



## Senate Dem: Walker "Diminished Image" of Gov's Office

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Gov. Scott Walker speaks at WEL Companies in De Pere, Jan. 13, 2011. (courtesy of FOX 11).

MADISON, Wis. (WTAQ) - The nation's longest-serving legislator says Scott Walker has "diminished the image" of the Wisconsin governor's office.

State Senate Democrat Fred Risser of Madison has served under 12 governors since he was first elected in 1956. And he says he's never seen a governor of either party so unwilling to compromise. Risser says the Republican Walker is not the type of governor Wisconsin is used to having, based on his failure to sit down with public union leaders and, "represent all the people of the state."

But Walker says the state doesn't have any money for a compromise – we've known that for a long time – and he's the

first governor to try and do something about it.

Walker and most of his fellow Republicans in the state Legislature say they're standing firm on the governor's budget repair bill. It eliminates the bargaining power of most public unions except for wages at or below inflation.

Risser and the other 13 Democratic senators are starting their second week away from the Capitol, as they hold up a vote in the Senate on the budget package. They're in Illinois, where police cannot summon them back to Madison. Risser said the walkout started on the, "spur of the moment." He said they meet each night, and they're more united now than when they left the capital.

Risser hints that the Democrats would return before any state employees lose their jobs. Walker says layoff notices will start going out next week to 1,500 workers if the budget bill – which includes a refinancing package to pay those employees – is not approved by Saturday.