



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senator Mark Spreitzer: Wisconsin Elections Are Not For Sale

MADISON - Today, State Senator Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) and Democratic legislators from across the state introduced legislation to strengthen democracy in Wisconsin and reject attempts from the ultra wealthy to buy their way to power. After the announcement of these bills, Senator Spreitzer released the following statement:

“Last week, Wisconsinites went to the polls to elect Susan Crawford after months of negative ads and tens of millions of dollars of spending against her. Included in that spending was \$25 million just from Elon Musk, the world’s richest person, who put his net worth to work through dark money groups and misleading advertising. Musk exploited campaign finance loopholes that were created by the United States Supreme Court’s *Citizens United v. FEC* decision, which has allowed the ultra wealthy to suffocate our democracy with unrestricted spending since 2010. Musk was not content to just spend his wealth on dark money campaign ads. He also exploited ambiguity in Wisconsin election bribery laws to offer prizes ranging from \$100 to \$1 million to Wisconsin voters in the days before the election.

“Today, I joined my Democratic colleagues to stop these attacks on our democracy. We put forward two proposals that would help put an end to these campaign finance and bribery loopholes and protect against Elon Musk or anyone else ever doing this to our state again.

“First, we introduced a bill that would update Wisconsin’s election statutes to explicitly ban anyone from bribing people to sign a petition during election season or sign a petition relating to an election. This would make it crystal clear that Elon Musk’s scheme to offer voters \$100 for their signature is not allowed. This scheme received global coverage for its blatantly undemocratic intent. While it was ultimately unsuccessful, this behavior cannot be allowed in a free and fair democracy.

“Second, we introduced a resolution that would give Wisconsin voters the opportunity to make their voices heard - just as they did last week - and tell Congress that elections should not be for sale. Under this resolution, Wisconsin voters could direct our state’s congressional delegation to support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution declaring that money is not speech and that people have constitutional rights, not corporations. This language would overturn the *Citizens United* decision and allow for Congress or the Wisconsin legislature to once again regulate dark money campaign ads.

“For decades, Wisconsin was a leader in open, transparent government and campaign finance reform. Since 2010, that has been steadily worn away. In the aftermath of the most expensive judicial election in history, we must meet the moment and join with the people of Wisconsin to declare that **Wisconsin elections are not for sale.**”

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15th SENATE DISTRICT