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Barrett to supporters: Need you like never before

Tom Barrett told hundreds of cheering supporters in his victory speech that "I need you like I've never needed you before and more important, this state needs you like it's never needed you before."

"We have a lot of work to do in the next 27 days," he said, warning that Scott Walker's campaign would unleash a barrage of attack ads.

Blaming Walker for dividing Wisconsin as he has never seen it, Barrett said, "That division is the exact opposite from the way I will govern."

"It does not have to be this way in Wisconsin," he said.

Barrett said that under Walker, the state lost the most jobs in the nation between March 2011 and March 2012, and said of Walker, "He took his eye off the ball."

But he said, "The message we are sending tonight is that we want a governor who's going to stay home, who doesn't want to be a rock star and who will work on creating jobs.

"I will not be beholden to out-of-state interests," Barrett said.

In addition to ripping Walker for accepting large amounts of out-of-state money, traveling outside of Wisconsin and creating an "ideological civil war," Barrett made reference to an ongoing John Doe investigation involving former Walker aides.

"Do we want a governor who has to have a legal defense fund?" he asked, as the crowd shouted, "No!"

Wisconsin Dem party chairman Mike Tate assured reporters he was confident unions would support Barrett from now on, saying the party will be united "110 percent" behind Barrett.

"I fully expect all of the (Dem primary) candidates will campaign for Tom Barrett," said Tate. "I believe that everybody who supported Kathleen Falk or other candidates is going to be ready and willing and fired up to go beat Scott Walker and elect Tom Barrett governor."

State Sen. Spencer Coggs, D-Milwaukee, said Barrett seemed more forceful than he'd ever seen him.

"He was especially incendiary tonight," said Coggs. "You could tell he's fired up."

Asked what Barrett should do to break the tie among Wisconsin voters who appear equally divided between Barrett and Walker, Coggs said the momentum is on Barrett's side because people are so unhappy with Walker. Barrett's strategy should be to focus on jobs, jobs, jobs, advised Coggs.

-- By Kay Nolan

