



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 26, 2015

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Sen. Janis Ringhand, (608) 266-2253
Rep. Andy Jorgensen, (608) 266-3790
Rep. Debra Kolste, (608) 266-7503
Rep. Mark Spreitzer, (608) 266-1192

ROCK COUNTY LEGISLATORS CHALLENGE WEDC ON ANNOUNCED LOCAL JOB CUTS

(MADISON) – Four Democratic legislators from Rock County challenged the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation’s over the use of tax incentives that caused a net loss of jobs and the movement of jobs from Janesville to Horicon.

Senator Janis Ringhand (Evansville) and Representatives Debra Kolste (Janesville), Andy Jorgensen (Milton) and Mark Spreitzer (Beloit) wrote to WEDC chief Mark Hogan after learning that WEDC awarded \$2 million in tax incentives to John Deere to create “80 new jobs” in Horicon.

John Deere announced that it will close its warehousing and light manufacturing facility in Janesville at a cost of 100 local jobs and will move 80 of those jobs to Horicon, according to an article in the *Janesville Gazette* on Friday.

“WEDC’s actions are a slap in the face to Rock County taxpayers who help fund the very agency that is actively taking jobs away from our community,” the legislators wrote.

Governor Scott Walker replaced the Department of Commerce with WEDC in his first budget and made WEDC his flagship agency for business development and job creation. WEDC has been plagued by administrative problems, rapid turnover of chief executives, poor loan tracking and questionable loans since its inception.

The legislators demanded to know when WEDC found out that John Deere intended to eliminate the Janesville jobs and what the agency did to try to retain those jobs in Janesville.

“We further wish to know whether WEDC made any attempt to require net job creation to the allocation of the \$2 million of taxpayer resources,” the legislators wrote.

The four also asked what the state can do to reverse the awarding of tax incentives if the result is the transfer and net loss of jobs.

“We want to know if any of the promised or allocated resources can still be rescinded or reclaimed, and what action WEDC will take to ensure that, in the future, taxpayer dollars are not allocated to companies which then immediately eliminate jobs in our state,” the legislators wrote.

“WEDC is pitting community against community and picking favorites,” they wrote.

A copy of the letter was sent to Governor Walker.

-END-