

KELDA ROYS

for GOVERNOR

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Roys Stands Out as Clear Winner of Debate

**A proven progressive champion,
Roys is ready to lead Wisconsin Forward**

MADISON, WI -- Kelda Roys' campaign spokesman Brian Evans issued the following statement after Kelda's commanding performance at tonight's UWM Debate:

"One thing is clear after tonight's debate: Kelda Roys is ready to move Wisconsin forward. Kelda's command of the issues and her focus on improving the lives of Wisconsinites set her apart from the rest of the field."

The following is a transcript of Kelda's remarks at the debate:

Q: Who on this stage would kill or stop the FOXCONN deal?

K: raises hand

Q: How many support FOXCONN as is?

K: no hand

Q: A recent study by the Urban Manufacturing Alliance show that a majority of the manufacturers in the city of Milwaukee have ten or fewer employees. How can the state weigh the needs of large employers versus the needs of many small employers?

K: Thank you for the question and thank you for having us this evening. I am a small business owner and we know that small businesses are really the true job creators and the engine of our economy. They create the vast majority of net new-jobs in any economy. For the last three years, Wisconsin has been dead-last in creating new businesses. I think it is essential that we have a governor who has a long-term plan for economic development that includes sectors like manufacturing, that are so core to Wisconsin's economy. As a small business owner myself, I know by supporting small businesses, we are going to put our state in the very best position to create jobs that can actually support families.

There are a lot of politicians that want to give our money away in big, corporate deals like Foxconn, but ultimately we can't pay companies to create jobs. We have to make investments that are not just going to create family-sustaining jobs, but companies that are actually going to grow in Wisconsin- companies like mine and thousands of other companies across the state.

Q: Does that mean state should not necessarily pursue the large employers like Foxconn?

K: No, absolutely not. As a business owner, I want Wisconsin to be the very best place to grow a business. I think we are a great place to do business, and I welcome any company, large or small, who wants to start here or grow here. Whether it's a family farmer or somebody opening a mainstream cafe or somebody with an innovative tech idea, as long as you pay your taxes and follow our laws, we welcome you and we want to make you thrive.

Q: How many of you would support an early release program?

K: hand raised

Q: How can you cut prison population, if more than half are violent offenders?

K: The real threat to the public safety is the backlog of untested, rape kits that Attorney General Brad Schimel has sat on as he prints commemorative points to pat himself on the back. We need our criminal justice system to accomplish two main aims: public safety and just punishment. Right now, we're spending an ocean of money- it is bankrupting us morally and financially, and it is accomplishing neither of those aims. As governor, I will look to our neighboring state of Minnesota. They incarcerate fewer than half as many people as we do and yet, they are no more dangerous. They are actually investing in public-safety. We can do that. There are people sitting in prisons for decades who are sentenced under previous regimes, by judges who sentenced them taking into consideration that they would be let out and paroled. Now, Governor Walker has refused to do his responsible-duty as governor, and has just let people languish in prison. That means we are making ourselves less safe when they finally do come out.

Q: What kind of violent offenders would you release?

K: It's not about who we are releasing, it's about making sure that people receive just punishment for their crime, and that we are giving them the tools to actually be successfully reintegrated once they come out. Most of the people sitting in prison are there for crimes, that in other states they might be getting much shorter sentences for- if they are sitting in prisons for decades we are spending money that we are not actually getting back. We have to set people up for success

with safe housing, with a job when they come out, and with counselling to help them with substance abuse disorder.

Q: You've been such an advocate for women's rights, and I am surprised how little that has been asked of us. Talk about what we can do for women in Wisconsin.

K: I've been a champion for women's rights throughout my whole career. I'm a mom and a stepmom for four girls, and I cannot believe the type of peril we are facing right now where it looks like my daughters might have fewer rights than my mother and my grandmother. We have a President Trump who is hell-bent on appointing an anti-choice justice that will provide the fifth vote on our Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade. A lot of people don't realize that in Wisconsin we have a criminal abortion ban that criminalizes women and doctors and makes abortion illegal. As governor, I will continue to work to overturn that cruel law, and I've also pledged that I will pardon anyone charged under that law. We are not going to let our daughters go back to a time when abortion was illegal and a crime women, and when women can not get the health care that they need.

Q: how many would support free tuition for two year colleges/tech schools?

K: raised hand

Q: Explain what you would say to the parents of 27,000 children in Milwaukee who no longer have the option of voucher schools?

