

FEINGOLD FOR GOVERNOR: SCOTT WALKER & WI GOP'S WAR ON GOOD BEER

I don't know what the fine Cheese and Brat heads up in Wisconsin did to piss off the political gods, but they have been blighted. It was bad enough to cause national outrage and solidarity when extreme right wing movement conservative Governor Scott Walker and the crazed GOP majorities in the state legislature started attacking the working men and women of Wisconsin's unions, teachers, cops and firefighters. But now they have gone a bridge too damn far.

And that is why I am supporting Russ Feingold in a recall election against Walker, and you should too.

Scott Walker and the Wisconsin Republicans are declaring war on quality craft beer. From ThinkProgress:

Tucked into Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's (R) much-discussed budget was a little-noticed provision to overhaul the state's regulation of the beer industry. In a state long associated with beer, the provision will make it much more difficult for the Wisconsin's burgeoning craft breweries to operate and expand their business by barring them from selling directly to restaurants and liquor stores, and preventing them from selling their own product onsite.

The new provision treats craft brewers – the 60 of whom make up just 5 percent of the beer market in Wisconsin – like corporate mega-brewers, forcing them to use a wholesale distributor to market their product. Under the provision, it would be illegal, for instance, for a

small brewer located near a restaurant to walk next door to deliver a case of beer. They'll have to hire a middle man to do it instead.

And, so, what corporate moneyed hacks are Walker and the Wisconsin GOP blowing this time? From OpenMarket.Org:

The biggest backer of the bill is SABMiller, or as it is known in the US, MillerCoors. They have been pushing the measure, they say, in order to protect the vitality of Wisconsin beer in the face of a hostile invasion from their main national competitor, AB InBev, aka Anheuser-Busch. InBev has reportedly begun a nationwide campaign to purchase distributors in many states, something that MillerCoors says threatens all other brewers' ability to get their beers in bars and on shelves. That's the line that MillerCoors is peddling, but craft brewers in Wisconsin say they, and their ever increasing presence in the beer market, is the true target of the proposal.

So, the one thing we will not tolerate here is an attack on quality beer. Nawt gonna happen. there was some yammering here last night about whether so and so or no and no would or wouldn't vote for Feingold – apparently for President, it was hard to tell. But here, Wheelies and Wheelers, is a real decision point. Would you trade Russ Feingold for Scott Walker? Because that decision is a real possibility for the Wisconsinites.

That is a deal that should be made all day, and all night, long.

As you know, our very own lovely and talented Marcy T. Wheeler introduced guest of honor Sen. Russell Feingold last night at the gala session of Netroots Nation 2011 in Minneapolis,

Minnesota. As I am just arriving in Minneapolis as I post, and lord knows what trouble we may get into over the extended weekend (may even be beer drinking), be advised there will be substantive blogging here at Emptywheel, but the timing of the posts may be a bit, ahem, unusual. Hopefully Mary will also be supplying some coverage.