



SENATOR JANET BEWLEY WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

FACTS ARE STUBBORN THINGS

Over the last few weeks I've written about the impact of the state budget and Bucks arena bill that Republicans scheduled and adopted in July.

We've been told budget after budget, cut after cut, special interest giveaway after special interest giveaway, that working families need to sacrifice wages and services to bring jobs to the state.

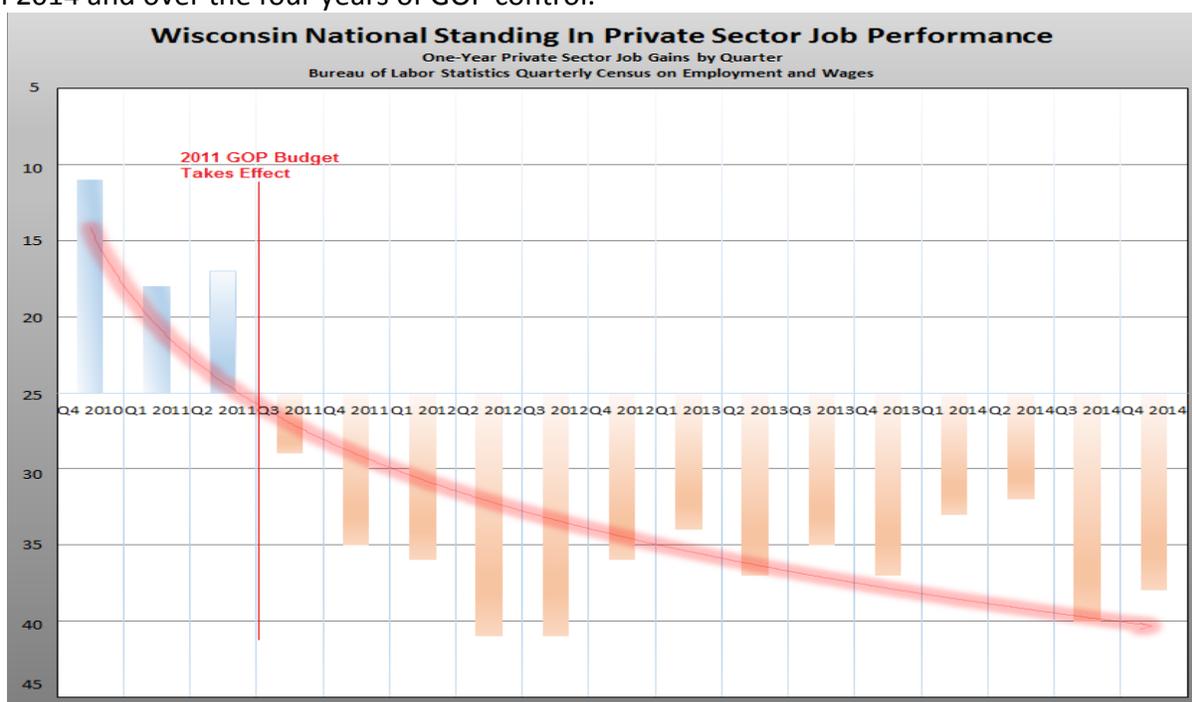
Working families have made those sacrifices. But the jobs haven't come. Wisconsin has trailed the nation and every neighboring state since the GOP priorities started to take effect two budgets ago, and the gap is widening.

Gov. Walker and the Republicans inherited a Wisconsin economy that was 11th nationally in private sector job creation in 2010. At the time, our state had come out of the recession with a top twenty finish in annual private job gains for 5 consecutive quarters. Starting in the 3rd quarter of 2011, Wisconsin fell below the national pace and hasn't recovered.

What changed?

In the summer of 2011, the first of the GOP budgets took effect. In addition to steep cuts to education and health care, the troubled Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation was launched the same day that budget took effect. WEDC's supporters promised a jobs surge in Wisconsin.

Since then, Wisconsin's economy under GOP leadership has trailed the national pace in annual private sector job creation for 14 consecutive quarters. Wisconsin has fallen to 38th nationally in private sector job creation. Wisconsin trailed all neighboring states in private sector job gains in 2014 and over the four years of GOP control.



