wisconsin and Illinois are the only states that don't allow concealed carry in some form. If things go as they should, soon Illinois will be alone. During Governor Doyle's time in office he twice vetoed concealed carry bills that had made it through the legislature. Just this last month, when speaking to the Wisconsin Bear Hunters, Governor Walker once again expressed his intent to sign such a bill into law. We expect to see such a bill introduced very soon. SCI is working closely with the NRA and other HRC members to make sure that the bill is a strong one and that it passes yet this year.

While we can never sit back and rest on our laurels, it may be quite a while before the anti-gunners and animal rights people make an impact on state policy.

Bob Welch is a former Wisconsin representative.

ATR supports ethanol repeal, opposes Coburn tax hike

By Ryan Ellis
ATR Tax Policy Director

First, Americans for Tax Reform opposes the ethanol tax credit, and always has. It is one of literally hundreds of tax code provisions which are bad tax policy and bad policy otherwise. We support its full and permanent repeal.

Second, the best policy outcome is to eliminate the ethanol tax credit in a way that leaves money in the hands of taxpayers, not increases the amount of money going to Washington for the Appropriations Committees to spend. Your amendment as written to repeal the ethanol credit (unfortunately) does the latter. ATR supports coupling the repeal of the ethanol tax credit with an offsetting tax cut of equal or greater size to avoid a net tax increase on the American people.

Third, the ethanol tax credit is not a spending program, despite your repeated attempts to claim that it is. According to the Joint Tax Committee (JCX-54-10), your amendment would increase taxes by \$4.869 billion over the next two years. Repealing the ethanol credit is the right thing to do, but other taxes must be reduced in the same legislation by at least this much to prevent a net tax increase.

Spending programs and tax relief are not the same thing. If the government lets Tom Coburn keep a dollar of his own money, that is not the same thing as the government stealing a dollar from Ryan Ellis and giving it to Tom Coburn. The differences between tax relief and spending are unambiguous.

Fourth, we have made our position on this crystal clear to you, to your staff, and to the media. An article by Chris Casteel in *The Oklahoman* ("Tom Coburn's Attack on Ethanol Subsidies Collects Powerful Allies," March 28, 2011) accurately quotes me articulating ATR's position that the ethanol tax credit is bad tax policy, bad energy policy, and must be repealed in a tax revenue-neutral way. I spent 40 minutes on the telephone with your Communications Director, John Hart, on Wednesday, March 23, 2011 and transmitted the same message; he told me that he understood ATR's position. However, our position is not accurately reflected in your letter sent today. If there is something we could do to make our position more clear, please let me know.

Fifth, please understand that our position on this matter has little to do with any specific deduction or credit and much to do with avoiding massive tax increases, such as those you supported in the Simpson-Bowles-Obama commission. That plan would have not simply

eliminated guppy tax credits like ethanol, but also chopped away at the whale-sized mortgage interest deduction, charitable deduction, state and local tax deduction, and the employer-provided healthcare exclusion. The commission's own score indicated that their failure to cut rates sufficiently in concert with these moves resulted in a ten-year net tax hike of over \$1 trillion. Congressman Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) says it was closer to \$2 trillion. The Heritage Foundation thinks it's more like \$3.3 trillion.

Eliminating a small tax credit without offsetting tax cuts of equal or greater size creates the precedent that net tax increases are a legitimate fiscal tool for pro-taxpayer policymakers. Ted Kennedy's definition of "tax reform" was to broaden the base and do nothing else, but that's simply not acceptable to taxpayers. How is a tax-compromised conservative movement supposed to tell Senator Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) and others "no" the next time they ask us to raise taxes?

Sixth, the Taxpayer Protection Pledge (signed by 41 United States Senators, notably you) does not protect any individual deduction or credit, or stand in the way of tax reform. It simply requires that any elimination of a deduction or credit be offset with a tax cut of equal or greater size. Senators who have signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge have promised to their constituents and the American people (N.B., not to ATR) to "oppose any net reduction or elimination of deductions and credits, unless matched dollar-for-dollar by further reducing tax rates." This is clear. This is unambiguous. Support for your amendment as written is simply inconsistent with this promise.

Americans for Tax Reform once again urges you to modify your ethanol tax credit repeal amendment to include a tax cut of equal or greater size to the tax increase you have proposed. Given the relatively-small size of the tax increase you have offered, this should be a simple matter. I remain ready to assist your staff in modifying your amendment so it becomes Pledge-compliant. Obviously, some tax cut offsets make for better policy than others, but the first test is avoiding a net tax hike at all.

