

SEIU Wisconsin State Council: Endorses slate of candidates who advance needs of working people

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WISCONSIN—The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Wisconsin State Council endorsed candidates in several key primary races, citing their support on key issues, their commitments to play leadership roles in advancing a governing agenda, and their approach to the relationship between elected officials and movement organizations.

SEIU Wisconsin State Council queried candidates not only on support for \$15 minimum wage and restoration of union rights like repealing Act 10 and so-called “right to work,” but also other measures to build worker power and raise wages in the 21st century economy.

Candidates endorsed by the SEIU Wisconsin State Council stated their commitment to expanding BadgerCare and working toward guaranteeing healthcare for all as a right of every Wisconsinite. As the coordinating body for the unions of healthcare and other frontline essential workers, SEIU Wisconsin State Council secured commitments from candidates to support the Healthcare Heroes Act, paid sick days, responsible building cleaning, and protections for and investments in long-term care workers.

SEIU Wisconsin State Council noted the candidates’ commitment to breaking down the systemic racism that keeps working families and our communities from getting ahead. The service workers council also highlighted their emphasis on tackling the existential threat of climate change by putting tens of thousands of Wisconsin residents to work in living-wage, union jobs transitioning our state to a clean energy economy.

After reviewing candidate answers to a policy-based questionnaire, conducting interviews with rank-and-file union members as well as union officers, and a vetting process, SEIU WI State Council is proud to announce its endorsement of the following candidates for state legislature who are running in contested primaries:

- JoAnna Bautch, State Assembly District 8
- Tomika Vukovic, State Assembly District 11
- Supreme Moore Omokunde, State Assembly District 17
- Samba Baldeh, State Assembly District 48
- Marsha Rummel, Assembly District 76
- Lisa Subeck, State Assembly District 78
- Kristina Shelton, Assembly District 90
- LaTonya Johnson, Senate District 6
- Melissa Sargent, Senate District 16
- Kelda Roys, Senate District 26
- Brad Pfaff, Senate District 32

“The members of SEIU WI State Council are proud to support these outstanding candidates,” said **Brenda Frary, SEIU WI State Council President and hospital worker in Madison**. “By electing representatives who are committed to rewriting the rules and putting more power in the hands of working people, Wisconsin can be a place where all can live with dignity and respect. These candidates have shown

their commitment to fighting for the issues that matter most to working families: securing living wages for all workers and the right to join together in unions to have a seat at the table.”

Throughout the pandemic, members of SEIU local unions have been the essential workers keeping the state running and providing critical care and services, and have also been at the forefront of fighting for policies that prioritize the health, safety, and economic well being of working people. These candidates have shown they have a plan to address the public health and safety challenges and ensure that working peoples’ needs are met as the COVID-19 crisis continues, through the recovery and in the long-term.

“Janitorial and service workers like me on the front lines have been told we are essential but treated as though we are disposable,” said **Amicar Zapata, janitor in Milwaukee and member of SEIU Local 1**. “We need a new way forward for Wisconsin where all workers have a living wage, paid sick leave, and the right to form a union. To do that, we need allies in the halls of government who will look out for the interests of working people.”

For many months, SEIU WI State Council has spearheaded a voter engagement program, which is focused on mobilizing, educating and turning out SEIU members, their families and their communities, while expanding the electorate by turning out infrequent Wisconsin voters.