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Walker: Need to move forward; invites Dem, GOP legislators over for brats and beer



An ebullient Gov. Scott Walker told a cheering crowd Tuesday evening that, "It's time to move on and move Wisconsin forward," and said he would meet tomorrow with his cabinet in the state Capitol to work on jobs.

"Tonight we tell Wisconsin, we tell our country and we tell people all across the globe that voters really do want leaders who stand up and make the tough decisions," he said to thundering applause at a packed exposition building on the Waukesha County fairgrounds.

Walker told supporters he would focus on putting the state back to work and closing the divide in Wisconsin.

"Tomorrow, I'll meet with my cabinet in the state's Capitol and we'll renew our commitment to help small businesses grow jobs in the state," Walker said. "We'll renew our commitment to help improve the quality of life for all our citizens, both for people who voted for me and those who voted for someone else."

Walker told the crowd that Mayor Tom Barrett had called to congratulate him. But the Walker supporters drowned out the governor with boos at the sound of Barrett's name, causing Walker to pause and tell them, "No, no, no. The election is over. I talked to the mayor and we had a good talk and I said I'm committed to working with you to help the city of Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin -- tomorrow. The election is over."

Walker said, "Bringing our state together will take some time, but I'm going to start out right away."

He said he plans to invite both Democrats and Republicans in the state Legislature to share brats, burgers and "maybe a bit of good Wisconsin beer as well."

Walker talked about his own "courage" more than once and described how, during a trip to Independence Hall in Philadelphia early this year, he realized that the founders of the country were "ordinary people" who stood for the good of the nation. He discussed his own actions as governor in similar terms.

"Throughout our history, there have been men and women of courage who stood up and decided it was more important to stand up for their children and their grandchildren than their own political future," Walker said. "And what has sustained them here in Wisconsin and across our country is there were good and decent people who stood with them shoulder to shoulder and arm to arm and that's what you have done for Wisconsin and for America."

Throughout Walker's speech, people cheered and waved signs, as they had done all evening, especially when televised news, shown on a giant movie screen, showed voting totals or mentioned Walker or GOP candidates.

Prior to Walker's victory speech, the crowd angrily booed Barrett while watching his televised concession speech on the movie screen.

When Barrett said, "I just got off the phone and congratulated (Walker)," the Walker supporters booed loudly. When Barrett thanked his wife, the crowd made catcalls and one man yelled, "What about her emails?"

The crowd booed loudest when they heard Barrett say, "Now we must look to the future" and began chanting, "Nah, nah, nah, nah, hey, hey, hey, goodbye." Many held up their arms and waved goodbye at the image of Barrett on the screen.

Walker supporters also jeered Dem lieutenant governor Mahlon Mitchell as they watched him on screen. Shouts of "You lost!" "F--- off!" and "Want a war?" were heard above the boos.

Afterward, Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch shook her head when asked about the boos.

"I think right now is a time to be humble and grateful. Right now is a time to be grateful that the voters stood with those who stood with them. So I think that's why the governor kind of toned down the booing," said Kleefisch. "He wants to move beyond that. I want to move beyond that. I think our legislators want to move beyond that. Here's our opportunity to reunite as a state, to remember what it's like to be neighbors again."

Walker was introduced by his wife, Tonette, who said, "My husband is the only governor elected twice in one term."

"It's time to celebrate," said Tonette Walker, who thanked volunteers for making "four million contacts" since January. "Thank you for the doors you've knocked on, the calls you've made," she said. "Thank you for talking to your friends and your family. Thank you for all of the emails you've been reading. Yes, all of the emails will finally stop."

-- *By Kay Nolan*

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