

Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Voting Record 2015-2016 Wisconsin State Legislature Summary of Bills

STATE ASSEMBLY

Senate Bill 44 Right to Work

(Unfavorable upon Passage) Despite repeated vows by Governor Walker that he was not interested in taking up Right to Work, Republicans began discussing the passage of a Right to Work bill shortly before the legislative session began, in an effort to weaken workers' unions. Right to Work laws take advantage of a loophole in federal law that allows state law to erode workers' rights by letting workers receive the benefits of a union contract without sharing in the costs of union representation. Research shows that Right to Work laws lower wages for both union and non-union workers by over 3%, and make it more difficult for all workers to obtain employer-sponsored health insurance by about 3% and obtain pensions by 5%. Right to Work laws neither create nor improve economic security for any worker; these laws are a political tool for people at the top to increase their own power and wealth.

In addition to outlawing unions and employers from negotiating over whether all workers should contribute to the cost of union benefits, this bill made the penalty criminal. If either a business or union representative attempts to negotiate over the shared cost of union representation, such person could face jail. Furthermore, this bill repealed the Declaration of Policy for labor in Wisconsin. The Declaration of Policy had stood for 75 years, laying the foundation for what Wisconsin expects: labor peace, adequate and regular income, and support for those who wish to voluntarily negotiate labor agreements and methods of dispute resolution – so that we don't revert into "trial by combat."

Republicans called an extraordinary session to ram through this anti-worker bill. In the public hearing, people came to publicly oppose the bill by a 25 to 1 margin. Despite an overwhelming outcry from citizens to oppose the bill, the Right to Work bill was introduced, passed, and signed into law in a matter of 15 days. **The recorded vote of 62-35 was on passage (March 6, 2015). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** SB 44 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 1.

Assembly Bill 900 Workers' Rights Restoration Act (Repeal Act 10)

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) Until Governor Walker took office in 2011, Wisconsin had been the leader in respecting workers' rights. That proud history came to a halt in 2011 with the passage of Act 10, a bill that essentially stripped public sector workers – librarians to teachers to water utility workers – of their rights to come together with their co-workers as a union. This bill, AB 900, would restore all rights of public sector workers. More specifically, it would have permitted municipal and state employees to collectively bargain over wages, hours, and conditions of employment. This bill would have restored the right of University of Wisconsin (UW) System, UW Hospitals and Clinics Authority, and certain home care and child care provider employees to collectively bargain over wages, hours, and conditions of employment. **The recorded vote of 34-62 was on a motion to bring AB 900 to the full Assembly for a vote (February 17, 2016). A vote in favor is a "right" vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

Assembly Bill 373
Civil Service Destruction

(Unfavorable upon Passage) Wisconsin has a proud tradition of fairness, openness, and impartiality in our civil service system, which was signed into law over 100 years ago by Gov. La Follette to fight corruption and cronyism. To date, our civil service laws have protected taxpayers and state workers alike. Its hallmark is the civil service exam, a blind, objective test for each position to ensure that job offers are given to applicants for their job knowledge and not for their political connections. AB 373 removed the blind exams for new job applicants and replaced them with a resume-only based system. AB 373 also changed layoff rules, significantly lengthened the probationary period, hamstrung employees' rights to reasonable due process by tightening grievance timelines, and transferred the hiring process to Governor's appointees in the Department of Administration. **The recorded vote of 57-35 was on passage (October 27, 2015). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** AB 373 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 150.

Assembly Bill 724
Worker's Compensation

(Favorable upon Passage) Over a century ago, Wisconsin became the first state to pass a constitutionally-valid workers compensation law. This law created a nationally-renowned system whereby injured workers receive prompt treatment, compensation, and an incentive to return to work at the conclusion of the healing period. In an effort to maintain the overall stability of the worker's compensation system without regard to partisan changes in the legislative or executive branches of government, the Legislature created the Workers Compensation Advisory Council to advise the Legislature on the development and administration of the worker's compensation law. The Workers Compensation Advisory Council is comprised of representatives from labor and management. Council members meet regularly to study, vet, and ultimately ensure that recommended changes are good for the entire system: workers, employers, and insurers. The Council's recommended changes are brought to the Legislature as an agreed-upon bill. The Legislature introduces, reviews, and passes the agreed-upon bill because legislators trust that the Council's members have an excellent understanding of the system and have trust in the Council's process.

This year, the Council brought AB 724 to the Legislature as the Agreed-Upon bill. The bill was supported by labor, management, and institutions involved with the worker's compensation system, such as medical providers and the insurance community. **The recorded vote of 97-0 was on passage (February 9, 2016). A vote in favor is a "right" vote.** AB 724 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 180.

