



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Katrina Shankland

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71st ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Media Release

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Rep Shankland: What a Bunch of Baloney!

Reacts to Report of WI Business Lobby Dissuading State Action after Kraft Heinz Merger

Madison –Today, the *Wisconsin State Journal* reported that the Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce business lobby dissuaded WEDC officials from reaching out to Kraft Heinz after their merger and prior to the closure announcement of the Madison-based Oscar Mayer plant. In response, Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) said:

“It is shocking that in the months leading up to the Oscar Mayer closure announcement, it appears officials within the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation did not engage with officials at Kraft Heinz – despite knowing that other states were attempting to court the company for relocation.” (*E-mail subject: RE: Kraft - NY & CA Want Them*). “I am also troubled by the report that our state’s alleged pro-business lobby did not feel it was necessary for WEDC to meet with Kraft Heinz after their merger.”

“Revelations like this, brought to light only through thorough investigative journalism, raise several red flags. If WMC is telling state officials not to engage with major employers after a merger, what other kinds of marching orders are they pushing on state officials? Why did WEDC officials appear so deferential to WMC’s advice on the issue despite knowing that other states were working to incentivize a move to their state? I am so disappointed in these failures by Governor Walker’s WEDC. It’s time for the legislature to reform WEDC so this never happens again.”

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