

Biden campaign: Wisconsin AFL-CIO President Applauds Joe Biden's Commitment to Workers in Labor Day Op-Ed

Posted on Tuesday, Sep 8, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Today in The Capital Times, Wisconsin AFL-CIO President Stephanie Bloomingdale penned a Labor Day op-ed outlining the clear choice in the election for Wisconsin workers. Bloomingdale slammed the Trump Administration for failing to protect the essential workers on the front lines of the pandemic, and praised Joe Biden's [economic recovery plan](#) that will also strengthen labor unions.

Senator Kamala Harris is in Wisconsin for Labor Day, touring an International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers training facility and hosting a roundtable discussion on the "Build Back Better" economic recovery agenda with Black small business owners and entrepreneurs in Milwaukee.



<https://twitter.com/SarahHauer/status/1303040967717588993?s=20>



<https://twitter.com/tylerpager/status/1303041371603902466?s=20>

Read more below:

The Capital Times: [Stephanie Bloomingdale: Biden is the president workers need in the White House](#)

As we honor the achievements of working people in Wisconsin this Labor Day, we must give special recognition to those serving on the front lines during this pandemic. And as we grieve the deaths of over 187,000 Americans—many of whom contracted the virus on the job—we must also acknowledge that it did not have to be this bad. Over 1,100 Wisconsinites have died and over 80,000 have tested positive for COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated that the work done every day in America, quietly and without fanfare, is truly essential to our collective well-being. Six months ago, too many people took for granted the men and women behind the wheel of the buses getting workers to their jobs or the truckers keeping goods flowing throughout our economy; the healthcare workers who care for us and the meatpackers, grocery store, and food processing workers who make sure fresh food is available at the grocery store whenever we need it.

When the pandemic hit, workers stepped up, often without the personal protective equipment they needed, and carried on, shouldering the additional burden of knowing after a long day's work, they might be bringing a deadly virus back home to their families.

It is not enough to put out a yard sign thanking our front lines heroes. We must make sure we protect working people on the job every day. To ensure that we're never again caught without sufficient personal protective equipment, we must put Americans to work manufacturing these products in this country. We must enact and vigorously enforce regulations that make our workplaces safer. This type of enforcement has come to a virtual halt under the Trump Administration.

During this crisis, Donald Trump has chosen to point fingers and deny responsibility rather than take concrete action to keep our essential workers safe. The Trump Administration actively stopped an OSHA infectious disease standard and still to this day refuses to issue an OSHA standard on the virus. The Trump Administration has actively made workplaces less safe by slashing the number of health and safety inspectors and refusing to use the National Defense Production Act to make PPE.

Many factors have contributed to the undermining of the economic security of working families in this country, but one stands out above the rest: the sustained attack on workers' ability to stand together in a union. If we are to get past the current crises we face and usher in a better, more just and prosperous America, this has to end.

Joe Biden has a plan to build back better out of this crisis and to restore full union rights. The stability of our American economy rests with the middle class, and the middle class is built and sustained by labor unions. For working families, union membership remains the surest path to economic security and a more just and fair society for all.

As President, Joe Biden is committed to repealing so-called “right to work” laws here in Wisconsin and across the country, and he will hold company executives personally liable when they interfere with organizing efforts. Biden has made it clear he will increase the federal minimum wage to \$15/hour and make the path fair for workers to join a union and collectively bargain.

As Joe Biden says, we build back better “with newly empowered labor unions, they’re the ones who have built the middle class.”

In these challenging times, we remain inspired by all of our union members and essential workers who have stepped up to keep our communities safe. And we are proud of our Union Mask Brigade here in Wisconsin which has stepped up to sew hundreds of handmade masks for front line working people who need it. In the face of adversity, we are seeing the incredible resilience of working people.

Like all crises, this pandemic will someday be behind us. In the meantime, we must work to ensure that it leaves more than shattered lives and destruction in its wake. Let this pandemic serve as a catalyst for a more just society for everyone. And let a newfound awareness of the critical role played by working Americans guide us toward meaningful action.

In less than two months, voters will choose the trajectory of post-pandemic America. Joe Biden has challenged us to work for more than a return to the status quo and “build back better.” In his nomination acceptance speech, he said that vision includes an active role for newly empowered labor unions. This Labor Day, as we reflect on the essential contributions so many American workers have made throughout the pandemic, there is no better way to say thank you than to make this vision a reality.

Stephanie Bloomingdale is the president of the Wisconsin state AFL-CIO, and the first woman elected to that position. She has over 20 years’ experience in labor as an organizer, negotiator, trainer and activist.