Assembly Bill 87
Creates "Buy Wisconsin" Preference for State Procurements

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) When state and local governments buy products and contract for services, those products and services should be provided by Wisconsin companies that perform the work in our state, whenever possible. This bill, AB 87, was a modest proposal that set a goal for the State Department of Administration and any state or local government unit to purchase 20% of its products and services from Wisconsin-based businesses. Local government units include cities, villages, towns, counties, and school and technical college districts. Democrats moved to suspend the rules to take up AB 87 before the session ended. **The recorded vote of 36-61 was on a motion to bring AB 87 for a vote (November 3, 2015). A vote in favor is a "right" vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

***Senate Bill 21
2015-2017 Wisconsin State Biennial Budget***

(Unfavorable upon Passage) Wisconsin's 2015-2017 Biennial Budget covers the fiscal period of July 2015 to June 2017 and is truly the worst budget for working families. **The recorded vote of 52-46 was on passage (July 9, 2015). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** SB 21 passed the Legislature and the 2015-2017 Wisconsin State Biennial Budget was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 55.

The following are just ten examples of harmful policies that were included in the 2015-17 State Budget:

- **Repeals Prevailing Wage:** For over 80 years, Wisconsin's prevailing wage laws set a wage floor for workers and ensured a level playing field for Wisconsin workers and contractors alike. When the Assembly took a vote on the budget bill (SB 21), it included the repeal of Wisconsin's prevailing wage for local government projects.
- **Irresponsible Transit Funding:** The lack of adequate revenue to fund our infrastructure is a long-time known problem. Rather than solving the problem by generating revenue, this budget borrows \$850 million to pay for ongoing road construction projects. On top of the borrowing is an overall decreased amount of spending for road projects, which will mean that ongoing infrastructure projects will suffer.
- **Cutting taxes for the wealthy:** This budget reduces taxes for the wealthy – individuals that make over \$200,000 per year. This tax reduction is expected to cost taxpayers \$6 million in 2017, \$25 million in 2018, and \$30 million in 2019.
- **Introduced 7 day workweek:** This budget provision removes the required 24-hour rest period in a 7-day workweek. Permitting companies to have employees work 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year will harm Wisconsin workers, families, and communities.
- **More of Act 10:** This budget makes it more difficult for public employees to form a brand new bargaining unit. Act 10 imposed a higher election standard for employees who were already in a bargaining unit and wished to re-certify (Act 10 orders public employees to re-certify their union each and every year). Recertification elections require 51% of the bargaining unit, whether or not every employee votes, to recertify their union. This budget provision changes the standard for public employees who wish to organize a bargaining unit for the first time. Under Act 10, if public employees had not already joined together in a union and organized a brand new bargaining unit, then they only needed to receive a simple majority, the standard for all democratic elections. This provision requires public employees who have not yet joined together in a union to receive 51% of the bargaining unit, whether or not every employee votes – just like recertification elections.
- **K-12 Education:** This budget continues to upend Wisconsin's strong tradition of great public schools and commitment to local control by cutting at least \$48 million from public school districts' budgets during the budget cycle, by changing the method for paying voucher schools.

The budget calls for the split-up of Milwaukee public schools without receiving public input or giving notice to parents or taxpayers. The plan is limited to Milwaukee, but part of the larger plan is to recreate the plan in Madison and Racine (districts with 15,000 or more students). Finally, the budget removes local control from Racine taxpayers by dictating the manner in which Racine voters elect their school board.

- **UW System:** The University of Wisconsin System has been a critical pathway to success for generations of Wisconsin's working families. For over one hundred years, any academically-prepared person, regardless of his or her background, has had the opportunity to receive a quality college education without acquiring massive debt. Governor Walker and his legislative allies are decimating the UW System with this budget by cutting \$250 million in state aid, eliminating tenure from state law, and changing shared governance.
- **FamilyCare:** Family Care, a Medicaid program, serves adults with various disabilities as well as our frail elders by improving their access to long-term care services and creating a cost-effective system that focuses on health and social outcomes. This budget allows unscrupulous for-profit companies to manage long-term care services, which will harm patients/consumers and their service providers, including their homecare workers who provide dignified, compassionate care.
- **Weakening Teaching Standards:** This budget weakens teaching license qualifications by removing the requirement that all teachers have college degrees.
- **Correctional Officers and Public Safety:** This budget cuts all night tower Correctional Officer positions at every prison across the State, with the exception of Waupun Prison, leaving night towers vacant at a time when prisoners are most likely to escape.

