

# Main Street Alliance: Wisconsin small business meets virtually with President-elect Biden on urgent relief need as state legislators undermine local public health response

Posted on Wednesday, Dec 2, 2020

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Today, Milwaukee based restaurateur and Main Street Alliance member Dan Jacobs met [virtually](#) with President-elect Joe Biden and workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to discuss the urgent need for financial support for small businesses and American households.

Jacobs impressed upon the incoming President the dire need for grants based support to small businesses, particularly the restaurant industry that has been so hard hit and not served well by the previous loan programs.

“We as small business owners, like our workforce, cannot have the help come in the form of taking on more debt,” said Jacobs. “We need grant help and we need that grant help now.”

“We need to get help out the door as soon as we can. Americans like you need relief now,” said Biden during the roundtable. “But any package passed in this lame duck session, between now and January 21st at best is only going to be a downpayment.”

The delay in additional aid through the winter means Biden will likely be sworn in to a much bigger economic crisis than necessary. Biden has been encouraging federal

lawmakers to come together during the lame duck session. Urgent relief cannot wait for a new administration, as small businesses [could shutter by the hundreds of thousands](#) before January.

Jacobs' conversation comes on the heels of Assembly Leaders in Madison [introducing measures](#) they claim will help address the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, but will only make problems worse for Wisconsin small businesses. These measures would take away critical tools from local officials and small businesses to help stop the surging spread until a vaccine is more widely available.

Small businesses in Wisconsin have waited too long for additional support from the federal and state government and time is running out. Many businesses across the state, from Rhinelander to Racine, are on the edge of bankruptcy and need additional grants and direct aid, not more loans, to make it through this crisis.

"We need relief for restaurants and other businesses...if we wait any longer many owners across the state will go under," said AJ Dixon, owner of Lazy Susan MKE. "And as a parent of a child who chose to keep my kids on virtual learning I don't understand the push to go back before we know how bad case numbers will be this winter."

"The fact that they are concentrating efforts to limit liability exposure is inexcusable. We should be protecting residents of Wisconsin," added Jacobs specifically about these local measures. "It feels like they are choosing money over lives."

In a survey done by Main Street Alliance, small businesses chose paid leave and paid sick days supports over corporate immunity by a [2 to 1 margin](#), making it clear the effort by State legislators is not for small businesses, but big corporations.

Wisconsin small business owners and Main Street Alliance members are calling on Speaker Vos, Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu to get to work on a set of proposals that will actually help small business, not exacerbate the health crisis and prolong economic recovery. We can't wait any longer.