

## The Influence of the Tavern League in Wisconsin Politics

**Transcript from the July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Midday with Charlie Sykes on News Radio 620 WTMJ, Milwaukee**

Charlie Sykes [54:30]: One of the most powerful special interests... Think about this over the news. We know that the road builders are an incredibly powerful and influential special interest in Madison. They are not the most powerful special interest in Madison. Just think about this. What do you think is the most powerful special interest in Madison right now? Maybe we should do this as an inside shot. Emily, let's see if people have been paying attention. And this has been true for years. 799 1620...When the Democrats were in charge, the answer was WEAC, right, the public employee union. They're not in charge. Well you could also argue that when the democrats were in charge the trial lawyers were. Now that Republicans are in charge, and by the way I don't think this actually true just for Republicans or Democrats – it's a lobby that almost always gets its way and when people ask the question: well why did this happen? On the other hand, why did this not happen? The answer is almost always because this is an incredibly powerful, influential lobby. Arguably the lobby with the most clout within the Wisconsin state legislature. And I'll tell you a story about what they were able to slip into the budget as well and see if anybody gets this during the news...

Charlie: What is the most entrenched, influential special interest? And it used to be WEAC. When the Democrats controlled the legislature, they were really a wholly owned subsidiary of the teacher's union but of course uh #1 Democrats do not control the legislature anymore and #2 WEAC is a shadow of its former self. Trial lawyers have always been very influential. They pretty much got whatever they wanted when Jim Doyle was running the show. There are other very powerful special interest groups, the road builders who usually get their way. Until the fight over right to work, they lost on two issues. They lost on right to work and they lost on prevailing wage. But there's another arguably more entrenched special interest...

**CALLER Kim from Fox Point:** Yeah, Charlie, I'm gonna say it's the Tavern League.

**Charlie:** You are absolutely right! But tell me why you said that.

**Kim:** Well, because, it's impossible to change the drunk driving laws.

**Charlie:** Yeah, that is certainly the tip off.