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# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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May 21, 2012

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The Honorable Darrell E. Issa  
Chairman  
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Issa:

We are writing to request that you ask Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker to clarify his testimony before our Committee hearing on April 14, 2011, in light of a new videotape taken of Governor Walker three months earlier and an article published last week by The Nation entitled "Did Scott Walker Lie Under Oath to Congress?"<sup>1</sup>

On April 14, 2011, Governor Walker testified before our Committee at a hearing entitled "State and Municipal Debt: Tough Choices Ahead." During the hearing, Governor Walker was asked detailed questions about his unprecedented efforts to roll back protections for state employee unions in Wisconsin. He argued repeatedly that repealing these protections was necessary to help balance his state's budget. During questioning, Rep. Connolly asked Governor Walker whether he was targeting unions for political purposes rather than budgetary reasons:

Rep. Connolly: Have you ever had a conversation with respect to your actions in Wisconsin and using them to punish members of the opposition party and their donor base?

Governor Walker: No.

Rep. Connolly: Never had such a conversation?

Governor Walker: No.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Did Scott Walker Lie Under Oath to Congress?*, The Nation (May 14, 2012) (online at [www.thenation.com/blog/167881/did-scott-walker-lie-under-oath-congress-he-says-no-video-says-yes](http://www.thenation.com/blog/167881/did-scott-walker-lie-under-oath-congress-he-says-no-video-says-yes)).

<sup>2</sup> House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *State and Municipal Debt: Tough Choices Ahead* (Apr. 14, 2011).

The Nation article published last week describes a newly-discovered videotape that reveals a conversation Governor Walker had with Diane Hendricks in January 2011, just after he was sworn in as Governor. Ms. Hendricks is one of Governor Walker's top campaign donors, and their conversation occurred at the headquarters of a firm owned by Ms. Hendricks. According to the videotape, Governor Walker and Ms. Hendricks discussed how attacks on unions could help Republicans in Wisconsin:

Ms. Hendricks: Any chance we'll ever get to be a completely red state and work on these unions?

Governor Walker: Oh, yeah.

Ms. Hendricks: And become a right-to-work?

Governor Walker: Well, we'll in fact if they think we are—

Ms. Hendricks: What can we do to help you?

Governor Walker: Well, we're going to start in a couple weeks with our budget adjustment bill. The first step is, we're going to deal with collective bargaining for all public employee unions, because you use divide and conquer.<sup>3</sup>

Within weeks of this conversation, Ms. Hendricks reportedly wrote a check for \$10,000 and “would eventually up the donation to \$510,000, making Hendricks the single largest donor in the history of Wisconsin politics.”<sup>4</sup>

This new video raises serious questions about the veracity of Governor Walker's testimony before our Committee, in which he repeatedly described his decision to strip public sector union workers of collective bargaining rights in purely economic terms. Instead, this video suggests that his motivation was to “divide and conquer” public sector unions in order to turn Wisconsin into a “completely red state.”

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<sup>3</sup> A Transcript of the Walker/Hendricks Union Discussion, *Journal Sentinel Online* (May 10, 2012) (online at [www.jsonline.com/news/statepolitics/a-transcript-of-the-walkerhendricks-union-discussion-805952v-151052965.html](http://www.jsonline.com/news/statepolitics/a-transcript-of-the-walkerhendricks-union-discussion-805952v-151052965.html)) (linking video footage).

<sup>4</sup> *Did Scott Walker Lie Under Oath to Congress?*, *The Nation* (May 14, 2012) (online at [www.thenation.com/blog/167881/did-scott-walker-lie-under-oath-congress-he-says-no-video-says-yes](http://www.thenation.com/blog/167881/did-scott-walker-lie-under-oath-congress-he-says-no-video-says-yes)). See also *Hendricks Donation Highest Ever in State*, *Beloit Daily News* (May 1, 2012) (online at [www.beloitdailynews.com/news/hendricks-donation-highest-ever-in-state/article\\_807f02b4-93a0-11e1-943b-0019bb2963f4.html](http://www.beloitdailynews.com/news/hendricks-donation-highest-ever-in-state/article_807f02b4-93a0-11e1-943b-0019bb2963f4.html)).

At another point in our hearing, Congressman Murphy asked Governor Walker for his response to comments by a Wisconsin Republican state senator, Scott Fitzgerald, who stated:

If we win this battle and the money is not there under the auspices of the unions, certainly, what you are going to find is President Obama is going to have a much more difficult time getting elected and winning the State of Wisconsin.<sup>5</sup>

In response, Governor Walker reiterated that his decisions were not intended to undermine unions or their political support for Democrats. He stated: "It's not about that. It's ultimately about balancing the budget now and in the future."<sup>6</sup> Again, the newly discovered video appears to contradict these statements.

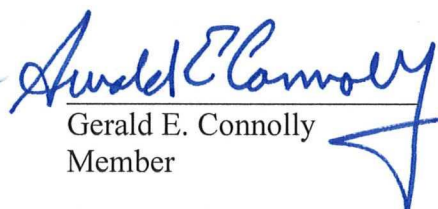
Congress relies on the accuracy of official testimony to make effective policy determinations, and you have written letters in the past asking witnesses to clarify testimony before our Committee when new information arises. In this case, it is possible that Governor Walker had forgotten his conversation with his largest campaign donor when he testified before our Committee. We ask that you write to Governor Walker on behalf of the Committee and request an explanation for why his statements captured on this videotape appear to contradict his testimony before the Committee.

We appreciate your consideration of this request.

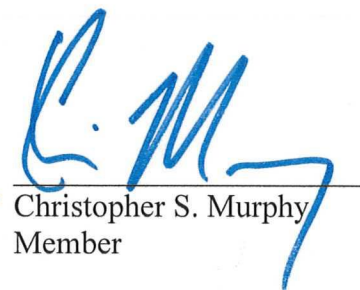
Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings  
Ranking Member



Gerald E. Connolly  
Member



Christopher S. Murphy  
Member

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<sup>5</sup> House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *State and Municipal Debt: Tough Choices Ahead* (Apr. 14, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*