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Zepnick: Walker's Comments on Immigration out of Line

Madison, WI- After recent controversial comments made by Governor Scott Walker about immigration, Representative Zepnick spoke out saying that the Governor's comments were out of touch with Wisconsin. In a recent interview with conservative talk show host Glenn Beck, Walker said that although he used to support a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants he no longer supports this plan of action after having worked closely with U.S. Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala). Walker then went on to say that illegal immigrants should be made to return to their country of origin before being given US citizenship. Lastly, he continued on by advocating for the restriction of legal immigration into the country.

“Governor Walker’s rapidly changing views on immigration is wrong for Wisconsin. Statements like these are out of touch and frankly just plain wrong. Anti-immigration rhetoric to this degree is downright offensive to all the hard working immigrants who have come to Wisconsin in search of greater economic opportunity. Whether those immigrants are Polish, German or Latino, today’s Wisconsin was built by immigrants. I am proud to represent a district that is heavily diverse, these are my neighbors; people that I see working every day to make our community and the city of Milwaukee a better place each and every day.

“On the one year anniversary of the Oak Creek Sikh temple shooting I was privileged to be a part of a meeting between Governor Walker and the victims’ family members. One of the first questions that were asked at the meeting was, ‘what could be done about the US immigration system?’ Walker was gushing with support as he promised to not only work towards fixing the problems in our immigration system, but even expanding legal immigration. It’s sad to see the Governor breaking another promise he made in order to get ahead while playing Presidential politics.

“The hard working people of Wisconsin, whether immigrants or children of immigrants have come here to find a better life for themselves and their families. These people add to the fabric of our communities and contribute to our economy in an overall positive way. This entire nation was built by the hands of immigrants: I find it troubling and embarrassing that the Governor and

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his Republican counterparts are contemplating legislation discriminating against legal immigration.

“Since elected to the Wisconsin Legislature in 2002 I have continually championed bills that protect immigrants and their fundamental rights. In 2009 I introduced legislation that would give in state tuition to those who were brought to America at a young age, but completed secondary school in Wisconsin.

“To hear the Governor saying that these hardworking folks aren’t worthy of being Americans because they came here from somewhere else is deeply troubling. Immigrants like Lauro, and Louis Rodriguez came not only to this state in 1937, but namely to Delavan, WI Governor Walker’s hometown with a dream for a better life. The Rodriguez Brothers and their Potato farm will be the subject of a historical painted mural later this summer in that downtown. When we hear the stump speech of the man who grew up in Delavan, WI he must have forgotten the history of immigrants that made, and continue to make it one of the unique areas in this state.”

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