Assembly Bill 570
Restores the Equal Pay Enforcement Act

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) Before 2012, Wisconsin afforded victims of employment discrimination (based on gender, race, religion, military service, sexual orientation, etc.) the right to take their cases to circuit court to seek justice in the form of compensatory and punitive damages. In Wisconsin, this law was known as the Equal Pay Enforcement Act – nationally it is often referred to an Equal Pay for Women Act – and was on the books until Governor Walker repealed it in 2012. Under current law, victims of employment discrimination can file a claim with the state, but the remedy for such illegal discrimination is limited and neither addresses the actual harm committed by egregious employers nor deters employers from engaging in such discrimination. This bill, AB 570, would restore the right of workers who are victims of employment discrimination to take their cases to circuit court to seek greater justice by seeking compensatory and punitive damages. Democrats moved to suspend the rules to take up AB 570 before the session ended. **The recorded vote of 35-61 was on a motion to bring AB 570 for a vote (January 19, 2016). A vote in favor is a “right” vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

Assembly Bill 529
The Marty Beil Bill to Create a State Office of Civil Service

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) Named after our brother, Marty Beil, who passed away last year after providing decades of service and leadership to Wisconsin's workers and their families, this bill – AB 529 – would have provided objectivity and fairness to Wisconsin's civil service system, which came under attack this legislative session. AB 529 would have helped prevent against political hiring by removing the hiring process from Governor's political appointees in the Department of Administration. AB 529 would have created the Office of Civil Service, which would have housed a newly created Division of Labor Relations and Division of Affirmative Action. **The recorded vote of 35-61 was on a motion to bring AB 529 for a vote (January 12, 2016). A vote in favor is a “right” vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

Assembly Bill 221

Requires State to Expand BadgerCare and Accept Millions of Federal Medicaid Dollars

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) For years, Wisconsin was a national leader in ensuring that its most vulnerable citizens had access to health care. The Affordable Care Act, signed into law in 2010, offered each State a greater reimbursement of Medicaid (known as BadgerCare in Wisconsin) costs, if it expanded Medicaid to include more uninsured adults. In February 2013, Governor Walker announced his decision to scale back the BadgerCare program, remove 77,000 Wisconsinites from BadgerCare, and reject hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funds. Since 2014, this decision has cost taxpayers \$572 million and cost tens of thousands of Wisconsinites health care. Governor Walker's reckless decision could be changed by state law at any time. This bill, AB 221, would require the State to expand our BadgerCare program to those adults making 133% of the federal poverty level, to accept the federal dollars, and to fully comply with the Affordable Care Act. **The recorded vote of 36-60 was on a motion to bring AB 221 for a vote (January 19, 2016). A vote in favor is a "right" vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

Assembly Bill 388

Dismantles the Government Accountability Board

(Unfavorable upon Passage) After a political scandal that sent legislators to jail a decade ago, the legislature created the non-partisan Government Accountability Board in 2007. Since then, the GAB has been charged with investigating campaign finance, lobbying, and ethics violations as well as administering state elections and lobbying laws. The GAB is led by a board of retired judges, and therefore is independent and operates above partisan politics. The GAB has become a nationally-renowned check on state elections and ethics. This bill, AB 388, eliminates the GAB and creates two commissions – the "Elections Commission" to oversee elections and the "Ethics Commission" to oversee ethics, lobbying, and campaign finance. The new entities would each be run by a group of 6 partisan appointees. Changes to the independent GAB constitute an attack on good government because AB 388 restricts the Commissions' abilities to launch an investigation. Furthermore, once an investigation is launched, if more funds are needed to continue the investigation, then the Commission would have to request the legislature for funds to do so. The Assembly first passed AB 388 less than two weeks after it was introduced. **The recorded vote of 58-39 was on passage (October 21, 2015). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** AB 388 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 118.

Senate Bill 209

Milwaukee Bucks Arena

(Favorable Upon Passage) The Milwaukee Bucks, a NBA franchise team, has a contract to play at the BMO Harris Bradley Center, a state-chartered facility, through 2017. A new stadium is needed for the Bucks and construction of a new stadium will benefit the community. The new arena will spur more building and development in the Park East Corridor, which will create good jobs. Local and state leaders came together to provide some public financing for the development and construction of a new arena. This bill, SB 209, is the keystone of the public financing package for the new arena. State funding would be triggered by the City of Milwaukee's funding of a parking structure and financing for the arena district. The total state funding, with interest, will be \$80 million. This investment will create literally thousands of jobs, including union jobs. Once the arena is finished, the entire sports and entertainment district will employ thousands of people, for decades to come. **The recorded vote of 52-34 was on passage (July 28, 2015). A vote in favor is a "right" vote.** SB 209 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 60.

