**STEIL2403.mp3**

[00:00:24] **Speaker 1** Head-spinning faints and fights in Washington this week, and the Republican House speaker cut short the legislative session as some congressional members demanded votes on releasing the Jeffrey Epstein files. Our next guest was among those who got an early recess, Wisconsin First District Republican U.S. Representative Brian Stahl joins us, and thanks very much for being here.

[00:00:46] **Speaker 2** Thanks for having me on.

[00:00:47] **Speaker 1** So first off, what is your reaction to Tony Evers not running for a third term?

[00:00:53] **Speaker 2** I think what you're going to see is a large number of Democrats get in the race and run to the left. But what we have to do is get our state back on track, not measuring things like education by just how much money we're spending, but on how well we're doing, whether or not students are being taught how to learn, not what to know. Whether or not we're getting the spending in Wisconsin under control and money back to hard paying taxpayers, I think you're gonna have a robust debate I think at the end of the day. We have a great opportunity to have a conservative governor once again.

[00:01:23] **Speaker 1** Do you have a favored candidate at this point?

[00:01:27] **Speaker 2** No, I'm not running. I'm going to be running for reelection to the House of Representatives. We'll watch the Republican field play out, but I think we have a large number of great strong candidates who will, and one of them will ultimately be successful.

[00:01:38] **Speaker 1** So this week's House session was cut short, as we said, by the speaker, attributed to what the Wall Street Journal called, quote, furor over disclosures from the Epstein investigation. What's your reaction to the distraction that the whole Jeffrey Epstein file is causing?

[00:01:54] **Speaker 2** The broader media landscape loves to talk about Epstein. They don't want to talk about the president's success at securing the border, about the positive impacts of the tax package that was just passed. I think it's a lot to do about nothing. I think I lean on the side. More disclosure is always a good thing. The sunlight is the best disinfectant. I think actually we should just move forward with this. Disclose what's legally permissible. It's obviously under a court seal. It's not under the direct control of Congress. And then get really back and try to draw the attention of the media who loves to be distracted by this. Back to the most important issues of the day.

[00:02:28] **Speaker 1** Now, a new Marquette Law School national poll shows that 41% of respondents support the reconciliation bill that President Trump signed into law, while 59% oppose it, of course, with sharp partisan divides. Why did you vote in favor?

[00:02:45] **Speaker 2** Let me look at the underlying provisions inside the bill. Let's talk about what we got done. Almost every single thing is net popular once the American people understand what's in the bill, this is about doubling down and making sure that the border is secure. Wildly popular, the president's moves to do that and then building to make sure that's permanent, a good thing. Investing in the military at a period of time of dangerous global instability, making sure the 2017 tax cuts are permanent to build on the economic growth that we saw leading into the pandemic, and then doubling down on that, in particular, for seniors, those working over time are those who are earning tips. And then finally. Getting spending under control. And this is where the demagoguery has been probably the most challenging. Putting in place work requirements for able-bodied, childless adults is an 80-20 issue in the state of Wisconsin as indicated by the not so long ago referendum. That's what this bill does. It actually secures the program for those it was designed for, permanently disabled adults, children, pregnant women. And it simply says if you're an able-body, childless adult of working age, we're asking you to be looking for work, volunteering or working a minimum of 20 hours a week. And so the provisions of the bill, as the American people learn more and more about them, I think will only become more popular because they're common sense reforms to get this country back on track.

[00:04:06] **Speaker 1** On this program last week, Milwaukee Democratic Congresswoman Gwen Moore reiterated her position that there's quote, truly no bottom to this bill, now laws, cruelty, saying it will result in 276,000 people in Wisconsin not receiving healthcare. What's your response to her?

[00:04:27] **Speaker 2** Yeah, that's kind of the dangerous demagoguery that I think really tries to scare people. And it's unfortunate at a period of time where we're trying to get spending under control in Washington. Again. Let's review the bill. In the state of Wisconsin, there are roughly about 130,000 able-bodied, childless adults on Wisconsin's Medicaid badger care program. Little over half of those individuals are already working a minimum of 20 hours a week. There's about 63,000 individuals out of the 1.2 million individuals on Medicaid. They're able-oddied, they're of working age, they don't have young children. We're simply asking them to come to the table and have some skin in the game, look for a job, be in school, volunteer, or work a minimum of 20 hours a week. This is, I think, a common sense reform. The demagoguery that we get by those on the left is actually, I think, quite disappointing. A period of time where we're working to strengthen the program. For those it's truly designed for.

