

Wisconsin governor to sign \$3 billion Foxconn bill into law

September 12 2017, by Todd Richmond

Gov. Scott Walker is scheduled Monday to sign into law a \$3 billion incentive package for Foxconn Technology Group to build a flat-screen plant in southeastern Wisconsin, a deal that he calls a "huge win" for the entire state.

The governor told WTMJ-AM radio that with the bill signed into law, Foxconn will likely announce the location of the giant factory within a couple of weeks. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Walker's job-creation agency, will finalize a contract with the Taiwanese electronics manufacturer to execute the legislation by the beginning of October with groundbreaking expected this spring, the governor said. Foxconn hopes to open the doors in 2020, he said.

"I couldn't be more thrilled that today we'll be signing legislation that will open the door for literally tens of thousands of jobs in Wisconsin," said Walker, who planned to sign the package Monday afternoon at Gateway Technical College near Racine. "It's a huge win, not just for the people in southeastern Wisconsin but people across the state."

The bill provides nearly \$3 billion in cash to Foxconn if it invests \$10 billion in a new flat-screen factory in southeastern Wisconsin and employs 13,000 people. The measure provides \$150 million in sales tax exemptions on construction equipment and allows the company to build in wetlands and waterways.

The package also gives the conservative-leaning state Supreme Court the

option to take appeals of circuit court decisions related to the Foxconn project directly rather than having them heard by an intermediate appellate court. Any lower court decision would be automatically stayed during the appeal.

Walker and supporters are heralding the deal as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make the state a hub for the high-tech electronics industry. Foxconn is the world's largest contract manufacturer of electronics and is best known for making iPhones.

Opponents have decried the deal as a giveaway to Foxconn, saying it hasn't provided enough guarantees to protect taxpayers in case workers are laid off or Foxconn leaves the state. An analysis by the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau found it will take at least 25 years for Wisconsin taxpayers to break even on the incentives.

Walker told WTMJ-AM that he's confident the incentives package is constitutional.

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Citation: Wisconsin governor to sign \$3 billion Foxconn bill into law (2017, September 12) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-09-wisconsin-billion-foxconn.html>

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