



On, Wisconsin!

Obama Makes His First Visit To The Badger State Since Abandoning Democrats During The Recall

Obama Is Campaigning In Wisconsin Today, His First Visit To The State Since February. “The president has a campaign rally set for Saturday in Milwaukee, the largest city in a state that has gone Democratic in six straight presidential elections. It is Obama’s first visit to Wisconsin since February.” (David Jackson, “New Swing State? Obama To Visit Wisconsin,” [USA Today](#), 9/20/12)

THE JUNE RECALL ELECTION SOLIDIFIED WISCONSIN AS A BATTLEGROUND STATE

On The Eve Of The Recall Election, The Obama Campaign Began For “The First Time ... Officially Calling The State, Which Had Always Been Expected To Be In The Democratic Column In The Presidential Race, A Toss Up.” “This appears to be the first time that Democrats are officially calling the state, which had always been expected to be in the Democratic column in the presidential race, a toss up. Democrats are probably wise to make the call ahead of tomorrow’s recall vote, in which Republican Gov. Scott Walker is favored to win. It helps pre-spin what will be the narrative coming out of a Walker victory, which is that Republicans have the grassroots momentum in the state heading into November.” (Maggie Haberman, “Obama Camp Calls Wisconsin A Toss-Up For The Fall,” [Politico](#), 6/4/12)

- **President Bill Clinton: “And Now They Look At Wisconsin And They See America’s Battleground Between People Who Want To Work Together To Solve Problems And People Who Want To Divide And Conquer.”** (President Bill Clinton, [Remarks At A Campaign Rally](#), Milwaukee, WI, 6/1/12)

Roll Call: “Wisconsin Recall Vote Becomes Microcosm Of National Election” (Eliza Newlin Carney, “Wisconsin Recall Vote Becomes Microcosm Of National Election,” [Roll Call](#), 6/4/12)

DNC Chairwoman Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL): The Wisconsin Election Will Be “The Dry Run We Need” Of Our Grassroots Presidential Campaign. CROWLEY: “But are there national implications?” REP. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: “Well, I think what’s going to happen is because of our on the ground operation we have had an opportunity in this election, especially given that Wisconsin’s a battleground state, just like we did in the recall elections a year ago, to give this a test run, and so what I think the implications will be is that ultimately I think Tom Barrett will pull this out, but regardless it’s given the Obama For America operation an opportunity to do --.” CROWLEY: “Test run it.” REP. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: “--the dry run we need of our massive, significant, dynamic grassroots presidential campaign which can’t really be matched by the Romney campaign or the republicans

because they've ignored on the ground operations." (CNN's "State Of The Union," 5/27/12)

- **Rep. Wasserman Schultz: "We Clearly Have A Lot At Stake Here In Wisconsin."** (Bill Glauber, Patrick Marley, "DNC Chair Wasserman Schultz Said National Party Backs Recall," [Milwaukee-Journal Sentinel](#), 5/30/12)

International Association of Fire Fighters President Harold Schaitberger: "I Think This Is A National Campaign. Wisconsin Is Another Important Test To Establish The Tone And Mood Of What Is To Come In November." (Cameron Joseph, Kevin Bogardus, "Unions Angry With Democrats Over Lack Of Help In Wisconsin Governor's Recall," [The Hill](#), 5/25/12)

AND OBAMA PROMISED TO WALK THE PICKET LINE AND STAND WITH UNIONS

Obama Called Efforts In Wisconsin An "Assault On Unions." OBAMA: "Some of what I've heard coming out of Wisconsin, where you're just making it harder for public employees to collectively bargain generally, seems like an assault on unions." (President Barack Obama, [Interview With TMZ](#), 2/17/11)

- **"Obama To Labor: I'm On Your Side"** (John Maggs, "Obama To Labor: I'm On Your Side," [Politico](#), 12/17/10)
- **Obama In 2011:** "And I want everybody here to know, as long as I'm in the White House I'm going to stand up for collective bargaining." (President Barack Obama, [Remarks By The President At Detroit Labor Day Event](#), Detroit, Michigan, 9/5/11)

Obama In 2007: "If American workers are being denied their right to organize and collectively bargain when I'm in the White House, I'll put on a comfortable pair of shoes myself.' ... 'I'll walk on that picket line with you as president of the United States of America because workers deserve to know that somebody is standing in their corner." (Sam Hananel, "PROMISES, PROMISES: Obama Shies Away From Protests," [The Associated Press](#), 3/12/11)

- **Obama:** "And if American workers are being denied their right to organize when I'm in the White House, I will put on a comfortable pair of shoes and I will walk on that picket line with you as President of the United States." (Senator Barack Obama, [Remarks In Spartanburg, South Carolina](#), 11/3/07)

