



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Why buy elections? Why purchase judges? Because Scott Walker asked.

BELoit – Earlier this week, *The Guardian* published a story and previously undisclosed documents that strongly suggest Governor Scott Walker and Wisconsin legislative Republicans engaged in an extensive amount of pay-for-play governance, purposeful avoidance of campaign finance law, and outright corruption.

“The planning and sophistication, in addition to the sheer breadth, of this scheme is truly shocking,” Rep. Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) said. “It appears that Republicans and Governor Walker illegally laundered massive corporate contributions in violation of campaign finance law. They then funneled money through back channels to protect Supreme Court Justices, who returned the favor by declaring those same campaign finance laws unenforceable so that no one could be prosecuted. To cover himself even more, Governor Walker directed money to vulnerable legislative Republicans who further gutted campaign finance laws.”

The documents suggest that Governor Walker collaborated and traded favors with lobbyists, third-party shadow groups, and even Donald Trump. This included \$750,000 in donations to ensure laws were changed to protect a lead paint manufacturer from being held accountable for poisoning children. The documents also contain a \$10,000 check to a shadow group with a memo line reading “Because Scott Walker asked.” This group then spent generously to protect Walker and Republican senators from recall.

“Campaign finance laws, in letter and in spirit, require disclosure to give Wisconsin voters some confidence that if money is trading hands between politicians and special interests, at least they will know who is contributing and how much,” Rep. Spreitzer added. “When voters know who contributes, they can hold their elected officials accountable and have a fighting chance against the corrupting influence of big campaign contributions.”

“Governor Walker appears to have not only solicited money that massively exceeded contribution limits, but he did so in a way to deliberately avoid having to disclose any of it. He and his friends then changed the rules to ensure they couldn’t be prosecuted. When there is no disclosure, we now have a perfect, real-life example of how elected officials will absolutely give in to pressure from wealthy corporations who don’t have the best interests of Wisconsin families at heart.”

“We deserve the truth about just how pervasive the influence of corporate dollars is in all three branches of Wisconsin government,” Rep. Spreitzer added. “Is every decision of the legislature and the Wisconsin Supreme Court simply ‘because Scott Walker asked’? What other changes to our laws has Walker commanded in order to appease donors, no matter the damage done to our state?” ###

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