

Rep. Robyn Vining, WOW County mothers: Speak out about child care struggles

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(WISCONSIN) — Representative Robyn Vining and WOW County mothers Mary Lockwood and Sarah Knowles held a video press call highlighting how Trump's failed response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including his failure to provide adequate funding for parents to get the child care they need for their kids. Rep. Vining highlighted her work as a member of the Committee on Children and Families, as well as touted Vice President Biden's newly released plan to build a 21st century caregiving and education workforce.

Due to unaffordable childcare costs, Ms. Lockwood explained that she has all but left her job as an essential worker at an organization that works with people experiencing homelessness so that she can take care of her children and educate them at home. In addition, Ms. Knowles' noted her son has health issues that puts him at far greater risk of COVID-19 as Wisconsin faces a growing rate of infections. Should the pandemic persist but Trump forces school re-openings, she will be forced to keep her son at home.

[Watch the full event here](#) or read excerpts of what the speakers said below.

Rep. Robyn Vining: "There are so many families I represent — mothers and fathers who are always trying to do what's best for their children, but who are struggling more than ever because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This virus has hurt everyone in my community, and a big struggle that I hear about from my constituents and as a member of the Committee on Children and Families is the outrageous cost of child care. We have parents who have had to choose between keeping their essential job and staying at home with their children because child

care is just too expensive. What makes all of this worse is that it didn't have to be this way — my constituents didn't have to be suffering this way. Trump's refusal to take this pandemic seriously has put us in greater jeopardy, and it has put Wisconsin families at greater risk with both their health and financial stability... Joe Biden has released a plan that I believe will help address this crisis. This includes a tax credit for low-income and middle-class families for child care expenditures, investing in universal pre-kindergarten, and investing in quality standards as well as better compensation for child care workers... There is a real opportunity here to right the ship after Donald Trump has left office."

Mary Lockwood: "In normal circumstances, I work in homeless services, specifically... connecting individuals experiencing housing insecurity to housing opportunities, and under the current administration the clients that I work with are struggling hugely anyway, and much more so in the pandemic... When my husband and I did the cost benefit analysis of who should stay home with the kids, it was clearly me; I make far less even though my job is more essential than ever... We need changes so that mom's like me can stay in their essential jobs, because my work is essential and I don't want it to be the logical conclusion that the mom stays home because she makes less money... I know that Joe Biden has a plan, not only for housing which is so important to me, but to support essential workers and it is absolutely necessary now."

Sarah Knowles: "I have a 20 year old son, Matthew, who will graduate next year from the special education program at Fairview South... Matthew has cerebral palsy, he uses a wheelchair, he's nonverbal, and he needs one-on-one care for all of his daily living skills, so in addition to being Matthew's 24/7 caregiver... overnight I had to become a therapist and a teacher... It's been a big failure from Trump to let it get this bad, there has been zero leadership from the very start, and it's made it very difficult for vulnerable populations... The wellbeing of our family has been affected by the administration, and I really hope we can elect Joe Biden as the next president, and reelect Robyn, because we need people who are thinking of everyone, including the most vulnerable."