If you append to your amendment a tax cut of equal or greater size to the tax increase you have proposed, ATR will then endorse and urge all senators to vote for your amendment. ATR opposes net tax increases as a matter of principle, and your amendment as currently written is a net tax hike.

Walker's budget a 'sweet deal'

By Sen. Frank Lasee
(R-1st District)

Governor Walker's state budget is really a sweet deal for taxpayers and hard-working families. It's historic. It's a first. In the history of our state, it is the first budget that doesn't raise taxes, doesn't raise fees, and freezes property taxes. This truth needs to be spread far and wide. Please help.

Over the next two years, regular folks will keep more of their hard-earned money. We won't pay more taxes and we won't pay more fees. When we register our car, when we buy a hunting license, when we renew a professional license, we won't be paying more.

According to the Tax Foundation, Wisconsin is the fourth-highest taxed state in the nation. This was caused by the Democrats, who over the last two years raised taxes and fees by \$4.5 billion and left us a \$3.6 billion deficit. They spent one-time federal stimulus money too, and raided \$200 million from the state's patient compensation fund. They didn't care that this would drive up your medical

bills. The Supreme Court ruled that the raid on the patient compensation fund had to be paid back.

This budget resets government spending. It is a major step forward. It eliminates the deficit. It sets the stage for private sector job growth. It will get Wisconsin working again!

Whiners from the left and their allies in the media are painting the spending reductions in education as "draconian and devastating." They ignore the fact that we would need to reduce per student spending another \$200 dollars to bring our spending in line with Minnesota and another \$750 to match Iowa. We spend more than \$11,000 per student now. Iowa and Minnesota also lead the nation in educating their kids. And yet we are falling behind other countries in results.

The left ignores the tools this budget provides. The recently passed Budget Repair Bill gives municipalities and school districts great tools to save taxpayer money. This Budget builds on this savings and flexibility.

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Obama's Medicare hypocrisy

By Dick Morris

Piously posturing as the savior of Medicare, President Obama lashed out at the House Republicans for embracing the budget proposed by Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-Wis.). But a comparison of the president's own plans for Medicare with those in the Ryan budget shows that the Democratic cuts are far more immediate and drastic than anything in the GOP proposal.

While the Republican Medicare changes only take effect in 2021, Obama's cuts will begin hurting seniors right away. The president's healthcare legislation imposed a hard spending cap on Medicare — the first time it has ever had one — which he has just proposed lowering by another one-half of 1 percent of GDP (a further cut of about \$70 billion a year).

Obama's cuts, which will take effect immediately, are to be administered by his newly created Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) of 15 members appointed by the president. Its recommendations for cuts in Medicare services or for reductions in reimbursement will not be subject to congressional approval but will take effect by administrative fiat. Right now.

The IPAB will be, essentially, the rationing board that will decide who gets what care. Its decisions will be guided by a particularly vicious concept of Quality Adjusted Life Years (QUALYS). If you have enough QUALYS ahead of you, you'll be approved for a hip replacement or a heart transplant. If not, you're out of luck. Perforce, many of these cuts will fall on those at the end of their lives, reducing

their options to accommodate Obama's mandate to cut costs. If death comes sooner, well, that's the price of aging in Obama's America.

Ryan's approach is totally different. First, he does nothing at all to cut benefits for those now on Medicare or for anyone who turns 65 before 2022 (leaving me in the clear!). Second, the Republicans would leave the elderly in charge of their own medical decisions by letting them spend their Medicare money as they wish. The subsidy they would receive for health insurance would permit them to buy plans tailored to their needs. Just as a myriad of insurance-company plans sprang up to fill the mandates of the new prescription drug benefit, there will likely be quite an array of choices for the elderly of 2021. Finally, the savings from Ryan's plan will be plowed back into Medicare, prolonging its life, rather than being diverted, as Obama would do, into paying for a new entitlement for younger people.

But the most important difference is that Obama's cuts are now and Ryan's are not. Any budget projection is a guess. When the projection is made two to three years in advance, it is conjecture. Ten years away it becomes fantasy. Who can possibly tell how the American economy will be doing a decade hence? What revenues will it generate? And the only thing less certain than guessing about the economy is projecting healthcare costs.

