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Assembly Democratic Radio Address: WEDC Audit is Déjà Vu for Wisconsin Taxpayers

Madison – Today, State Representative Melissa Sargent (D – Madison) offered the following Democratic Weekly Radio Address regarding this week’s Joint Legislative Audit Committee’s review of the WEDC audit. The audit results once again raised concern about WEDC’s continued trouble executing contracts, verifying job numbers, and complying with state statutes.

The audio file can be found here:

<http://media2.legis.wisconsin.gov/multimedia/Sen16/sargentradio102517.mp3>

The video file can be found here:

<https://youtu.be/Q8BEYIR5oI4>

A written transcript of the address is below:

Hi, I’m State Representative Melissa Sargent with this week’s Democratic radio address.

Wisconsin Democratic Legislators know we must prioritize the values, needs and dreams of all Wisconsinites and stand against any system that is rigged to favor the rich and the powerful.

This week, the Joint Legislative Audit Committee held a public hearing on the results of the nonpartisan audit of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, more commonly known as WEDC.

Not surprisingly the audit is eerily similar to one released two years ago. WEDC has proven time and time again to be derelict in its duties to taxpayers and our state.

I am gravely concerned by the audit results as it highlights a disturbing trend: WEDC’s inability to substantiate job creation claims or effectively execute contracts pursuant to Wisconsin’s laws, as well as a failure to comply with statutory requirements.

WEDC should be able to account for what they’ve done with the dollars that they’ve been given, but they aren’t able to, even though they have been asked many times.

Wisconsin state laws are not a buffet - state agents don’t get to pick and choose which laws they want to follow. Governor Walker wants to run this state like a business, but WEDC behaves in a way that no responsible business would.



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Ironically, the WEDC hearing comes less than a week after the Foxconn package vote was postponed by the WEDC board citing contractual concerns.

Simply put, how can the Legislature, as stewards of Wisconsin's taxpayer dollars, honestly entrust WEDC to a \$3 billion contract like Foxconn when WEDC has demonstrated not once, not twice, but three times that they are not capable of adequately executing contracts, verifying job creation, and even complying with the state statutes?

Democrats believe in building an economy that works for everyone, WEDC isn't building an economy that works for anyone.

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