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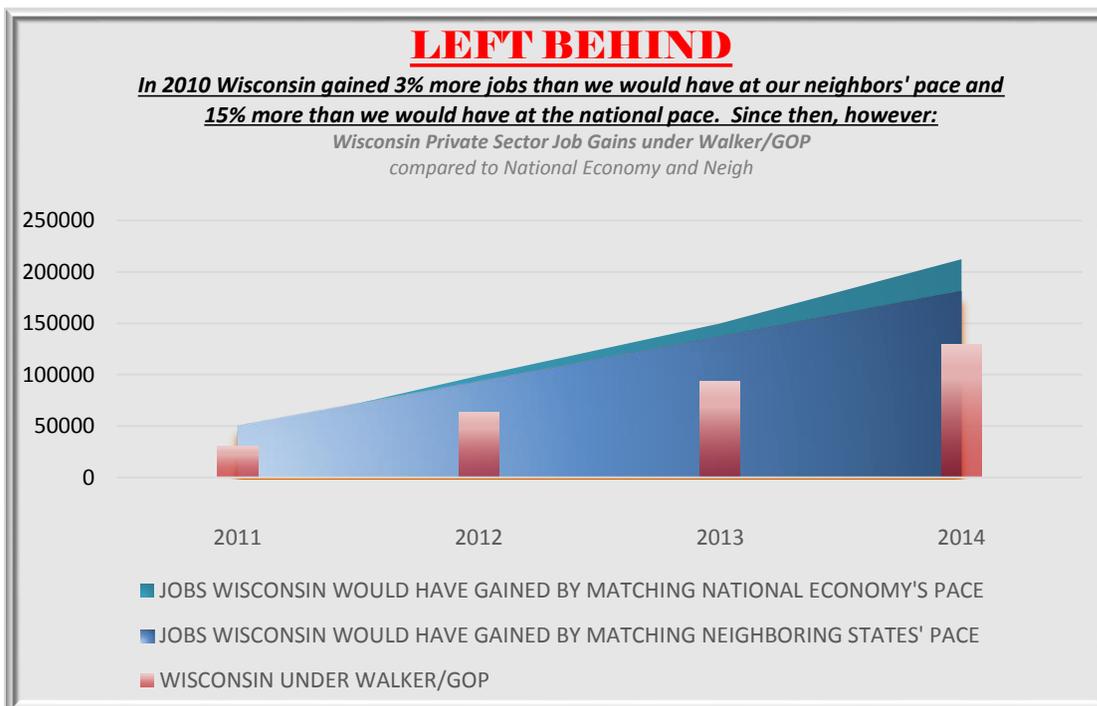
The majority party and the Governor seem to have blinders on. When they do acknowledge the state's economic performance on their watch, Republicans have tried to blame the national economy.

The facts, however, do not back up this claim. The US economy gained 2.6% private sector jobs in 2014 and 9.3% over 4 years. The Wisconsin economy gained 1.5% private sector jobs in 2014 and 5.69% over 4 years.

Had Wisconsin under GOP leadership matched the national rate we would have added 212,174 private sector jobs, 64% more than were gained. Wisconsinites would have the benefit of 83,019 more private sector jobs.

We take a lot of pride in our neighborly competition with Minnesota. That state, as we know, is demographically very similar to ours. Unfortunately, it has become less of a competition over the course of two GOP budgets.

Wisconsin trailed neighboring Minnesota in annual private sector job gains for 15 of 16 quarters. Minnesota added 47,734 more private sector jobs than Wisconsin added under GOP control.



What can we do to reverse the trend? So far this session Senate Republicans have cut the economic engine of higher education, left our public schools behind where they were in the depths of the recession, refused \$360 million Medicaid dollars and cut or delayed local and state road projects. And paid for a basketball arena.

There are few if any indications we will gain ground by doubling down on the policies of the previous two budgets. Building an arena in Milwaukee is not the job creation answer for Northern Wisconsin.

In the private sector, leaders take responsibility and shift priorities. Results matter. Unfortunately, Wisconsin's GOP leaders have so far refused to acknowledge the problem and shift gears.

Facts are stubborn things. It is clear that the budget priorities benefitting the Governor's presidential ambitions have not resulted in a jobs surge for Northern Wisconsin or the state as a whole.