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Audit Highlights Longstanding Issues at WEDC

MADISON – The co-chairs of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC) Senator Wimberger (R-Green Bay) and Representative Wittke (R-Racine) released the following statement in response to [audit report 23-11](#), which is a statutorily-required biennial audit of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation’s (WEDC) financials and economic development programs.

“Despite having been provided similar recommendations for multiple years in a row, the WEDC has failed to execute meaningful change. There is no excuse,” said Sen. Wimberger. “The WEDC has knowingly implemented policies contrary to state statute, they’ve waited years to revoke tax credits when contractual obligations haven’t been met, and they haven’t implemented recommendations to comprehensively evaluate their programming. I hope their promise to fix these identified issues holds true.”

Audit report 23-11 is the sixth biennial audit of the WEDC and includes [26 recommendations](#). Recommendations include increasing transparency through posting their governing board meeting minutes and archiving program pages on their website, improving program administration by ensuring all policies comply with state law and federal requirements, and revoking taxpayer funded tax credits in a timely manner so recipients do not pay unnecessary interest.

“Wisconsin is currently at a critical juncture – a point where it is essential for the Legislature to strategically invest in our economy and workforce. As regular citizens face challenges like inflation and labor shortages, the state must put their money in places where we can see real results. I have some concerns regarding efficacy of some WEDC programs as they fall short of their job creation and retention goals.

“When organizations like the WEDC are lax in their adherence to statutory requirements and policies, it is the role of legislative oversight to demand improvement. The audit committee will continue to be attentive to the work of the WEDC, particularly as they recover COVID-era misallocated funds. I do not want to continue to see audits that show poor implementation of policies that are intended to benefit the people of Wisconsin,” said Rep. Wittke.

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