Assembly Bill 915
Prohibiting the Sale or Lease of Wisconsin's Water

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) Clean and accessible water is a human right and should not be used cavalierly as a tool for profit. In early 2016, a \$5 billion dollar Pennsylvania corporation attempted to ram through a bill that would have made it easier for private companies to purchase or lease our public utilities, including our water utilities, without a mandatory referendum vote. The labor movement joined environmentalists, municipalities, and concerned citizens in sending a strong message that we value clean, safe, and quality water and will not let our water be sold to the highest bidder. Due to our collective work, the bill died in the Senate. This bill, AB 915, was a proactive bill that would have prohibited municipalities from selling or leasing water or sewer utilities to private companies. **The recorded vote of 33-61 was on a motion to bring AB 915 for a vote (February 19, 2016). A vote in favor is a “right” vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

Senate Bill 533
Restricts Local Governments from Issuing Identification Cards

(Unfavorable Upon Passage) In 2011, Governor Walker signed Voter ID into law, requiring all voters to show an acceptable photo identification in order to vote. The courts blocked the law from being implemented for a number of years because of a lawsuit challenging the harsh voter ID law. Now that the law has gone into effect, voters must show an acceptable photo ID to vote. One of the many problems with the flawed law is that it is difficult to obtain a new photo identification card at a State DMV. For example, the DMV in Sauk City is open only on the fifth Wednesday of every month, from 8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. DMVs in the area do not have uniform hours; some are open on Mondays and Wednesdays and others are open only on select Wednesdays of each month. To help residents obtain an identification card, some municipalities began discussing the possibility of issuing their own photo identification cards. However, this bill – SB 533 – put a quick stop to those discussions by prohibiting all municipalities from issuing photo identification cards. This bill constitutes an attack on local control and places another obstacle to obtaining a photo identification card. **The recorded vote of 62-35 was on passage (February 16, 2016). A vote in favor is a “wrong” vote.** SB 533 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 374.

Assembly Bill 886
Stopping Companies that Receive State Funds from Outsourcing Jobs

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) The Wisconsin AFL-CIO supports investments that result in family- and community-supporting jobs, always with transparency and accountability. In 2011, Governor Walker partially privatized the Department of Commerce when he created the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (“WEDC”). The WEDC has been a failed experiment. Recently, there have been multiple reports of companies, which have received financial assistance from WEDC, outsourcing Wisconsin jobs. It is deplorable that this administration has negligently allowed businesses to benefit from tax funds while laying off hundreds, if not thousands, of workers. This bill, AB 886, would prevent corporate giveaways that harm workers by explicitly prohibiting state funds from being used to outsource or reduce employment in Wisconsin. It would require any business that receives a loan, grant, or tax credit from the WEDC to report job losses or the outsourcing of Wisconsin jobs to WEDC within seven days. This bill would allow the WEDC to include relevant sanctions in its contracts and agreements with businesses. **The recorded vote of 32-62 was on a motion to bring AB 886 for a vote (February 19, 2016). A vote in favor is a “right” vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

Assembly Bill 862

Full Compensation for Victims Act (Repeals Asbestosis Victimization Act)

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) In 2014, the legislature passed Act 154, which harmed victims of asbestos exposure. Asbestos has been classified as a known human carcinogen by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Repeated exposure to asbestos has been shown to increase the risk of lung cancer and mesothelioma, a relatively rare but brutal form of cancer. Mesothelioma is the most common form of cancer associated with asbestos exposure. Building Trades workers and veterans have been particularly victimized by asbestos exposure. Veterans comprise 30% of mesothelioma deaths but make-up only 7% of our population. In addition, veterans filed over 60% of the asbestos cases in the last five years in Wisconsin. Act 154 harmed victims and their families by placing unnecessary and onerous hurdles in the way of processing a claim through the courts, which will draw out the process of compensating a victim – perhaps until after he or she passes away. This bill, AB 862, would ensure that asbestos-exposed victims and their families will receive adequate compensation for their injuries in a timely manner. **The recorded vote of 35-62 was on a motion to bring AB 862 for a vote (February 9, 2016). A vote in favor is a “right” vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

