

Opportunity Wisconsin: As the RNC concludes, Wisconsinites tell President Trump to stop putting the interests of the wealthy and well-connected over working Wisconsinites

Posted on Friday, Aug 28, 2020

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MADISON, Wis. — This week, President Trump used his stage time during the Republican National Convention to tell the American people just how strong the economy is. But for whom is his pandemic economy strong? Certainly not the hundreds of thousands of unemployed Wisconsinites who've lost more than \$335 million in unemployment income since the President let benefits expire July 31. Nor Wisconsin's essential workers who put their lives on the line everyday to keep our state running, but haven't seen a raise even though massive corporations got big tax breaks before the pandemic and a \$500 billion bailout during it. And certainly not Wisconsin's dairy farmers who've been forced to dump excess milk this year and continue leading the nation in farm bankruptcies.

Over the past week, Opportunity Wisconsin has uplifted the stories of the Wisconsinites who are hurting because of the President's economic policies, and it's clear that the economy right now isn't strong and it isn't working for us.

On Monday, we heard from [Tim of Appleton](#), as he discussed who really benefits from the Trump tax scam. "The people who really benefit from Trump's tax cuts are the people at the top, and what it does is it leaves people like me, like most of my friends and family, out in the cold," said Tim, a former employee at AT&T's now-

closed Appleton center. “AT&T decided to close our center within a year. The Trump administration cares more about lining the pockets of Wall Street than they do about helping Wisconsinites.”

We also heard from [Becca Cooke from Eau Claire](#) as she discussed the struggles she’s facing to keep her small business afloat. “I came back to Wisconsin to open my own small business. I didn’t come from an affluent family, so it was really kind of a pull-yourself-up-by-the-bootstraps start,” said Becca Cooke, owner of Red’s Mercantile. “I think the 1 percent and corporations are the people that are benefiting from the Trump tax law. You don’t see that trickle down to small businesses.”

On Tuesday, we held a roundtable discussion with Rep. Gwen Moore and Milwaukee County tenants struggling under the eviction crisis brought on, in no small part, by President Trump’s do-nothing executive actions. You can watch the full discussion [here](#).

On Wednesday, we heard from [Jarrett](#), a former JBS beef plant worker, who experienced first hand how President Trump has endangered frontline workers. Even as coronavirus cases spiked among meat packing plant employees, President Trump put corporate profits over worker safety and pushed the factories to reopen. Jarrett asked, “if President Trump cares about frontline workers, why are we forced to put our lives at risk while big corporations get richer?”

We also heard from [Angelina](#), another essential worker serving as a nurse in Milwaukee. She shared her frustration with communities re-opening while cases increase, saying it “puts stress on health care workers and all front line workers.” Despite this, President Trump continued to push states to reopen, even as the virus strikes communities of color the hardest. Angelina explains: “We’re going to continue to see Black and Brown communities affected at a higher rate — unless we tackle that, we’re not going to see any changes.”

And yesterday, we heard from [Anna Landmark](#), owner of Landmark Creamery. In the video, Anna told us: “Over the past few years, I’ve watched dairy farms across Wisconsin struggle — and I’ve seen some fold completely. It’s heartbreaking. Trump promised to take care of farmers, but he hasn’t. He helped big corporations and the billionaires get ahead, while farmers lost everything. And now, with the coronavirus crisis, Trump is still putting big corporations first. And small businesses like mine, and small farmers that I rely on, are getting very little.”

Then, we heard from [Paul Adams](#), a long-time family farmer in Eleva. “This farm has been in the family for 148 years. Three years ago, profits were good. Now, I’m selling my cows. It’s impossible to get by,” said Adams. “Trump’s trade and dairy policies put my farm out of business.”

Last but not least, we heard from [Sarah Lloyd](#), a dairy farmer in Wisconsin Dells. Sarah told us: “I am watching very carefully and with a very heavy heart what is happening with the workers in the meatpacking plants. Because dairy farmers are also in the beef business. When a cow is not producing milk anymore, then she goes to the beef supply chain. Our food system is so broken, we’re allowing this massive meatpacking plant to just kill their workers. And as a farmer, I must be in solidarity with the workers! We’re dependent on each other.”

President Trump’s economic policies have actively hurt Wisconsin by putting billionaires and big corporations first, and leaving working and middle-class people behind. Between rising housing costs, wages not keeping up with the cost of living, and nearly non-existent benefits, many in the Badger State are just barely getting by. The president’s botched policy response to the coronavirus pandemic has only made matters worse for Wisconsin workers. President Trump’s remarks during the convention this week rang hollow for millions of struggling families, and that’s why folks all across our state told President Trump this week: Stop putting the interests of the wealthy and well-connected over working Wisconsinites.

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