

2015 ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 32

April 7, 2016 – Introduced by Representatives Shankland, Barca, Jorgensen, Zamarripa, Barnes, Bowen, Brostoff, Goyke, Hintz, Kessler, Meyers, Ohnstad, Spreitzer, Subeck, C. Taylor, Wachs, Zepnick, Berceau, Danou, Riemer, Kahl, Sinicki, Hebl, Hesselbein, Considine and Stuck. Referred to Committee on Rules.

| 1 | Relating to: protecting open and transparent government in Wisconsin. |
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| 2 | Whereas, as Governor Walker states in Executive Order 189, Wisconsin has |
| 3 | enjoyed a long history of open and transparent government; and |
| 4 | Whereas, except for the time that 12 Republican members of the Joint |
| 5 | Committee on Finance voted to completely eviscerate our state's open records law |
| 6 | while families were preparing to celebrate our nation's independence and |
| 7 | exceptionalism; and |
| 8 | Whereas, despite substantial backlash from Wisconsin taxpayers and media |
| 9 | outlets that forced Republicans to distance themselves from the idea of dismantling |
| 10 | our open records law, the fall 2015 Republican Party agenda consisted of legislation |
| 11 | that will make lawmakers less accountable to the people they serve; and |
| 12 | Whereas, Republican legislators had the gall to exempt themselves from John |
| 13 | Doe investigations, increase the amount of money they may receive from campaign |
| 14 | donors, and turn Wisconsin's nationally recognized government watchdog — the |
| 15 | Government Accountability Board — into a politically appointed commission; and |

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1 Whereas, former cabinet members in the Walker administration have made 2 statements to the media saying that there is a policy of doing official state business 3 through private channels to avoid open records requests; and

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Whereas, Wisconsin's open records law has uncovered Republican attempts to gut the open records law, strike the UW System's "Wisconsin Idea" from the Wisconsin statutes, and sit on crucial information related to a major private-sector employer being lured to move to another state; and

8 Whereas, on the other side of the political spectrum, Assembly Democrats have 9 proposed enshrining the open records and open meetings laws in the state's 10 constitution, successfully fought back Republican Party efforts to gut the open 11 records law, and drafted legislation to strengthen conflict-of-interest protections for 12 elected officials; now, therefore, be it

13 Resolved by the assembly, That it is clear Governor Walker's "Sunshine 14 Week" rhetoric rings hollow after examining his record on the issue of open, 15 transparent government. Assembly Democrats do hereby continue to stand up for 16 the public's access to their government and will work on behalf of the people that elect 17 them to office to move Wisconsin forward.

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(END)