Assembly Bill 342

Protecting Taxpayers from Presidential Campaign Expenses

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) Wisconsin taxpayers have always paid for the security detail for the current Governor of Wisconsin, as the Governor traveled around the state, and even traveled out-of-the-state on State business. Governor Walker took advantage of this arrangement when he effectively began running for President. His lead-up to the announcement for President lasted about 8 months and his Presidential campaign lasted only 2 months. During the lead-up, Gov. Walker took advantage of the taxpayer paid security as he increased his travel significantly. For example in June 2014, he traveled out of state 2 days but in June 2015 he traveled out of state at least 13 days, including a trip to Canada that cost Wisconsin taxpayers \$30,000. When Gov. Walker’s campaign failed after 70 days, he promised to repay the state. However, taxpayers do not know how much he borrowed, interest-free, from Wisconsin taxpayers. This bill, AB 342, would protect taxpayers by requiring any elected state official who is considering running for national office to submit monthly statements to the State ethics office identifying the official’s travel expenses from the previous month. The official would then be required to reimburse the State for any taxpayer money used for a political trip within one month of the filing date or a \$500 penalty would have been assessed for each day that the payment is late. **The recorded vote of 35-61 was on a motion to bring AB 342 for a vote (January 12, 2016). A vote in favor is a “right” vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

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STATE SENATE

Senate Bill 44 Right to Work

(Unfavorable upon Passage) Despite repeated vows by Governor Walker that he was not interested in taking up Right to Work, Republicans began discussing the passage of a Right to Work bill shortly before the legislative session began, in an effort to weaken workers' unions. Right to Work laws take advantage of a loophole in federal law that allows state law to erode workers' rights by letting workers receive the benefits of a union contract without sharing in the costs of union representation. Research shows that Right to Work laws lower wages for all workers by over 3%, and make it more difficult for all workers to obtain employer-sponsored health insurance by about 3% and obtain pensions by 5%. Right to Work laws neither create nor improve economic security for any worker; these laws are a political tool for people at the top to increase their own power and wealth.

In addition to outlawing unions and employers from negotiating over whether all workers should contribute to the cost of union benefits, this bill made the penalty criminal. If either a business or union representative attempts to negotiate over the shared cost of union representation, such person could face jail. Furthermore, this bill repealed the Declaration of Policy for labor in Wisconsin. The Declaration of Policy had stood for 75 years, laying the foundation for what Wisconsin expects: labor peace, adequate and regular income, and support for those who wish to voluntarily negotiate labor agreements and methods of dispute resolution – so that we don't revert into "trial by combat."

Republicans called an extraordinary session to ram through this anti-worker bill. In the public hearing, 1,751 people came to publicly oppose the bill (most of whom never spoke because the public hearing was cut short) and only 25 registered in favor. Despite an overwhelming outcry from citizens to oppose the bill, the Right to Work bill was introduced, passed, and signed into law in a matter of 15 days. **The recorded vote of 17-15 was on passage (February 25, 2015). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** SB 44 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 1.

Senate Bill 666 Workers' Rights Restoration Act (Repeal Act 10)

(Favorable on Motion to Take Up Bill) Until Governor Walker took office in 2011, Wisconsin had been the leader in respecting workers' rights. That proud history came to a halt in 2011 with the passage of Act 10, a bill that essentially stripped public sector workers – librarians to teachers to water utility workers – of their rights to come together with their co-workers as a union. This bill, SB 666, would restore all rights of public sector workers. More specifically, it would have permitted municipal and state employees to collectively bargain over wages, hours, and conditions of employment. This bill would have restored the right of University of Wisconsin (UW) System, UW Hospitals and Clinics Authority, and certain home care and child care employees to collectively bargain over wages, hours, and conditions of employment. **The recorded vote of 13-19 was on a motion to bring SB 666 to the full Senate for a vote (February 16, 2016). A vote in favor is a "right" vote.** Unfortunately, the motion was rejected and the bill died at the end of the session.

***Assembly Bill 373
Civil Service Destruction***

(Unfavorable upon Passage) Wisconsin has a proud tradition of fairness, openness, and impartiality in our civil service system, which was signed into law over 100 years ago by Gov. La Follette to fight corruption and cronyism. To date, our civil service laws have protected taxpayers and state workers alike. Its hallmark is the civil service exam, a blind, objective test for each position to ensure that job offers are given to applicants for their job knowledge and not for their political connections. AB 373 removed the blind exams for new job applicants and replaced them with a resume-only based system. AB 373 also changed layoff rules, significantly lengthened the probationary period, hamstrung employees' rights to reasonable due process by tightening grievance timelines, and transferred the hiring process to Governor's appointees in the Department of Administration. **The recorded vote of 19-14 was on passage (January 20, 2016). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** AB 373 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 150.

