Written by GBP Staff
Friday, 12 February 2016 14:46

http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/walker-liar-s5.jpg



Walker flees the angry crowd in Madison to sign bill undermining "Merit System" into law at private sector temporary help giant Manpower. Many employees fear Walker wants to take action against "recall signers". Democrats contend the bill will open the door to cronyism.

APPLETON, WI - Gov. Scott Walker plans to sign a Republican-backed bill to overhaul Wisconsin's civil service system in this northeastern Wisconsin city on Friday, far from Madison and the thousands of state workers angered by his action.

Walker's office says the GOP governor is scheduled to sign the bill into law at Manpower Group in Appleton. The location is choice, since Walker made Manpower a favorite source of temporary help to replace civil service employees during his two terms as Milwaukee County Executive.

The bill eliminates job applicant exams, centralizes hiring decisions within the governor's Madison Department of Administration, does away with bumping rights that have given more experienced workers first call on remaining jobs during layoffs and allows agencies to keep new hires on probation for up to two years before they can receive regular employee status. Until now, new employees were in probationary status for six months before their boss had to make the final decision to hire them.

The bill also adds a definition of just cause for termination and lists infractions that would result in immediate firing. These provisions would add nothing new in actual practice, since state

employees committing serious infractions have been subject to immediate termination for just cause for many years.

Walker has been outspoken in his support of the proposal, claiming efficiency as his motivation. However, many employees fear Walker wants the power to take action against so-called "recall signers", meaning the thousands of state employees among the nearly 1 million Wisconsinites who signed the petition to recall the governor during his first term.

Democrats contend the bill will open the door to cronyism within state agencies.



“By dismantling our state’s civil service system, Governor Walker and legislative Republicans are kicking down the door for cronyism and corruption in Wisconsin," said Assembly Democratic Leader **Peter Barca** (D-Kenosha) on Friday. “The civil service system was founded on the idea that state employees should serve the public interest, not partisan political interests. Republicans have made it clear they will stop at nothing to consolidate their own power while rewarding their cronies with taxpayer-funded jobs."

Early in his administration Governor Walker was caught in a couple prominent situations where he placed allies in key positions with thin to no qualifications. Back during his Milwaukee County days, Walker was also known to place key aides into "holding" positions to draw large salaries. This law will make it easier to more broadly do this unencumbered by the rules.

Additionally, Walker used this approach at WEDC, where he eliminated civil service for hiring staff and we saw continuous problems with turnover and ethically questionable conduct with potential pay to play and taxpayer funds at risk.

"Republicans want to make that (the WEDC) the model for our entire state", concludes Barca. "This is truly a dark day for Wisconsin’s proud heritage of clean, open and transparent government.”