[00:05:22] **Speaker 1** So the Congressional Budget Office did estimate that this law will cut federal spending on Medicaid and CHIP benefits by $1 trillion, due in part, the CBO says, to at least $10.5 million being eliminated from the program.

[00:05:44] **Speaker 2** But let's dive into those numbers, right? Because the people are using those numbers to try to scare people in the state of Wisconsin. Wisconsin's had work requirements for many of our welfare programs, in particular SNAP benefits, since the 1990s when Governor Tommy Thompson put them in place. In Medicaid, we don't have the exact work requirements that the federal government has, that this law passes. What this law does is simply say, if you're an able-bodied, childless adult, we want you to be looking for work, going to school, volunteering, or working 20 hours a week. This is an 80-20 common sense issue. And you say, if you dig further into that, who's the CBO examining? I mean, the positive view that is those people find themselves with an opportunity to get a job, to volunteer, that we won't see folks losing their health benefits. What we'll see is people getting into a good or a better paying job with the ultimate goal of many of these able-bodied, childless adults getting into the workforce and receiving their health care from their employer, like many hardworking families in the state Wisconsin do.

[00:06:48] **Speaker 1** What about changes to the Affordable Care Act that I understand and, according to Congresswoman Moore, will raise premiums and also impose other restrictions, potentially causing people to lose that coverage?

[00:07:02] **Speaker 2** You give me the details on that. I think what you're taking there is national analysis on the state of Wisconsin that doesn't apply. Wisconsin didn't expand Medicaid. And so some of the reforms that are made in other states apply differently. And so this is what's really dangerous about the demagoguery that some individuals want to engage in. They wanna take a national narrative and apply it to Wisconsin. Wisconsin, I think very thoughtfully, did not expand Medicaid further into the able-bodied childless working age population. And so again, of the 1.2 million individuals in the state of Wisconsin who currently are on Medicaid. Tony Evers of Plaint E noted that there's about 163,000 of them that are of the demographic that we should look at, able-bodied, childless adults. Well over half of those are already. Already working 20 hours a week, going to school, volunteering, 63,000 are not or are not documenting it. And so this is about making sure that we're strengthening the program for those that it's designed for. No changes. And in fact, in my opinion, strengthening. Wisconsin, after the passage of the state budget, actually received about a billion dollars a year more in federal money. We got a whole debate about that, but more money's coming in. And So the left is trying really hard to demagogue on this issue. As the facts got out, you saw a quick pivot into Epstein, which was the lead question of your interview. So what we need to do is to dive in, get the information out to the American people about how we're strengthening the program. And I think as the American People learn more and more about this, it's only going to be more popular. Again, the work requirements in the state of Wisconsin had a referendum, 80-20 popular.

[00:08:39] **Speaker 1** As to the recent rescissions package that's stripped appropriation funding from USAID and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, do you expect and support additional rescissions as a way to cut costs going forward?

[00:08:56] **Speaker 2** Washington has a massive spending palm. We're spending almost $2 trillion a year more than we're taking in, and the debt is well over $30 trillion. I think we need to go through the federal budget with a fine-tooth comb to remove waste fraud abuse. Look at programs that could find either other sources of funding or aren't necessary. And so I think it's appropriate to make sure that we're combing through the Federal budget, looking for ways to save taxpayer dollars. And again, at a period of time where every extra dollar we spend is effectively a dollar borrowed from China, I think it's absolutely appropriate. To dig through the federal budget and look for ways to save funds for hard-working families.

[00:09:32] **Speaker 1** U.S. Representative Brian Stiles. Thanks very much. Thank you, sir.

[00:09:43] **Speaker 2** Thank you very much. Have a wonderful weekend.

[00:09:45] **Speaker 1** You too.