***Senate Bill 21, SA2-SSA1
Repeal Prevailing Wage for Local Governments***

(Unfavorable upon Motion to Pass Amendment) Early in the legislative session, Republicans in the Assembly and Senate introduced bills to completely repeal Wisconsin's Prevailing Wage laws, comprised of three statutes that have been on the books for over 80 years. Wisconsin's three prevailing wage statutes (one for local governments, one for state government, and one for state transportation projects) set a wage floor for workers and ensured a level playing field for Wisconsin workers and contractors alike. Each of the three Prevailing Wage statutes also ensured that construction projects were built with high-quality workmanship. After months of debates around the bills and nearly five months of debate around the State Budget, Senate Republicans slipped an amendment onto the budget calling for the repeal of prevailing wage laws for local and municipal government projects, and a substitution of the federal prevailing wage for the state prevailing wage for state-funded projects. **The recorded vote of 17-16 was on passage (July 7, 2016). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** After the Senate voted to amend the State Budget (SB 21) with this amendment, it then passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 55.

***Senate Bill 21
2015-2017 Wisconsin State Biennial Budget***

(Unfavorable upon Passage) Wisconsin's 2015-2017 Biennial Budget covers the fiscal period of July 2015 to June 2017 and is truly the worst budget for working families. **The recorded vote of 18-15 was on passage (July 7, 2015). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** SB 21 passed the Legislature and the 2015-2017 Wisconsin State Biennial Budget was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 55.

The following are just ten examples of devastating policies that were included in the 2015-2017 Biennial State Budget:

- **UW System:** The University of Wisconsin System has been a critical pathway to success for generations of Wisconsin's working families. For over one hundred years, any academically-prepared person, regardless of his or her background, has had the opportunity to receive a quality college education without acquiring massive debt. Governor Walker and his legislative allies are decimating the UW System with this budget by cutting \$250 million in state aid, eliminating tenure from state law, and changing shared governance.

- **Irresponsible Transit Funding:** The lack of adequate revenue to fund our infrastructure is a long-time known problem. Rather than solving the problem by generating revenue, this budget borrows \$850 million to pay for ongoing road construction projects. On top of the borrowing is an overall decreased amount of spending for road projects, which will mean that ongoing infrastructure projects will suffer.
- **Cutting taxes for the wealthy:** This budget reduces taxes for the wealthy – individuals that make over \$200,000 per year. This tax reduction is expected to cost taxpayers \$6 million in 2017, \$25 million in 2018, and \$30 million in 2019.
- **Introduced 7 day workweek:** This budget provision removes the required 24-hour rest period in a 7-day workweek. Permitting companies to have employees work 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year will harm Wisconsin workers, families, and communities.
- **More of Act 10:** This budget makes it more difficult for public employees to form a brand new bargaining unit. Act 10 imposed a higher election standard for employees who were already in a bargaining unit and wished to re-certify (Act 10 orders public employees to re-certify their union each and every year). Recertification elections require 51% of the bargaining unit, whether or not every employee votes, to recertify their union. This budget provision changes the standard for public employees who wish to organize a bargaining unit for the first time. Under Act 10, if public employees had not already joined together in a union and organized a brand new bargaining unit, then they only needed to receive a simple majority, the standard for all democratic elections. This provision requires public employees who have not yet joined together in a union to receive 51% of the bargaining unit, whether or not every employee votes – just like recertification elections.
- **FamilyCare:** Family Care, a Medicaid program, serves adults with various disabilities as well as our frail elders by improving their access to long-term care services and creating a cost-effective system that focuses on health and social outcomes. This budget allows unscrupulous for-profit companies to manage long-term care services, which will harm patients/consumers and their service providers, including their homecare workers who provide dignified, compassionate care.
- **Weakening Teaching Standards:** This budget weakens teaching license qualifications by removing the requirement that all teachers have college degrees.
- **K-12 Education:** This budget continues to upend Wisconsin's strong tradition of great public schools and commitment to local control by cutting at least \$48 million from public school districts' budgets during the budget cycle, by changing the method for paying voucher schools. The budget calls for the split-up of Milwaukee public schools without receiving public input or giving notice to parents or taxpayers. The plan is limited to Milwaukee, but part of the larger plan is to recreate the plan in Madison and Racine (districts with 15,000 or more students). Finally, the budget removes local control from Racine taxpayers by dictating the manner in which Racine voters elect their school board.
- **Correctional Officers and Public Safety:** This budget cuts all night tower Correctional Officer positions at every prison across the State, with the exception of Waupun Prison, leaving night towers vacant at a time when prisoners are most likely to escape.
- **Repeals Prevailing Wage:** For over 80 years, Wisconsin's prevailing wage laws set a wage floor for workers and ensured a level playing field for Wisconsin workers and contractors alike. When the Senate took a vote on the budget bill (SB 21), it included the repeal of Wisconsin's prevailing wage for local government projects.

