



Wisconsin State AFL-CIO ...the voice for working families.

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Wisconsin Manufacturer's and Commerce Math Doesn't Add Up

Last Friday, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce, which says it speaks for Wisconsin businesses, sent out a press release stating that more than 1,000 business executives had signed a petition opposing a State Budget that included \$18 B in higher taxes.

What baloney! First of all, they admit that these 1,000 executives employ only 125,000 workers. Unions which belong to the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO represent about 250,000 workers (and there are another 150,000 that belong to unions not affiliated with the AFL-CIO). All those unions support the Budget the WMC opposes—especially Healthy Wisconsin, which would provide health care to all in Wisconsin.

The \$18B tax increase WMC screams about is a hoax. The biggest “tax” increase is to finance top-notch health care for everyone in Wisconsin. That would cost about \$15B. But the reality is that we are currently paying about \$17B for health care for this population in Wisconsin—and nearly 500,000 have no health insurance and at least 200,000 have bare-bones coverage that doesn't meet the needs of their families.

So which makes more sense: paying \$15B to cover everyone in the state with the same comprehensive benefits enjoyed by our Governor and our elected state legislators? Or paying \$17B through our current fragmented system that leaves hundreds of thousands without coverage and more with inadequate coverage?

And we are told that business executives are “bottom line” guys! Can't they do the math?

Now the other outrage about this press release from the business lobby is that Democrats on the Budget Conference Committee have already withdrawn Healthy Wisconsin (and its \$15B price tag—which saves us all money) from their Budget proposal. So why is WMC crying about huge tax increases now? Do they think no one is paying attention?

Our health care system needs fundamental repair. And at the same time, we need voices from the business community to speak up for the truth against the lies and misrepresentations of Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce.

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