

Walker plugs Kleefisch for guv, predicts Trump impeachment push will backfire

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Former Gov. Scott Walker says he's not writing off another run for elected office, but wouldn't stage a bid until his term as president of Young America's Foundation concludes at the beginning of 2025.

And he made a pitch for his former Lt. guv to seek his old office in 2022.

Walker, who begins his term with the conservative youth group in February 2021, said he agreed to a four-year commitment.

"What happens after that?" Walker said Tuesday at a Milwaukee Press Club/WisPolitics.com luncheon in Milwaukee. "It really depends on what's happening."

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In the meantime, he said he hopes Rebecca Kleefisch runs for guv.

"I think she would win, and I think she would be a hell of a great governor," Walker said.

Others who have been mentioned as possible GOP candidates for guv include: Waukesha County Exec Paul Farrow, former GOP U.S. Senate candidate Kevin Nicholson, state Sen. Chris Kapenga and U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson.

State Dem Party spokeswoman Courtney Beyer knocked Walker's comments on the guv's race.

"The 2022 Republican gubernatorial primary election is years away and yet Republicans are already fighting amongst themselves over who should be their nominee," Beyer said. "Considering Scott Walker left the Republican Party of Wisconsin broke, disorganized and completely dysfunctional when he lost reelection, I'm sure his former colleagues contemplating running did not appreciate today's comments."

He also plugged Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, who's running to replace retiring GOP U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner in the heavily Republican 5th CD.

"Why Fitzgerald will and should win is because he's been tested over and over and over again, and he didn't back down," said Walker, who recently endorsed Fitzgerald in the race.

Fitzgerald is currently the only Republican running for the seat, while Democrat Tom Palzewicz has also announced a bid.

On other state topics, Walker encouraged more dialog between Dem Gov. Tony Evers and GOP legislative leaders in order to find approaches to solving issues.

"There's got to be trust, and you can't have trust if you're not talking to people," Walker said.

He noted he held weekly meetings with legislative leaders of both parties, and that he often met with legislators from both parties who were not in leadership.

He said while divisive issues get the most attention, most legislation passes with bipartisan support.

"In the end, most things are things that require, not only people from different parties, but often different geographical locations in the state, to talk to each other and kind of compromise a little bit and work with them," Walker said.

Despite Foxconn scaling back its plans in Southeast Wisconsin, Walker defended the deal he signed with the Taiwanese tech company, noting that incentives are based on performance and the company hasn't received any tax credits yet.

Still, he predicted Foxconn would meet or exceed its job creation targets, but "there

will be variations along the way in terms of how they queue it up.”

A new report from George Mason University researchers suggested the incentive package offered to Foxconn will likely “discourage more economic activity than will be encouraged by the subsidies themselves.”

As for infrastructure dollars already spent in connection with the deal, such as the expansion of I-94, Walker said other companies such as Uline and Amazon will benefit from the investments.

“So it’s not just for Foxconn,” Walker said. “There were infrastructure needs that needed to be done all throughout that corridor.”

Walker defended President Trump’s policies and praised the economic progress made under him while predicting the effort to impeach him will backfire.

He drew parallels between the failed effort to recall him in 2012 with the current impeachment fight, noting that as with Trump, people were pushing to remove him from office shortly after the election.

He noted the recent Marquette Law School Poll showed slipping support for impeachment and said people are starting to question whether Democrats have a plan or are just focused on impeachment.

“I think that’ll backfire,” Walker said. “And I think in the end that makes it more probable that the president gets reelected.”