

Walter Rogers
Iowa House District 60



Official Biography

Walt Rogers is serving his fourth term in the Iowa House.

Walt was born on July 5, 1961, as the sixth of what would be eight children. Walt attended grade school in Waterloo and graduated from Columbus High School in 1979.

During high school, Walt met Jenny Ridder and they were married in 1980. Walt then attended the University of Northern Iowa, where he earned a Bachelor of Technology Degree with an emphasis in Manufacturing and Management Technology in 1984. Walt and Jenny have lived in Cedar Falls for 32 years. He and his wife have three grown children and 10 grandchildren.

Rogers has been a leader in his community all his adult life. He has worked in the private sector for several years at Rath Packing Company, Northland Products Company, and as an account executive at Mudd Advertising. Rogers spent more than twenty years working with Cedar Valley youth and families at area churches. He was on the staff management team at Orchard Hill for several years, has been a member of the Cedar Falls Safe and Drug-Free Committee, and has served on the boards of Alternatives Pregnancy Center and Love Cedar Valley.

Rogers is a leadership consultant and has worked as a concert promoter and event planner. He has also organized entertainment locally for My Waterloo Days. Rogers founded and directed Onefest—one of the largest indoor music festivals in the Midwest, and for the fifteen years has led Caravan—an influential annual trip for high school students.

He was elected as a House Assistant Majority Leader in 2013.”

(Legislative Biography, [Accessed 9/20/17](#))

ALEC membership/ties

In 2014, ALEC claimed that all members of the Iowa Legislature were members of the organization. According to a letter from then House Democratic Leader Mark Smit, all Democrats “informed the Chief Clerk of the Iowa House that no dues or fees were to be paid to ALEC on our behalf and none of us have applied to ALEC for individual membership.” However, since we have no evidence that a similar letter was sent by Iowa Republicans, we assume all Iowa Republicans are ALEC members. (Iowa House Democrats, [1/9/14](#))

ALEC model legislation authored/sponsored

Bill Title/Number	ALEC Model Bill	Sponsored/Authorred
HJR 1 (2013)	Right to Work Act	Sponsored
HF 368 (2013)	No Sanctuary Cities for Illegal Immigrants Act	Sponsored
HF 295 (2017)	Living Wage Mandate Preemption Act	Voted ye
HF 95 (2011)	Voter ID Act	Sponsored
HF 291 (2017)	Public Employer Payroll Deduction Policy Act, Public Employee Freedom Act, and other ALEC legislation	Voted ye
HF 589 (2012)	Animal and Ecological Terrorism Act	Voted ye
HF 651 (2018)	Family Education Tax Credit Program Act; Family Education Savings Account Act	Sponsored

Rogers sponsored a joint resolution proposing a so-called right-to-work amendment to the Constitution of the State of Iowa. HJR 1 (2013) would prevent unions from negotiating contract provisions that require all workers, including non-members, to contribute to the costs of worker representation on the job. It is very similar to the ALEC template. (Bill text, [1/15/2013](#))

Rogers sponsored a bill prohibiting “sanctuary cities.” The bill mandates local enforcement of federal immigration law, allows private citizens to sue if they feel their town, city, county or state government is not “fully” enforcing immigration law, makes it a crime to have an illegal immigrant in one’s vehicle, makes presence on state soil without federal immigration status a criminal offense, and requires that employers use the E-Verify system (and further criminalizing the employment of illegal immigrants). HF 368 prohibits local government from deciding how best to allocate limited law enforcement resources to confront the most pressing public safety threats and interferes with the law enforcement-community relationship. ([CMD](#))

Rogers voted to preempt municipalities from establishing a local minimum wage. HF 295 rolled back wage increases in Polk, Johnson, Wapello, and Linn counties, mandating that no local minimum wage exceed the state level of \$7.25 an hour. In opposition, Rep. Amy Nielsen (D) stated, “for the state to come in and take away the right of communities to decide how their values systems, what they want to make a priority in their communities — I believe it’s an overreach. And I believe it’s not our place.” In addition to preventing cities and counties from setting their own minimum wages, the bill also prohibits them from requiring things like paid family leave. (The Des Moines Register, [3/9/2017](#))

Rogers sponsored burdensome photo ID and proof of citizenship requirements. This bill is similar in effect to ALEC legislation and would disenfranchise minority voters. ([CMD](#))

Rogers voted to strip public employees of their collective bargaining rights. HF 291 dismantled collective bargaining rights for public workers and required public sector unions to conduct recertification votes ten months prior to the expiration of employment contracts; if the union is decertified, the union’s contract with their employer is null and void. This bill banned unions from negotiating with their employers over issues such as health insurance, evaluation procedures, staff reduction and leaves of absence for political purposes. Republicans developed the bill behind closed doors and broke tradition to limit debate on the measure. Senate Minority Leader Robert Hogg, D-Cedar Rapids, called passage of the legislation a "travesty of the democratic system" that will reduce the wages of public-sector employees. All Democrats and six Republicans voted against the bill. (Des Moines Register, [2/16/2017](#); Tri State Public Radio, [9/21/2017](#))

Rogers voted for HF 589 in 2012, a bill that became the nation’s first “Ag Gag” law. According to *The Atlantic*, this bill allows factory farms to hide animal and ecological abuse from the public. It criminalizes investigative journalists and animal protection advocates who take entry-level jobs at factory farms in order to document the rampant food safety and animal welfare abuses within. (The Atlantic, [3/20/2012](#); Food Safety News, [3/1/2012](#))

Rogers sponsored that would take money away from public schools and give it to private schools. Representative Jeff Timberlake voted for LD 1092 and LD 250, which would divert taxpayer money from public to private schools. The bills model ALEC’s Family Education Savings Account Act, which creates a “a financial incentive for people to take their children out of public schools and support private for-profit, religious, and other primary or secondary schools (Dirigo Blue [4/12/12](#); Courier [2/15/2018](#))

Other Hits

In 2016, Rogers received \$500 in campaign contributions from KochPAC. According to PR Watch, “The billionaire Koch brothers are seeking to make Iowa the next Republican state government trifecta with a late influx of cash into races. While the national press has focused on the fact that the Kochs are not playing in the presidential, too little attention has been paid to their ramped up activities in the states.” (PR Watch, [9/7/2016](#))