Medicine is on the verge of a revolution akin to that which followed the creation of antibi-

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Walker: We must put kids before adults

By Gov. Scott Walker

I've read Dr. Seuss' "Oh, the Places You'll Go" quite a bit over the past few weeks as I visited schools in Milwaukee, Green Bay and Stevens Point to read to second- and third-graders and meet with teachers and school officials. I've been visiting schools to promote our Read to Lead Task Force, which is finding ways to make sure all Wisconsin students can read before they complete the third grade.

As a parent with two boys in public schools, it has been great to see the passion our teachers have for showing children how education can take them to amazing places. Like the teachers I met, I believe strongly in the power of education to open new worlds of opportunity, break the cycle of poverty and empower those searching for hope with a sense of purpose and self-determination.

All too often, people focus on the negatives in our education system. We are trying to focus on our strengths - particularly in reading - and then replicate that success in every classroom across our state.

In the 1990s, the nation followed Wisconsin's lead on education reform as we took bold steps to expand choices for parents and focused on results in the classroom. Regrettably, much of that progress slipped away. In good times and bad, both Republicans and Democrats have assumed dollars were a good enough substitute for real reform.

Over a 15-year period in Wisconsin, per-pupil spending on education far outpaced inflation and roughly doubled. Meanwhile, student performance has stagnated or gotten worse while states that have been serious about reform have left us in the dust.

This is unacceptable to me and other parents I talk to around the state. This is why my proposed budget is built on expanding education reform. Our reforms will minimize teacher layoffs and ensure that staffing decisions can be made based on keeping the very best teachers in the classroom.

We also know that our students need to do better in reading. In 1994, Wisconsin ranked third in the nation on the fourth-grade reading assessment. In 2009, Wisconsin ranked 30th, and our African-American students ranked below those in every other state.

Still, many of our schools are doing well. We need to bring their success to every classroom in the state. That is why I put together the Read to Lead Task Force.

This bipartisan team of teachers, legislators, researchers and advocates will find ways to ensure that all of our third-graders can read. To do this, we will look for ways to better support our teachers while encouraging parental involvement. We also will focus on accountability and end the demoralizing practice that



Scott Walker

pushes struggling students through the system before they have mastered basic skills, setting them up for failure.

The teachers I have spoken with know that, in education, one size does not fit all. That is why my proposed budget removes mandates so teachers' instructional practice is not at the mercy of bureaucratic rules or the latest educational fad.

We also improve accountability by making our expectations clearer and fairer while continuing to raise the bar. We must make sure that we are rewarding teachers who have especially difficult assignments by measuring student growth over time and using multiple measures to gauge success, not simply one high-stakes test.

Parents understand that each child has a set of unique needs, so we must ensure each student receives the differentiated instruction that is right for him or her. Infusing more virtual learning into the classroom will allow a student to work at his or her own pace while being continually challenged.

In addition, parents across the state should have a wealth of education choices for their children, even if they themselves are not wealthy. It is time that we expand parental choice to give more opportunities to middle-class families and to children with special needs.

For decades, a steady stream of families has left Milwaukee in search of better educational opportunities for their children. Our reforms provide one more incentive to stay in the city.

Finally, we must ensure that parents across the state have access to quality, independent public charter schools, which for years have served so many Milwaukee students well. By putting the interests of children first, improving educational options and increasing accountability, Wisconsin once again can be a national leader in education reform.

A Nation of takers, not makers

By Stephen Moore

If you want to understand better why so many states—from New York to Wisconsin to California—are teetering on the brink of bankruptcy, consider this depressing statistic: Today in America there are nearly twice as many people working for the government (22.5 million) than in all of manufacturing (11.5 million). This is an almost exact reversal of the situation in 1960, when there were 15 million workers in manufacturing and 8.7 million collecting a paycheck from the government.

It gets worse. More Americans work for the government than work in construction, farming, fishing, forestry, manufacturing, mining and utilities combined. We have moved decisively from a nation of makers to a nation of takers. Nearly half of the \$2.2 trillion cost of state and local governments is the \$1 trillion-a-year tab for pay and benefits of state and local employees. Is it any wonder that so many states and cities cannot pay their bills?

