



CHRIS TAYLOR

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ♦ 76th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

For Immediate Release
September 15, 2016

For More Information, Contact:
Rep. Chris Taylor, 608-266-5342

Is pay-for-play why Walker Administration won't change unlawful lead poisoning standards?

MADISON – Yesterday, *The Guardian* released internal emails and other materials never before publicly disclosed that show a coordinated network of staff, dark money groups and millions of corporate dollars which Governor Walker assembled to fend off his own recall and the recalls of state Senators. Walker secretly solicited millions of corporate dollars to aid in his re-election, and the re-election of various Republican state Senators, which he and his staff directed to the dark money group, Club for Growth. Club for Growth, in turn, funneled the money to other dark money groups assembled to help Republicans survive recall elections. According to the US Supreme Court's *Citizen United* decision, though corporations can spend money to influence elections, they may not coordinate with candidates to assist in their reelections, which clearly occurred in Governor Walker's coordination scheme.

Also revealed was an apparent pay-for-play scheme where a corporate lead producer donated \$750,000 to Wisconsin Club for Growth in close proximity to legislation granting corporate immunity from lawsuits brought by lead contaminated individuals, including children.

"It is absolutely outrageous that Governor Walker, aided by Republican legislators, sacrificed the health and lives of Wisconsin children to fill his campaign coffers with corporate cash. This apparent pay-for-play system not only undermines our democracy, but shows a callous disregard for the health and well-being of the people of Wisconsin, including children. Is this why I can't get the Walker administration to abandon their outdated lead poisoning standards to better protect Wisconsin children?"

Wisconsin is wildly out of compliance with federal guidelines both in the definition of lead poisoning and required investigatory and remediation efforts. Four years ago, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) adopted a lower threshold for what constitutes lead poisoning. Despite the fact that Wisconsin law requires the Department of Health Services (DHS) to align their definition of lead poisoning with the CDC, the Walker administration has refused to do so, and continues to operate under a lead poisoning standard that is twice the federal guideline. What lead poisoning standard the state adopts is important because it triggers lead investigations and remediation.

Rep. Taylor has been working for months to bring Wisconsin into compliance with federal standards. She authored AB 957, which brings Wisconsin's lead standards in line with CDC recommendations, and has written numerous correspondence to DHS urging compliance. In an April 19, 2016 letter, DHS acknowledged they were aware of the new federal standards, stating "The Department has considered this issue since the CDC created its reference value in 2012." Thus far, DHS has failed to act.

State Capitol: P.O. Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708

(608) 266-5342 ♦ E-mail: rep.taylor@legis.wi.gov ♦ Web: <http://taylor.assembly.wi.gov>

“Lead poisoning, especially in children under six, causes a lifetime of health and behavioral issues, including reduced intelligence, learning disabilities, and developmental delays. There are some Wisconsin communities that have a higher percentage of lead poisoned children than Flint, Michigan. Inexplicably, the Walker administration has refused to do anything about it. Now I think I know why, and I am sickened by it,” concluded Taylor.

Rep. Taylor’s numerous correspondence with DHS on this issue are attached.

###