

AFL-CIO: President calls for personal protective equipment as every worker's right

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APRIL 3, 2020) – In a new [op-ed](#) published in the Wisconsin State Journal, Stephanie Bloomingdale, President of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO, and former policy director for the Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals (WFNHP, AFT) details how every essential worker, whether on the front lines, working with the public, or simply working closely with coworkers, must have personal protective equipment and distance from one another to save their own lives and the lives of all Americans.

The op-ed details underlying causes of the Personal Protective Equipment shortage, and how America's unions are ready to lead us through this public health crisis.

An excerpt from the op-ed:

The current pandemic shows the potentially catastrophic impacts to front-line responders and every worker still on the job. Sadly, here in Wisconsin, we've already seen COVID-19 deaths among workers not in front-line occupations. Every day, workers are sent into battle without the equipment we need, which is unethical and unsustainable. Working people shouldn't have to choose between their safety and a paycheck.

Employers and government need to step up. Every workplace must take immediate steps to mitigate the risk of infection, including 6 feet of space between co-workers. Equally urgent is making appropriate protective equipment available to all.

America's unions stand ready to address this crisis. Across America, organized labor

is working with manufacturers to ramp up production of critical equipment and resources. We're educating workers and pushing employers to protect workers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed a dangerously broken system that put profits before preparedness. We must learn from this crisis and place our collective security back into the capable hands that have seen us through so many national challenges: America's union workers.

[Read the full op-ed.](#)