In 2008, Obama Promised To "Work A Picket Line" For Unions After They Raised Millions For His Campaign. "In 2008, labor invested heavily in Obama's presidential campaign, mobilizing millions of volunteers and raising millions of dollars for a candidate who pledged to support workers' rights and vowed to pass the Employee Free Choice Act — a bill that would allow unions to organize employees through signed pledge cards, a big-ticket item on labor's wish list. Obama also vowed to lace up 'comfortable shoes' and work a picket line if the movement ever needed him." (Joseph Williams, "Labor's Lost Love For Obama Returns," [Politico](#), 3/15/12)

BUT OBAMA ABANDONED DEMOCRATS IN WISCONSIN WHEN THEY NEEDED HIM MOST

Obama Abandoned Democrats During The Wisconsin Recall Election

There Was Disappointment That Obama Wasn't Scheduled To Visit Wisconsin And Campaign On Barrett's Behalf. "There is also some disappointment, according to one Wisconsin Democratic operative, that the President himself isn't scheduled to make a campaign stop on Barrett's behalf." 'He'd be huge to motivate the base, boost black turnout in Milwaukee, and raise cash,' said the source. "They're playing it safe here, but given that he's out there supporting Barrett and on collective bargaining, I believe it's a no-brainer that it'd be a net plus for Obama in November — even if Walker hangs on.'" (Chris Cillizza, "DNC Pushes Back On Wisconsin Recall Criticism," [The Washington Post](#), 5/17/12)

- **Obama “Declined Union Invitations To Go To Wisconsin,” Despite His Promise to “Walk The Picket Line” During His 2008 Campaign.** “It didn’t help that Obama declined union invitations to go to Wisconsin, where thousands of protesters mobilized against the anti-union measure. Candidate Obama had promised to ‘put on sneakers’ and walk a picket line himself when union rights were threatened.” (Sam Hananel, “Labor Unions Adjust To New Reality Under Obama,” [The Associated Press](#), 9/4/11)

Former Wisconsin Democrat Nominee For Governor Ed Garvey Criticized The White House For Avoiding The Race Saying, “People Are Not Happy With Obama And [Vice President] Biden For Not Coming Out Here, That’s For Sure.” “Ed Garvey, a longtime Democratic activist and the party’s nominee for Wisconsin governor in 1998, criticized the White House for avoiding the race. ‘People are not happy with Obama and [Vice President] Biden for not coming out here, that’s for sure,’ he said. ‘I’ve never seen a more risk-averse candidate or officeholder than Barack Obama.’” (Cameron Joseph, “Dems, Labor Fallout Begins In Wis.,” *The Hill’s Ballot Box*, 6/5/12)

- **CBS’s Mark Knoller: “Pres. Obama Has Made 8 Visits To Wisconsin Since Taking Office, But None Since February - Before The Recall Vote Was Scheduled.”** (Mark Knoller, [Twitter Feed](#), 6/5/12)

Obama “Flew Over Wisconsin Twice Friday To Visit Minneapolis And Chicago Without Ever Stopping.” “Walker supporters took comfort in the fact that President Barack Obama flew over Wisconsin twice Friday to visit Minneapolis and Chicago without ever stopping.” (Abdon M. Pallasch, “Republicans, Democrats Head To Wisconsin For Walker Recall,” [Chicago Sun-Times](#), 6/1/12)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: “Obama Keeps A Low Public Profile In Wisconsin Recall Fight” (Craig Gilbert, “Obama Keeps A Low Public Profile In Wisconsin Recall Fight,” [Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel](#), 5/23/12)

- **The Obama Campaign Was “Detached.”** “‘So far, since the uprising began last year, their position has been to remain detached for whatever reason. I don’t know of any compelling reason why that would change,’ said Kraig.” (Craig Gilbert, “Obama Keeps A Low Public Profile In Wisconsin Recall Fight,” [Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel](#), 5/23/12)
- **Obama “Avoided Taking A Vocal Role” In the Wisconsin Recall Election.** “The Obama forces are pitching in with voter turnout and fund-raising appeals. But the President has avoided taking a vocal role in the conflict, and there is little expectation of an Obama visit to Wisconsin in the homestretch of the campaign.” (Craig Gilbert, “Obama Keeps A Low Public Profile In Wisconsin Recall Fight,” [Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel](#), 5/23/12)
- **Obama “Purposefully” Tried To Keep His Distance From The Recall Fight.** “Mr. Obama has purposefully tried to keep his distance from the recall fight, which has unfolded with all the intensity and acrimony of a presidential campaign within the borders of Wisconsin. The mayor of Milwaukee, Tom Barrett, is the Democratic candidate trying to replace Mr. Walker, who ignited a furor by cutting collective bargaining rights for most of the state’s public workers. It is a rematch of the 2010 governor’s race, which Mr. Barrett lost to Mr. Walker.” (Jeff Zeleny, “Recall Battle In Wisconsin May Snarl Obama Camp,” [The New York Times](#), 6/3/12)
- **Obama Has Been “Silent” And Has Not Publicly Mentioned The Race.** “President Obama has been silent on the race since his campaign released a statement endorsing Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett (D) immediately after his primary victory two weeks ago. The Obama campaign is helping Barrett with get-out-the-vote operations, but the president has not publicly mentioned the race.” (Cameron Joseph and Kevin Bogardus, “Unions Angry With Democrats Over Lack Of Help In Wisconsin Governor’s Recall,” [The Hill](#), 5/25/12)
- **CBS’s Mark Knoller: “In None Of The 3 Fundraising Speeches He Gave Last Night Did Pres. Obama Mention Today’s Recall Vote In Wisconsin.”** (Mark Knoller, [Twitter Feed](#), 6/5/12)