Senate Bill 209
Milwaukee Bucks Arena

(Favorable Upon Passage) The Milwaukee Bucks, a NBA franchise team, has a contract to play at the BMO Harris Bradley Center, a state-chartered facility, through 2017. A new stadium is needed for the Bucks and construction of a new stadium will benefit the community. The new arena will spur more building and development in the Park East Corridor, which will create good jobs. Local and state leaders came together to provide some public financing for the development and construction of a new arena. This bill, SB 209, is the keystone of the public financing package for the new arena. State funding would be triggered by the City of Milwaukee's funding of a parking structure and financing for the arena district. The total state funding, with interest, will be \$80 million. This investment will create literally thousands of jobs, including union jobs. Once the arena is finished, the entire sports and entertainment district will employ thousands of people, for decades to come. **The recorded vote of 21-10 was on passage (July 15, 2015). A vote in favor is a "right" vote.** SB 209 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 60.

Senate Bill 21, Senate Amendment 6-SSAI
Restores Funding to the University of Wisconsin System

(Unfavorable on Motion to Table Amendment) The University of Wisconsin System has been a critical pathway to success for generations of Wisconsin's working families. For over one hundred years, any academically-prepared person, regardless of his or her background, has had the opportunity to receive a quality college education without acquiring massive debt. With the current budget, Gov. Walker and his legislative allies are attempting to dismantle our strong UW System by cutting \$250 million in state aid. This budget amendment, Senate Amendment 6, simply restores the funding to the UW System. **The recorded vote of 19-14 was on a motion to kill Senate Amendment 6 to SB 21 (July 7, 2015) by tabling it. A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** Unfortunately, the amendment was tabled.

Senate Bill 533
Restricts Local Governments from Issuing Identification Cards

(Unfavorable Upon Passage) In 2011, Governor Walker signed Voter ID into law, requiring all voters to show an acceptable photo identification in order to vote. The courts blocked the law from being implemented for a number of years because of a lawsuit challenging the harsh voter ID law. Now that the law has gone into effect, voters must show an acceptable photo ID to vote. One of the many problems with the flawed law is that it is difficult to obtain a new photo identification card at a State DMV. For example, the DMV in Sauk City is open only on the fifth Wednesday of every month, from 8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. DMVs in the area do not have uniform hours; some are open on Mondays and Wednesdays and others are open only on select Wednesdays of each month. To help residents obtain an identification card, some municipalities begun discussing the possibility of issuing their own photo identification cards. However, this bill – SB 533 – put a quick stop to those discussions by prohibiting all municipalities from issuing photo identification cards. This bill constitutes an attack on local control and places another obstacle to obtaining a photo identification card. **The recorded vote of 19-13 was on passage (February 16, 2016). A vote in favor is a "wrong" vote.** SB 533 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 374.

***Senate Bill 21, Senate Amendment 22-SSA1
Stopping Companies from Receiving State Aid and then Outsourcing Jobs***

(Unfavorable on Motion to Table Amendment) The Wisconsin AFL-CIO supports investments that result in family-supporting jobs, always with transparency and accountability. In 2011, Governor Walker partially privatized the Department of Commerce when he created the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (“WEDC”). The WEDC has been a failed experiment. Recently, there have been multiple reports of companies, which received financial assistance from WEDC, outsourcing Wisconsin jobs. It is deplorable that this administration has negligently allowed businesses to benefit from tax funds only to layoff hundreds, if not thousands, of workers. This amendment to the budget, Senate Amendment 22, would have created the Wisconsin Job Development and Retention Commission to determine when a business, which receives state tax benefits, is outsourcing jobs. It would also render any business that outsources Wisconsin jobs ineligible to receive any WEDC grants or loans. Moreover, if a business did receive any benefit from WEDC and then outsourced Wisconsin jobs, then that business would be required to repay the benefit within 6 months of the outsourcing. **The recorded vote of 19-14 was on a motion to kill Senate Amendment 22 to SB 21 (July 7, 2015) by tabling it. A vote in favor is a “wrong” vote.** Unfortunately, the amendment was tabled.

***Senate Bill 21, Senate Amendment 12-SSA1
Requires State to Expand BadgerCare and Accept Millions of Federal Medicaid Dollars***

(Unfavorable on Motion to Table Amendment) For years, Wisconsin was a national leader in ensuring that its most vulnerable citizens had access to health care. The Affordable Care Act, signed into law in 2010, offered each State a greater reimbursement of Medicaid (known as BadgerCare in Wisconsin) costs, if it expanded Medicaid to include more uninsured adults. In February 2013, Governor Walker announced his decision to scale back the BadgerCare program, remove 77,000 Wisconsinites from BadgerCare, and reject hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funds. Since 2014, this decision has cost taxpayers at least \$572 million and cost tens of thousands of Wisconsinites health care. Gov. Walker’s reckless decision could be changed by state law at any time. This Amendment to the Budget Bill, Senate Amendment 12, would have required the State to expand our BadgerCare program to those adults making 133% of the federal poverty level, to accept the federal dollars, and to otherwise fully comply with the Affordable Care Act. **The recorded vote of 19-14 was on a motion to kill Senate Amendment 12 to SB 21 (July 7, 2015) by tabling it. A vote in favor is a “wrong” vote.** Unfortunately, the amendment was tabled.