K: Well, those 27,000 children would have the option. They would continue their education. We can not allow the children who are currently in those voucher schools to have their education disrupted; they can complete it up until the time that their school ends. That's the only responsible way to address it. We should not be allowing new voucher students to be entering those schools and we have to be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. I'm a product of public schools, my kids are in public schools, and I believe that public dollars are for public education, period. We need to invest in our public education system. The problem with privatization is that it takes the resources out of the public schools, and the kids who are remaining in public schools, who didn't get the chance to get cherry-picked out for their backpack full of cash, are still left there. If we want Wisconsin to succeed economically, we need to invest in our kids, and that means investing in our education system.

Q: If you could, you would eliminate the school voucher program and let students finish the year?

K: No, not the school year, throughout their schooling. So if they are in elementary school, until fifth grade, or if they are in high school, they can graduate. We are not going to disrupt anyone or take anybody out of school- that is the responsible way

to do it. We can't disrupt families, but we also have to stop sending our taxpayer dollars to unaccountable, blackbox schools.

Q: Recently, Walker chose to give a surplus (in the state budget) back to a select group of taxpayers, in the form of a child tax credit. How would you erect a deal with a surplus?

K: Well it would be great to have a budget surplus, but we haven't had one in eight years. I think we need to start making the investments in Wisconsin's future that every person in this state knows we really need to. We have got to make sure Wisconsin is a place where every person has access to affordable health care, and where people can afford their prescription drugs. We've got to start investing in our kids- our K12 public education system, and also early childhood education- making childcare more affordable. We've got to make sure people can afford to go to college, and that those of us that have already earned a degree in higher ed, can refinance our student loan debt so we can go on to buy a house, buy a car, have our own kids, and save for retirement. There are so many investments that we can make in Wisconsin's future to help this state move forward and become a place where everyone has the opportunity to succeed. As governor, I am going to make sure I am prioritizing these things to help make Wisconsin be a place of opportunity and fairness again, where every family can thrive.

Q: Did you elect to take that tax credit?

K: No, we did not, and I talked to a lot of families who did, and I understand that a hundred dollars can go a long way for a lot of families. We've had a seriously shrinking middle-class in this state, and that's all the more reason why we have to make these investments to help working-families in our state succeed. As governor, I am going to do a lot more than hand out a hundred-dollar election year gimmick to families across the state. I am going to make the investments that we all know we need, whether it's in our schools, our roads, or our healthcare system.

Q: Do you promise to support the democratic nominee no matter who it is after August 14th?

K: Enthusiastically, yes. My kids' future is on the line, all of our kids' futures are on the line. A recent polling shows that 70% of our voters are enthusiastic about the idea of electing our first woman-governor. I am going to work my heart out to make sure that we can win this election. We are not going to win it by talking about all the failures of the last eight years- we are going to win it with our positive, optimistic vision for Wisconsin's future and building a state where all of us have the opportunity to thrive. That's what I have done in this campaign, and I will do that for the nominee.

Closing Statement:

We have eight good people on this stage, but I have a track record of actually turning our big ideas and progressive values into real results. When I was the Executive Director of NARAL Pro-choice- Wisconsin, I helped pass the first pro-choice legislation in this state in 30 years through an anti-choice, Republican assembly - so I know how to reach across the aisle and get things done for working families in Wisconsin. I also helped expand healthcare to over 80,000 Wisconsinites when I was in the assembly as Vice Chair for the Committee on Health. We need somebody with that kind of commitment I helped make Wisconsin a leader in banning BPA, a toxic in children's products- so much so that California looked and said "hey, we better get on the boat, because look what Wisconsin is doing." We can do that again.

We can be a leader in addressing climate change and clean energy. We can be the education-state again- and we can make sure every Wisconsite is covered by health insurance. Let's do it together- I ask for your vote on August 14 to make Wisconsin a place of opportunity again. Thank you.

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Kelda Roys, 39, is a small business owner, attorney, former state representative, and past head of NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin who has been standing up for women and families throughout her career. In the Assembly, she stood out as an influential and effective lawmaker, delivering results for working families and helping lead the opposition to Governor Scott Walker's divisive agenda. As a parent and step-parent of four girls, Roys will fight for paid family leave, affordable childcare, great schools, and quality healthcare for all. In a year in which Wisconsin voters are ready for change, Kelda Roys provides the clearest contrast to Scott Walker.