

For Immediate Release: April 17, 2018

Senators Ringhand, Larson, Rep. Tod Ohnstad and Wisconsin Homeowners to Address Impacts of Dark Store Tax Loophole

*Members of group to deliver “Rotten Apple Award” to Senate Majority Leader
Scott Fitzgerald and Assembly Speaker Robin Vos*

Madison, WI – Today, Tuesday, April 17th, Making Change at Walmart ([MCAW](#)), a project of the United Food & Commercial Workers ([UFCW](#)) International union, will join Wisconsin State Senators **Janis Ringhand** (D-Evansville) and **Chris Larson** (D-Milwaukee), Assembly member **Tod Ohnstad** (D-Kenosha), and homeowners Rob and Barb Pifer for a press conference in the Senate Parlor of the state capitol to demand state leadership revisit Ringhand’s bill [A.B. 386](#), an attempt to close the “dark store” tax loophole.

The “dark store” tax loophole allows big box retailers like Walmart to unfairly [shift](#) their property tax [burden](#) onto homeowners and reduces the amount of funding available for public schools, whose funding heavily relies on property tax revenue.

After the press conference, members of the group will deliver the “Rotten Apple Award” to leaders Vos and Fitzgerald’s offices for continuing to deny public school funding by allowing Walmart and other retailers to get away without paying their fair share in property taxes.

WHAT Press Conference on the Walmart Dark Store Tax Loophole and delegation to leaders Vos and Fitzgerald’s offices

WHO Wisconsin State Senator Janis Ringhand (D-Evansville)

Wisconsin State Senator Chris Larson (D-Milwaukee)

Wisconsin Assemblymember Tod Ohnstad (D-Kenosha)

Wisconsin homeowners Rob and Barb Pifer

WHEN Tuesday, April 17, 2018 @ 11:00 AM.

WHERE Wisconsin State Capitol, 2 E Main St, Madison, WI 53703 – Senate Parlor

MEDIA Press is invited to interview speakers and MCAW organizers at the press conference and accompany the group to leaders Vos and Fitzgerald’s offices for the “Rotten Apple Award” delegation.

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Background:

- 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.” This unfairly shifts the property tax burden onto homeowners and reduces much-needed funding for public schools.
- 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.
- Sen. Ringhand’s bill [A.B. 386](#) received over 60 bipartisan co-sponsors, including Sen. Larson, but Assembly Speaker Robin Vos and Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald [blocked](#) the bill in the final weeks of session.