

Walker Signs Law to Ban Local Project-Labor Agreements

April 19, 2017

By Steven Wishnia and Neal Tepel

Madison, WI - Gov. Scott Walker signed a law Apr. 17 prohibiting local governments from making project-labor agreements that require contractors to use union labor.



Gov. Scott Walker

The bill had been passed by the state legislature on party-line votes, with only Republicans voting for it in both

houses. Its sponsor, Rep. Rob Hutton, said in January that requiring PLAs “discourages many contractors from participating” in public projects. Hutton and state Sen. Leah Vukmir, both Republicans from the Milwaukee suburbs, have also introduced a bill that would repeal the state’s prevailing-wage law, which sets pay standards for contractors on state-funded construction projects. Walker had proposed the repeal in his fiscal 2018 budget, but Republican legislative leaders removed that language. Wisconsin prohibited local governments from setting prevailing-wage requirements in 2015, and Vukmir and Hutton said their bill “completes that original goal” of eliminating “unreasonably high prevailing wage costs.” Vukmir got about \$47,400 and Hutton about \$4,200 in contributions from business and construction interests from 2010 to 2016, Matthew Rothschild wrote in the Madison Capital Times.