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HESSELBEIN: BUSINESS LOBBY CAN'T CONNECT THE DOTS
BETWEEN JOBS AND MILLIONAIRES' TAX BREAKS

Rep. Dianne Hesselbein (D-Middleton) today blew the whistle on the Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce's (WMC) incredible claim that a special tax credit, expected to average \$2 million at the very top for 11 multi-millionaires in 2017, was responsible for creating 34,000 new manufacturing jobs.

"I know it must be embarrassing to defend this outrageous grab of public funds, but the business lobby only can offer coincidences; they cannot connect the dots." She said. "Even if their claims were true, it is not a proper use of scarce taxpayer money."

WMC responded to a damning report by the Wisconsin Budget Project and new figures released by Rep Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh) on what the Manufacturing and Agricultural Tax Credit is estimated to cost the state in lost revenue from individual tax filers in 2017, a total of \$209,097,155. The top 11 individuals, making \$35 million or more, will get credits worth \$2 million each.

The Legislative Fiscal Bureau estimates that the combined individual and corporate credits under this program will cost the state \$283.9 million in lost revenue in 2017 and every year thereafter. No job creation is required. "To appreciate how big this is, this credit will cost the state more every year than the \$250 million cut to the UW System saved in two," Hesselbein noted.

WMC described the credit as "a reform that reduces the crushing tax burden on middle class jobs."

"This insults the hard-working middle class," Hesselbein responded. "The tax credit pays the taxes of the richest in our state, while leaving the middle class to pay their fair share and more."

In its news release, WMC called the credit "tax relief that led to 34,000 new manufacturing jobs." As evidence, it merely offered U.S. labor figures showing Wisconsin climbing out of the recession.

"It is true that manufacturing jobs have increased since 2011, but so have jobs in many other sectors that do not enjoy this special tax advantage," Hesselbein said. "WMC is welcome to its opinions, but it can't make up its own facts."

Hesselbein proposes phasing out the tax credit in the next state budget and using the money to benefit the general interest of Wisconsin residents, not special interests.

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