Steve Moore has the details on Rep. Paul Ryan's plan to cut spending. Every state in America today except for two—Indiana and Wisconsin—has more government workers on the payroll than people manufacturing industrial goods. Consider California, which has the highest budget deficit in the history of the states. The not-so Golden State now has an incredible 2.4 million government employees—twice as many as people at work in manufacturing. New Jersey has just under two-and-a-half as many government employees as manufacturers. Florida's ratio is more than 3 to 1. So is New York's.

Even Michigan, at one time the auto capital of the world, and Pennsylvania, once the steel capital, have more government bureaucrats than people making things. The leaders in government hiring are Wyoming and New Mexico, which have hired more than six government workers for every manufacturing worker.

Now it is certainly true that many states have not typically been home to traditional manufacturing operations. Iowa and Nebraska are farm states, for example. But in those states, there are at least five times more government workers than farmers. West Virginia is the mining capital of the world, yet it has at least three times more government workers than miners. New York is the financial capital of the world—at least for now. That sector employs roughly 670,000 New Yorkers. That's less than half of the state's 1.48 million government employees.

Don't expect a reversal of this trend anytime soon. Surveys of college graduates are finding that more and more of our top minds want to work for the government. Why? Because in recent years only government agencies have been hiring, and because the offer of near lifetime security is highly valued in these times of economic turbulence. When 23-year-olds aren't willing to take career risks, we have a real prob-

lem on our hands. Sadly, we could end up with a generation of Americans who want to work at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

The employment trends described here are explained in part by hugely beneficial productivity improvements in such traditional industries as farming, manufacturing, financial services and telecommunications. These produce far more output per worker than in the past. The typical farmer, for example, is today at least three times more productive than in 1950.

Where are the productivity gains in government? Consider a core function of state and local governments: schools. Over the period 1970-2005, school spending per pupil, adjusted for inflation, doubled, while standardized achievement test scores were flat. Over roughly that same time period, public-school employment doubled per student, according to a study by researchers at the University of Washington. That is what economists call negative productivity.

But education is an industry where we measure performance backwards: We gauge school performance not by outputs, but by inputs. If quality falls, we say we didn't pay teachers enough or we need smaller class sizes or newer schools. If education had undergone the same productivity revolution that manufacturing has, we would have half as many educators, smaller school budgets, and higher graduation rates and test scores.

The same is true of almost all other government services. Mass transit spends more and more every year and yet a much smaller share of Americans use trains and buses today than in past decades. One way that private companies spur productivity is by firing underperforming employees and rewarding excellence. In government employment, tenure for teachers and near lifetime employment for other civil servants shields workers from this basic system of reward and punishment. It is a system that breeds mediocrity, which is what we've gotten.

Most reasonable steps to restrain public-sector employment costs are smothered by the unions. Study after study has shown that states and cities could shave 20% to 40% off the cost of many services—fire fighting, public transportation, garbage collection, administrative functions, even prison operations—through competitive contracting to private providers. But unions have blocked many of those efforts. Public employees maintain that they are underpaid relative to equally qualified private-sector workers, yet they are deathly afraid of competitive bidding for government services.

President Obama says we have to retool our economy to "win the future." The only way to do that is to grow the economy that makes things, not the sector that takes things.

Stephen Moore is senior economics writer for The Wall Street Journal editorial page.

Fleming health care repeal update

Today, on the one year anniversary since government-approved health care was signed into law, a look at the implementation of the new health care reform reveals how the legislation has failed to deliver on costs, premiums, spending, and preserving Americans' existing coverage:

- 19—States where parents can no longer buy child-only insurance policies as a result of the law

- 30—States suing to block the law from taking effect, or requesting waivers from its requirements

- 51—Percentage of American workers who will lose their current health coverage by 2013, according to the Administration's own estimates

- 1,270—New bureaucrats requested by the Internal Revenue Service to implement the law this year

- \$2,100—Increase in individual insurance premiums due to Obamacare, according to the Congressional Budget Office

- \$2,500—Premium reduction promised by candidate Obama "by the end of my first term as President"

- 6,578—Pages of new regulations issued implementing Obamacare through March 14, 2011

- 800,000—Reduction in the American labor force due to Obamacare provisions that "will effectively increase marginal tax rates, which will also discourage work," according to the CBO

- 2,624,720—Total individuals in 1,040 plans granted waivers thus far exempting them from the law's insurance mandates; nearly half of whom participate in union plans

