

# 'Recall Walker' campaign off to fast start in Wisconsin

**T**he first anniversary of Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's election was celebrated by many hoping it would be his last year in office.

Wisconsin law dictates that a governor cannot be recalled before he serves one year, which gave opponents time to plan for the recall effort. That allowed United Wisconsin—the coalition spearheading the recall movement—to go full bore collecting signatures when the petition drive began.

During the first 12 days, United Wisconsin collected 300,000 signatures from Wisconsin voters, well on the way to the 540,000 signatures required by Jan. 17.

According to UnitedWisconsin.com, volunteers have collected signatures “on street corners and near shopping malls, they’ve knocked on their neighbors’ doors and set up drive-through recall stations alongside busy roads. They have worked hard through the wind and the rain, the snow and the cold.”

United Wisconsin also is attempting to recall Walker's partner, Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch, who is trying to position herself to be the next governor if Walker is ousted.

In a recent poll by St. Norbert College in De Pere and Wisconsin Public Radio, 58 percent of respondents said Walker should be recalled. That was up from 47 percent in an April poll.

Walker has taken the spotlight for a nationwide movement by some Republican state and federal officials to eliminate or restrict collective-bargaining rights for public employees. Walker also made huge budget cuts to education, health care and other vital working-family services, while cutting taxes for the wealthy and corporations.

Walker claimed that his policies would help with job creation, but the numbers show just the opposite. In

October, Wisconsin led the nation in the rate of jobs lost and has seen its unemployment rate jump from 7.3 percent in May to 7.7 percent.

The Wisconsin recall effort follows the overwhelming election-day repeal of the anti-union law, SB5, in Ohio (*see the December Postal Record*). Ohio Gov. John Kasich was forced to admit defeat when even historically Republican districts voted to overturn the unpopular law.

“They thought they could do anything and no one would care,” AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said of Walker and Kasich. He hopes they and other officials get the message: “If you make war on workers, it’s not a good electoral strategy.”

## Indiana

After Indiana House Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate President Pro Tem David Long said that making Indiana a right-to-work state would be their top legislative initiative for 2012, more than 2,000 Hoosiers occupied the state Capitol in protest in late November.

Workers, the jobless and retirees turned out to demand that their legislators listen to their constituents, make creating jobs their priority and not give in to special-interest groups and CEOs pushing the right-to-work proposal. Many attendees carried signs, including a banner that read “Shame on You.”

Indiana AFL-CIO President Nancy Guyott said after the rally that, “like our neighbors in Ohio, Hoosiers know that this is just another attack on working families.” ☒



Photo by Lena Chase

A protester readies himself for the recall Walker effort.