

For Immediate Release: April 11, 2018

Aldерwoman Chantia Lewis, Labor, and Allies to Host Conference and Delegation on Dark Store Tax Loophole

Group to present local Walmart with “Rotten Apple Award”

Milwaukee, WI – Tomorrow, at 11:00 AM, Making Change at Walmart ([MCAW](#)), a project of the United Food & Commercial Workers ([UFCW](#)) International union, will join Alderwoman Chantia [Lewis](#), Black Leaders Organizing for Community ([BLOC](#)), and UFCW Local [1473](#) for a press conference outside of the vacant North Ridge Mall to demand Wisconsin state leadership revisit A.B. 386, a bill that attempts to close what is known as the “dark store” tax loophole.

Big box retailers like Walmart have been using the “dark store” tax loophole to reduce their property tax rates by assessing their properties as if they were vacant, abandoned, or “dark,” like the North Ridge Mall.

After today’s press event, members of the group will present a local Walmart with the “Rotten Apple Award” for continuing to deny public school funding by continuing to fleece governments out of paying its fair share in property taxes.

WHAT Press Conference on the Walmart Dark Store Tax Loophole and delegation to local Walmart Supercenter

WHO Alderwoman Chantia Lewis – District 9, Milwaukee

Kae Jae Johnson, Organizer with BLOC

WHEN Thursday, April 12, 2018 @ 11:00 AM.

Walmart delegation will take place from 11:30 PM – 12:00 PM.

WHERE North Ridge Mall, 8110 W Brown Deer Rd, Milwaukee, WI 53223 – in the parking lot of the mall near Mendard’s

Walmart Supercenter, 6300 W Brown Deer Rd, Brown Deer, WI 53223

MEDIA Press is invited to interview speakers and MCAW organizers at the press conference and accompany the group to the nearby Walmart Supercenter for the “Rotten Apple Award” delegation.

###

Background:

- The “dark store” tax loophole unfairly [shifts](#) the property tax [burden](#) to homeowners and reduces the amount of funding available for public schools, whose funding heavily relies on property tax revenue.
- In Wisconsin, Walmart and other big box retailers used this loophole to try and cut their property assessments by a total of more than an estimated [\\$700 million](#) for the 12 months ending November 2017.
- When local towns and assessors try to re-assess Walmart at a fairer rate, Walmart unleashes its team of lawyers, like it’s done in [Plymouth](#), [West Bend](#), [Lake Delton](#), [Franklin](#), and other Wisconsin communities.
- Since 2014, Walmart has taken Wisconsin towns to court [12](#) times over assessment appeals in an attempt to reduce its property tax bill.
- Earlier this year, Senator Janis Ringhand sponsored [A.B. 386](#) along with over 60 bipartisan co-sponsors, but Assembly Leader Robin Vos and Senate Speaker Scott Fitzgerald [blocked](#) the bill in the final weeks of session.
- MCAW will host a similar press conference at the Wisconsin State Capitol on Tax Day, Tuesday, April 17, 2018, featuring State Senators Janis Ringhand (D- Evansville) and Chris Larson (D- Milwaukee) and will present leaders Vos and Fitzgerald with their own “Rotten Apple” Awards.