- 7,400,000—Reduction in Medicare Advantage enrollment as a result of Obamacare, resulting in a loss of choice for seniors and millions of beneficiaries losing their current health plan

- 40,000,000—Firms subject to the health law's new 1099 reporting requirements, which the National Federation of Independent Business called a "tremendous new paperwork compliance burden"

- \$118,000,000,000—New costs imposed on states to implement Obamacare—budgetary costs that will lead to reduced services for other state programs like education or to higher state taxes

- \$310,800,000,000—Projected increase in health costs due to Obamacare, according to the independent Medicare actuary, who called its promise of lower costs "false, more so than true"

- \$552,200,000,000—Amount of higher taxes Americans will pay if Obamacare remains in place

- \$1,390,000,000,000—Federal spending on new entitlements during fiscal years 2012-2021 according to the CBO, a 48 percent increase from an earlier estimate

- What this means for you: Even though we have seen only a few of the law's initial provisions take effect, American families and businesses are already facing higher costs, economic uncertainty, and loss of their current coverage.

- The doctor's diagnosis: The new health care reform law is the prime example of how the Democrats' tax hikes, spending spree, and heavy-handed government policies are hurting our economy and making it harder for small

State of Pay: State employees continue to dip into overtime goody basket

By Kate Elizabeth Queram and Kirsten Adshead

MADISON—State prison and health workers in Wisconsin continue to rack up big bucks in overtime, with more than 160 of them getting a salary boost of \$25,000 or more in overtime over 2010, according to a Wisconsin Reporter analysis of state payroll data.

Two of those workers earned a whopping six figures in overtime— overtime that alone amounts to about double the median household income in the state.

And one state worker got enough overtime to make the list of the 10 highest paid employees in the state at nearly \$365,000 in total pay.

Despite a decrease in overall overtime spending in the taxpayer-funded Wisconsin state work force since the Legislative Audit Bureau reviewed state agencies' use of overtime in 2008, overtime

remains a reliable payday for many state workers. The LAB is scheduled to release a follow-up audit this spring.

The state paid employees almost \$52.8 million for overtime in 2010—the equivalent of 1,200 workers making the average state salary.

To put it another way, Wisconsin's overtime tab is about the same as the budget as the state's Environmental Improvement Program, which pays for wastewater facility construction and cleaning up contaminated lands.

Wisconsin paid \$66.5 million in overtime in 2008, a goody basket that has decreased about 21 percent when compared to this year, according to the state database.

A 2008 state audit puts much of the blame for state workers' ability to rack up big overtime on the generous overtime provisions in state employ-

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Franklin Graham: World's Christians in grave danger

By Franklin Graham
Newsmax.com

The Muslim Brotherhood, with the complicity of the Obama administration, has infiltrated the U.S. government at the highest levels and is influencing American policy that leaves the world's Christians in grave danger, warns internationally known evangelist Franklin Graham.

"The Muslim Brotherhood is very strong and active here in our country," Graham tells Newsmax. "We have these people advising our military and State Department. We've brought in Muslims to tell us how to make policy toward Muslim countries.

"It's like a farmer asking a fox, 'How do I protect my hen house?'"

That same Muslim Brotherhood is fomenting much of the rebellion and the deteriorating social order roiling the Middle East, forcing millions of Christians to flee for their lives, says Graham, son of beloved evangelist Dr. Billy Graham, and founder of The Samaritan's Purse international charity.

"Under [Egypt's Hosni] Mubarek and [Jordan's] King Hussein and other moderate leaders, Christians had been protected," Graham says. 11 million Christians live in Egypt and I fear for them, because if the Muslim Brotherhood comes to power, you're going to see a great exodus of Christians. Same thing in Tunisia and Lebanon. I fear for the church because the Muslim Brotherhood is going to be a very terrible thing."

The Rev. Franklin Graham predicts an exodus of Christians from the Mideast and North Africa if the Muslim Brotherhood rises to power there. The radical group is shaping U.S. policy, the evangelist says in a Newsmax.TV video.

A new report from the Roman Catholic aid agency Aid to the Church in Need supports Graham's contention that the persecution of Christians world-wide has worsened exponentially in the past few years.

According to the report, Christians face increased suffering in 22 countries around the world, with Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Nigeria being among the worst countries to be a Christian in today.

The persecution has gotten markedly worse

over the past two years according to the organization.

