

Walker Should Step Down from WEDC

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Governor Walker, through WEDC, is in a position to pick and choose who gets grants and subsidies to corporations that are headed by major political donors that support him. Good Government Advocates say, in light of conflicts of interest, emergency action needed to protect public job creation dollars from the legal bribery of campaign financing.

STATEWIDE - Citizen Action of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign held a press conference at the Capitol earlier this week calling on Governor Scott Walker to step down as the Chair of the Board of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). A [full audio recording](#) of a media call held after the press conference [is available](#).

Citizen Action and the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign believe that the flawed structure of WEDC creates an unacceptable risk of legalized bribery. The high stakes election this fall, and the massive amounts of money being raised and spent, elevate this risk dramatically. Governor Walker is expected to raise a record amount of money for his reelection, with substantial sums coming from CEOs and corporate executives with a direct financial interest in the decisions made by WEDC.

“It is ethically impossible for a Governor to impartially preside over decisions to provide millions of dollars in corporate subsidies and also receive hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign donations from corporate executives,” said Robert Kraig, Executive Director of Citizen Action of Wisconsin. “This is a flawed structure. It would be an impossible situation for any governor, not just this Governor. The best way to safeguard the public’s precious job creation dollars, and prevent any appearance of legal bribery during this hotly contested election, is for Walker to step aside as the Board Chair of WEDC.”

"Governor Walker, through WEDC, is in a position to pick and choose in providing grants and subsidies to corporations that are headed by major political donors that support him," said Mike McCabe, Executive Director of Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.. "This flagrant conflict of interest is intolerable."

"The gross conflicts of interest created by the unhappy combination of WEDC's structure and the deregulation of our campaign finance system also creates difficult issues for ethical business leaders," Kraig continued. "Given Walker's direct and personal role in handing out economic development subsidies, who could blame corporate leaders for believing it necessary to make campaign donations to the Governor if they want to receive grants, loans, and tax credits from WEDC? If this outrageous conflict of interest is allowed to continue, it will destroy what is left of the public's faith in the integrity of Wisconsin government."

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