Labor Unions' "Costly Defeat" In Wisconsin Was "Marked" By Obama's "Strategy Of Opportunistic Detachment." "The costly defeat for the entrenched union interests that tried to oust Walker in retribution for challenging their power was marked by President Obama's refusal to lend his weight to the campaign for fear of being stained by defeat. We'll see how well this strategy of opportunistic detachment serves in the fall as Obama reaches out to unions for support." (Bill Frezza, Op-Ed, "Governor Walker's Victory Spells Doom For Public Sector Unions," [Forbes](#), 6/5/12)

"Top Union Officials Are Lashing Out At Washington Democrats, Claiming They Haven't Done Enough To Help Them Unseat Gov. Scott Walker (R) In Wisconsin's Recall Election." "Top union officials are lashing out at Washington Democrats, claiming they haven't done enough to help them unseat Gov. Scott Walker (R) in Wisconsin's recall election. President Obama has been silent on the race since his campaign released a statement endorsing Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett (D) immediately after his primary victory two weeks ago. The Obama campaign is helping Barrett with get out the vote operations, but the president has not publicly mentioned the race." (Cameron Joseph and Kevin Bogardus, "Unions Angry With Dems Over Lack Of Help In Wisconsin," [The Hill](#), 5/25/12)

Wisconsin Democrats Are "Seething" That The DNC Has Not Been Involved In The Recall Effort. "Local Democrats are seething that the national party has been MIA from their recall effort. The state's largest newspaper argued over the weekend that whatever Walker's sins, he doesn't deserve to be booted from office." (David Catanese, "Dems Limp To Finish In Wisconsin," [Politico](#), 5/21/12)

Gerry McEntee, President Of The American Federation Of State, County And Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Said National Democrats Could Have Done More In The Wisconsin Recall Race. "Gerry McEntee, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), said more could and should have been done in the effort to remove Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker (R) from office by the national party." (Kevin Bogardus, "Public Sector Union Head Says Dems Could Do More For Wisconsin Recall," [The Hill](#), 5/31/12)

- **A Union Official: "Labor Has Always Been There For The National Democratic Party. The National Democratic Party Should Be There For Labor In This Instance. They're Not."** When asked about national Democrats' support in the recall election, another union official scoffed. 'Labor has always been there for the national Democratic Party. The national Democratic Party should be there for labor in this instance. They're not,' he said." (Cameron Joseph and Kevin Bogardus, "Unions Angry With Democrats Over Lack Of Help In Wisconsin Governor's Recall," [The Hill](#), 5/25/12)

Obama Previously Abandoned Unions During The Wisconsin Budget Battle

Earlier In 2011, Obama Was "Largely A Bystander" In The Collective Bargaining Debate. "Rose Ann DeMoro, executive director of National Nurses United, the nation's largest nurses union, called Obama 'largely a bystander' in the debate over collective bargaining. 'I think we're feeling a sense of betrayal from him and not liking it much,' she said." (Sam Hananel "PROMISES, PROMISES: Obama Shies Away From Protests," [The Associated Press](#), 3/12/11)

- **Union Requests For Administration Officials To Appear In Wisconsin Were "Rebuffed" By The White House.** "Union leaders urged Vice President Joe Biden during a White House meeting last month to go to Wisconsin and rally the faithful in their fight against Gov. Scott Walker's move to curtail collective bargaining rights for most public employees. Request rebuffed, they asked for Labor Secretary Hilda Solis. So far, however, the White House has stayed away from any trips to Madison, the state capital, or other states in the throes of union battles." (Sam Hananel, "PROMISES, PROMISES: Obama Shies Away From Protests," [The Associated Press](#), 3/12/11)

- **Democrat Strategist: Obama's Strategy Was To "Avoid Direct Engagement."** "Doug Schoen, a Democratic political strategist, said Obama's strategy seems to be 'keep your distance, avoid direct engagement, say most of the right things most of the time, and hope for resolution through sources other than your own.'" (Sam Hananel "PROMISES, PROMISES: Obama Shies Away From Protests," [The Associated Press](#), 3/12/11)