"The proportion of countries with a worsening track-record of anti-Christian violence and intimidation would be higher were it not for the fact that in many cases the situation could scarcely have been worse in the first place" the report's authors wrote.

More than 75 percent of religious persecution in the world is currently being carried out against Christians, the report concludes.

The Vatican formed a special committee late last year to address the flight of Christians and the rise of militant Islam in the Middle East. In his New Year's message, Pope Benedict XVI said Christians suffer more than any other religious group because of their faith.

Asked if President Barack Obama was doing enough to protect Christians at home and abroad, Graham says, "No. If anything it's the opposite."

"Muslims are protected more in this country than Christians," he says. "The president has made many statements but he doesn't back them up. We have to do more to protect the Christians in the Muslim world. Their lives are in danger."

In recent weeks, Obama administration officials have stepped up the defense of their inclusive stance toward Muslims in their ranks. Deputy national security advisor, Denis McDonough, said last week that President Obama is actually trying to prevent terrorism by "dispelling the myths that have developed over the years, including misperceptions about our fellow Americans who are Muslim."

"When it comes to preventing violent extremism and terrorism in the United States, Muslim Americans are not part of the problem, you're part of the solution," McDonough said at an interfaith forum in Sterling, Va.

Graham, however says what Obama is really doing is "giving Islam a pass" rather than speaking openly about the "horrific" treatment women and minorities receive.

"We certainly love the Muslim people," Graham said in an earlier interview with Newsmax. "But that is not the faith of this country. And that is not the religion that built this nation. The people of the Christian faith and the Jewish faith are the ones who built America, and it is not Islam."

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...state employees' goody basket

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ee union contracts.

Those provisions allow, for example, employees to include vacation time or sick leave toward their 40-hour work weeks, allowing them to accrue overtime payments even if they don't actually work a full 40 hours.

And seniority provisions also ensure that, in the case of voluntary overtime, higher-paid senior employees are offered overtime opportunities before their lower-paid, junior counterparts.

Indeed, the audit notes that of the state employees making more than \$100,000 a year in overtime, the majority were in supervisory positions.

"There are agencies where they run up a fair amount of overtime, and it appears that there are some people who sort of do that to maximize compensation," said Todd Berry, president of the non-partisan Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance.

Virtually all of the top overtime earners worked for the Department of Corrections or the Department of Health Services, according to the data. The six-figure overtime earners were Health Services nurse clinician Sheryl Lee Fors and correctional Sgt. Jose Murray, who has since retired.

Neither returned calls seeking comment.

The two agencies have long been responsible for the bulk of the state's overtime pay, though each has decreased those costs in recent years.

Both departments have cited their 24-hour facilities as the major reason for using overtime, some of which is mandatory, according to a report by the Legislative Audit Bureau.

"Part of the reason is that we're a 24-hour operation," said Tim Le Monds, Corrections spokesman. "Prisons stay open. They don't close."

DHS spokeswoman Beth Kaplan said the agency's overtime is "consistent" with other facilities that operate around the clock.

"Due to the need to ensure adequate staffing levels at our seven institutions, overtime in such environments is appropriate and necessary," Kaplan said via email. "In many instances, given the unanticipated nature of staffing needs, overtime is more effective and cost-efficient than over-staffing."

As corrections institutions close down and those workers are moved to other facilities, increasing staffing levels there, overtime should be less necessary, said Ronald Keenan, Department of Corrections sergeant at the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility.

He also is president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 104.

Overtime also isn't a cut-and-dried issue, he said.

"One claim is that ... it is cheaper because it's not pay plus benefits to employees, so it depends how senior your staff is compared to base wages plus benefits," Keenan said.

The use of overtime is common in both the health and correctional fields, but can increase risk for on-the-job sloppiness, according to some experts and union officials. Indeed, one report

showed that excessive overtime is bad for workers' hearts.

And the 2008 state audit raised serious questions about overtime in fields that provide care or security and "their ability to effectively perform their responsibilities and not endanger patients, inmates, themselves and other employees."

A spokesman for the Department of Corrections acknowledged that working too many hours could adversely affect an employee's ability to perform his job.

"Certainly, any time any employee can't perform their duties due to how many hours they work is a concern to any of us. And in those instances, it's something we would want to take a look at," said Tim LeFave, assistant administrator for the corrections department's division of management services.

Some state prison facilities limit the number of hours employees can work per week, but LeFave said he wasn't aware of any ceiling for overtime hours. In some cases, he said, the department may not be able to impose such limits on employees at all.

