



# MARK POCAN

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## **Pocan urges GAB investigation of ALEC's lobbying activity**

MADISON – Today, the Center for Media and Democracy (CMD) requested the state's Government Accountability Board investigate potential ethics violations involving state lawmakers accepting scholarships and gifts from the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a corporate lobbying group.

Representative Mark Pocan (D-Madison) has crashed ALEC's conventions twice, becoming a member in an effort to learn more about the secretive lobbying group. In doing so, he exposed ALEC as a lobbying organization that evades Wisconsin lobby law by lobbying for "model" legislation before it is formally introduced.

"I've infiltrated their conferences and I've watched corporations wine and dine lawmakers," said Pocan. "ALEC corporate partners write model legislation, lobby lawmakers and all too often have legislators introduce their bills. It's either a violation of our ethics laws or a high-class corporate dating service."

Earlier this year, State Representative Mark Pocan (D-Madison) introduced the ALEC Accountability Act, which would regulate the reporting of any "scholarships" organizations that lobby for model legislation dole out to legislators. Assembly Bill 621 would also require organizations such as ALEC to disclose its list of corporate sponsors and would prohibit state taxpayer funds from being used to pay for these lobbyist conventions. The bill failed to pass before the end of last week's legislative session because Republican's refused to take the bill up.

"ALEC refuses to publicly disclose their corporate donors, but ALEC members can easily discover who is paying for their flights, meals and parties. They advertise at the conference, send representatives and even cater the lavish parties. I should know, I crashed one and was kicked out," said Pocan. "Corporate lobbyists aren't supposed to be able to buy off legislators. It's wrong and illegal."

When he attended ALEC's convention last August, Pocan was kicked out of a corporate-sponsored party.

The Government Accountability Board has not yet announced whether it will investigate ALEC.