***Senate Bill 21, Senate Amendment 8-SSA1
Restoring One Day Rest in Seven***

(Unfavorable on Motion to Table Amendment) For decades, Wisconsin has honored the fact that human beings are not machines; we need rest for our physical and emotional well-being. This right has been known as the “One Day Rest in Seven” law. It afforded a 24-hour rest period to many employees. And yet, efforts to repeal required rest periods have been on-going for the past few years. During the literally last minutes of budget deliberations, Republican legislators attached a provision to the budget that essentially repealed workers’ right to one day rest in seven. The provision removed the 24-hour required rest period in a 7-day work week by allowing employers to request that employees state in writing that they do not want a day off, ever. In an era of increasing job insecurity, an employment offer with a request to work 7 days a week may be an offer that many workers cannot refuse. This budget amendment, Senate Amendment 8, would have restored the One Day Rest in Seven statute. **The recorded vote of 19-14 was on a motion to kill Senate Amendment 8 to SB 21 (July 7, 2015) by tabling it. A vote in favor is a “wrong” vote.** Unfortunately, the amendment was tabled.

***Senate Bill 21, Senate Amendment 28-SSA1
Support for Made in the U.S.A.***

(Unfavorable on Motion to Table Amendment) Current law provides that when the Department of Administration purchases materials, if all factors among bidders are substantially equal, then the bidder with materials made in the USA should receive the contract. However, if we want manufacturing jobs to stay in our country, then we must be willing to prioritize bids that include goods and materials manufactured, produced, fabricated, and/or assembled by American workers. This budget amendment, Senate Amendment 28, sets the standard for the State Department of Administration and any state or local government unit that purchases products: any materials these governmental units purchase must be manufactured in the United States to the greatest extent possible. Local government units include cities, villages, towns, counties, and school and technical college districts. **The recorded vote of 19-14 was on a motion to kill Senate Amendment 28 to SB 21 (July 7, 2015) by tabling it. A vote in favor is a “wrong” vote. Unfortunately, the amendment was tabled.**

***Senate Bill 449
Weakening Teaching License Standards***

(Unfavorable on Passage) Wisconsin has always had high-quality licensing standards for teachers and, not coincidentally, strong public educational outcomes. Under Wisconsin law, in order to teach in any K-12 class in Wisconsin, one must possess a license issued by the State Department of Public Instruction. Generally, teacher license applicants must possess a bachelor’s degree and must have completed an approved teacher preparation program. This changed with the 2015-17 biennial budget: the Budget Bill created an “experiential-based” license to teach technical education subjects, including any technology-related occupation, without a bachelor’s degree. Now, this bill, SB 449, further weakens teacher license standards by changing the minimum qualifications for teachers in Wisconsin. More specifically, SB 449 expands the “experiential-based” teacher’s license, where one does not need a bachelor’s degree or teacher preparation to teach various educational subjects including, but not limited to, agriculture and business classes. **The recorded vote of 19-13 was on passage (February 9, 2016). A vote in favor is a “wrong” vote.** SB 449 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 259.

***Assembly Bill 387
Campaign Finance Deregulation***

(Unfavorable on Passage) Wisconsin was one of the first states to impose campaign finance limits, under bills passed in the early 1900s and signed into law by then Gov. Robert LaFollette. For example, over 110 years ago, Gov. LaFollette signed a law prohibiting political donations by corporations. Then, just a few years later, Wisconsin passed a law setting strict donation limits and disclosure requirements, with fines and jail time for violations. Since the early 1900s until recently, Wisconsin has been steadfast in its commitment to ensure candidates are responsive to the electorate and that the average voter could be a candidate. This bill, AB 387, turns that proud history upside down by re-writing and deregulating Wisconsin’s campaign finance law.

AB 387 doubles the limit for individuals’ donations to state and local candidates in a cycle. It removes limits for individual donations to political parties. It allows for corporate donations. In sum, it opens the flood gates for more money and corruption in our democracy. **The recorded vote of 17-15 was on passage (November 7, 2015). A vote in favor is a “wrong” vote.** AB 387 passed the Legislature and was signed into law as Wisconsin Act 117.