"Depending on local contracts, the institution (or) the department may or may not have much say in the issue," he said.

Walker's move to eliminate collective bargaining could curtail costs

That's because some employees' overtime procedures are written into their specific collective bargaining agreements. Pending the outcome of Gov. Scott Walker's union reform law, currently stalled in court, that could change.

If implemented, Walker's law, which eliminates collective-bargaining powers, except for salary, for most of the state's public union employees, should help, said Chris Schneider, a senior fellow with free-market think tank Wisconsin Policy Research Institute.

But Schneider said it's up to individual managers to help control overtime costs.

"I don't think there's anybody who's sitting over at the Department of Administration who can handle looking over everybody's time cards," he said.

Still, the Department of Corrections has managed to reduce overtime costs during the past two years. In 2008, the department spent \$33.4 million on premium overtime payments, paid out at time-and-a-half; last year, that number was almost \$30 million, a decrease of about 10 percent.

LeFave said there were a multitude of reasons for the change, including improved day-to-day time management and an influx of full-time employees designed to drive down costs. The employees were funneled to institutions with high overtime numbers, LeFave said.

But the solution to the problem isn't as simple as hiring more staff members to work at a regular hourly wage, LeFave added.

"We cannot just go out and hire people unless we've been allocated ... budget authority to hire permanent positions," he said.

Jackie Clews contributed to this report.

Dr. Charles Krauthammer, M.D.:

A blogger's perspective

Fast facts about Dr. Charles Krauthammer, M.D.:

1. Born: March 13, 1950
2. Birthplace: New York City, New York
3. Raised in Montreal, Canada
4. Attended Mc Gill University and Harvard Medical School
5. 1972 diving accident left him paralyzed from the neck on down.
6. Directed psychiatric research for the Carter administration
7. Began writing career in 1981 with *The New Republic*
8. Helped develop the "Reagan Doctrine" in the 80's
9. Appointed to Presidential Council on Bioethics in 2002

He is an M.D., a lawyer and is paralyzed from the neck down. A friend went to hear Krauthammer. He listened with 25 others in a closed room. What he says here, is NOT secondhand but first. The ramifications are staggering for us, our children and their children.

Recently Dr. Krauthammer spoke to the Center for the American Experiment. He is a brilliant intellectual, seasoned and articulate. He is forthright and careful in his analysis, and never resorts to emotions or personal insults. He is NOT a fear monger nor an extremist in his comments and views. He is a fiscal conservative, and has received a Pulitzer Prize for writing. He is a frequent contributor to Fox News and writes weekly for the Washington Post.

The entire room was held spellbound during his talk. I have summarized his comments, as we are living in uncharted waters economically and internationally.

Summary of his comments:

1. Mr. Obama is a very intellectual, charming individual. He is not to be underestimated. He is a cool customer who doesn't show his emotions. It's very hard to know what's behind the mask. The taking down of the Clinton dynasty was an amazing accomplishment. The Clintons still do not understand what hit them. Obama was in the perfect place at the perfect time.

2. Obama has political skills comparable to Reagan and Clinton. He has a way of making you think he's on your side, agreeing with your position, while doing the opposite. Pay no attention to what he SAYS; rather, watch what he DOES!

3. Obama has a ruthless quest for power. He did not come to Washington to make something out of himself, but rather to change everything, including dismantling capitalism. He can't be straightforward on his ambitions, as the public would not go along. He has a heavy hand, and wants to level the playing

field with income redistribution and punishment to the achievers of society. He would like to model the USA to Great Britain or Canada.

4. His three main goals are to control ENERGY, PUBLIC EDUCATION, and NATIONAL HEALTHCARE by the Federal government. He doesn't care about the auto or financial services industries, but got them as an early bonus. The cap and trade will add costs to everything and stifle growth. Paying for FREE college education is his goal. Most scary is his healthcare program, because if you make it FREE and add 46,000,000 people to a Medicare-type single-payer system, the costs will go through the roof. The only way to control costs is with massive RATIONING of services, like in Canada. God forbid!

5. He has surrounded himself with mostly far-left academic types. No one around him has ever even run a candy store. But they are going to try and run the auto, financial, banking and other industries. This obviously can't work in the long run. Obama is not a socialist; rather he's a far-left secular progressive bent on nothing short of revolution. He ran as a moderate, but will govern from the hard left. Again, watch what he does, not what he says.

