



Senator Wirch's Rhetoric and Record Out of Line

July 27, 2011
-For Immediate Release-

Contact: Brian Sikma, Communications Director
608.492.1774, brian@mediatrackers.org

MILWAUKEE - State Senator Robert Wirch (D-Kenosha) has over the years reiterated to constituents that he is a "fiscal conservative."¹ Yet a recent review of Senator Wirch's record by Media Trackers, a non-profit, non-partisan investigative watchdog group, revealed that his rhetoric and record are severely out of line. "Unfortunately, Senator Wirch's record hardly qualifies him to claim the title 'fiscal conservative,'" said Brian Sikma, communications director of Media Trackers.

Some key things in Wirch's record that do not qualify as being fiscally conservative include:

- In 2003, Senator Wirch voted to **uphold** Governor Jim Doyle's veto of a Taxpayer Bill of Rights that would have capped Wisconsin property taxes. Wisconsin property taxes rose by 5.9% and led to Wisconsin having the 11th highest property taxes in the country.²
- In 2007, Senator Wirch voted in **favor** of Governor Jim Doyle's 2007-2009 budget that increased taxes by \$376.8 million dollars and increased fees by \$386.4 million.³
- In 2009, Senator Wirch voted in **favor** of Governor Jim Doyle's 2009-2011 budget that increased taxes by \$1.6 billion and still left Wisconsin with a \$3.6 billion budget deficit.⁴ Democratic Senator Jim Holperin said "the Governor's got enough little tax and fee hikes in that budget to sink a good-sized battleship."
- In 2011, Senator Wirch voted **against** Assembly Bill 9, a measure that would protect taxpayers by requiring a supermajority to raise taxes.⁵
- In 2011, Senator Wirch had the opportunity to vote for a budget that cut taxes, eliminated a \$3.6 billion deficit, and provided the state with a \$300 million surplus. Not being a "fiscal conservative," Wirch voted **against** this budget.⁶

"Certainly, Senator Wirch would want to say he is a fiscal conservative," noted Sikma. "Wisconsinites are fiscally conservative and they want to see common sense in government. But it isn't enough to say you are fiscally conservative, you have to actually be fiscally conservative. Senator Wirch is not fiscally conservative, and he needs to start being honest about his record."

Sikma concluded saying, "On August 16 voters will have a chance voice their thoughts in a recall election in Senator Wirch's district. They deserve to have the record - and not just the rhetoric - on-hand before they make their decision."

¹ Official Website of Senator Wirch, <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/sen22/news/>

² Tax Foundation, *Wisconsin Property Taxes: Among The Nation's Highest*

³ Legislative Fiscal Bureau, *State Tax And Fee Modifications Included In 2009 Act 28*, January 2, 2008

⁴ Legislative Fiscal Bureau, *State Tax And Fee Modifications Included In 2009 Act 28*, July 8, 2009

⁵ Roll Call AB 9

⁶ Roll Call AB 40