



**J.B. Van Hollen**, Atty. General



**Scott Walker**, Governor



**Scott Baumbach**, Secretary

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CONTACT: Bill Cosh, Department of Justice, 608-266-1221  
John Dipko, Department of Workforce Development, 608-266-6753

## **VAN HOLLEN AND BAUMBACH ANNOUNCE WORKERS TO RECEIVE SETTLEMENT PAYMENTS IN WISCONSIN FOOD GIFT CASE**

**SUN PRAIRIE-** Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen and Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Scott Baumbach today announced the recovery of over \$290,000 for the benefit of 104 Wisconsin Food Gift employees.

The fund permits employees to recover wages and benefits lost in the closing of Wisconsin Food Gift, which formerly did business as Wisconsin Cheeseman, Mille Lacs Gourmet Foods and Scott's Fundraising Resource. "It is clear in Wisconsin that laws protecting the rights of workers to compensation must be followed," Van Hollen said. "The Wisconsin Department of Justice represents the Department of Workforce Development in enforcing the law when violations unfortunately occur."

The fund was recovered in the course of a Dane County Circuit Court case that led to the sale of Wisconsin Food Gift to new owners. The company was placed in receivership February 16, 2011. Judge Richard G. Niess approved the sale of the company June 29, 2011.

"This is a good example of the Department of Justice and DWD working together to enforce our state laws to ensure workers receive compensation owed to them," Secretary Baumbach said. "When the first wage claims were filed, we immediately asked the Department of Justice to file a lien. This sale moved quickly, and because of the prompt action we took, over 100 workers will receive payments, most of them the maximum amount allowed."

Under the state's Wage Claim laws, eligible workers are entitled to payment of up to \$3,000 in unpaid wages and benefits before most other creditors are paid. In this case, the 104 former workers will receive the full amount they are owed, or \$3,000 whichever is less.

The DWD Division of Equal Rights is working to process the payments and mail the correct amounts to all 104 claimants as soon as possible. The Division averages collection of about \$3 million per year in wage claims, plant closing notice wages, and prevailing wage payments.

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