6. Obama doesn't really see himself as President of the United States, but more as a ruler over the world. He sees himself above it all, trying to orchestrate and coordinate various countries and their agendas. He sees moral equivalency in all cultures. His apology tour in Germany and England was a prime example of how he sees America, as an imperialist nation that has been arrogant, rather than a great noble nation that has at times made errors. This is the first President ever who has chastised our allies and appeased our enemies!

7. He is now handing out goodies. He hopes that the bill (and pain) will not come due until after he is reelected in 2012. He would like to blame all problems on Bush from the past, and hopefully his successor in the future. He has a huge ego, and Dr. Krauthammer believes he is a narcissist.

8. Republicans have been in the wilderness for a while, but will emerge strong. Republicans are pining for another Reagan, but there will never be another like him. Krauthammer believes Mitt Romney, Tim Pawlenty and Bobby Jindal (except for his terrible speech in February) are the future of the party. Newt Gingrich is brilliant, but has baggage. Sarah Palin is sincere and intelligent, but needs to really be seriously boning up on facts and info if she is to be a serious candidate in the future. We need to return to the party of lower taxes, smaller government, personal

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...Walker's 'sweet deal'

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The economy is still struggling. Families are still behind, we're still recovering. Our government, the servant of the people, shouldn't ask for more, especially when we are the fourth-highest taxed state in the nation. Governor Walker's budget is family-friendly to the vast majority of Wisconsinites. It starts the long process of getting our government back to

servicing the people.

Our governments provide many valuable services to everyone, such as schools, roads, prisons, courts and other important services. We need to balance all of this with our families' ability to pay. We need to do the most we can, for the most people with the money we already have.

After all, our government should serve all of us, including taxpayers.

...Obama's Medicare hypocrisy

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otics. Genetic medicine and ultimately nanotechnology are about to change everything. No longer will we fight cancer by cutting or burning or poisoning diseased cells. Instead, we will use DNA and RNA to predict cancers and grow healthy cells. Who knows what the costs will be? Possibly, they could be lower than our current range of therapies.

And, between now and 2021, Congress will

be able to change the Ryan plan as it chooses. But the early deaths triggered by the rationing decisions of Obama's IPAB cannot be saved. Their decisions are, for the elderly of today, irreversible.

Democrats are drooling over the prospect of conducting the elections of 2012 over Medicare. They better watch their steps. The truth might come out!

Dick Morris is an author, commentator and former Bill Clinton advisor.

...Fleming health care update

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businesses to create jobs. Removing these barriers will provide the businesses that create new jobs with the certainty they need to hire new employees and get our economy back on track.

I remain committed to reducing healthcare costs by providing access and choices for every

American, protecting the patient-doctor relationship, and keeping the government out of the exam room. I will work aggressively in Congress to repeal what I firmly believe to be an onerous and unconstitutional health care reform law and support market-based solutions to our health care needs.

John Fleming, M.D. is a member of Congress.

...Dr. Charles Krauthammer

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responsibility, strong national defense, and state's rights.

9. The current level of spending is irresponsible and outrageous. We are spending trillions that we don't have. This could lead to hyperinflation, depression or worse. No country has ever spent themselves into prosperity. The media is giving Obama, Reid and Pelosi a pass because they love their agenda. But eventually the bill will come due and people will realize the huge bailouts didn't work, nor will the stimulus package. These were trillion-dollar payoffs to Obama's allies, unions and the Congress to placate the left, so he can get support for #4.

10. The election was over in mid-September when Lehman brothers failed, fear and panic swept in, we had an unpopular President, and the war was grinding on indefi-

nately without a clear outcome. The people are in pain, and the mantra of change caused people to act emotionally. Any Dem would have won this election; it was surprising it was as close as it was.

11. In 2012, if the unemployment rate is over 10%, Republicans will be swept back into power. If it's under 8%, the Dems continue to roll. If it's between 8-10%, it will be a dogfight. It will all be about the economy. I hope this gets you really thinking about what's happening in Washington and Congress. There is a left-wing revolution going on, according to Krauthammer, and he encourages us to keep the faith and join the loyal resistance. The work will be hard, but we're right on most issues and can reclaim our country, before it's far too late.

Posted by "kbsooner21" at www.bet-torschat.com.