

# Wisconsin AFL-CIO: Reopening of economy must focus on worker health and safety

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(May 13, 2020 MILWAUKEE, WI) – **Wisconsin AFL-CIO President Stephanie Bloomingdale** released the following statement as the Wisconsin Supreme Court rules 4-3 to block Wisconsin’s life-saving Safer at Home policy.

“This cynical lawsuit brought by Wisconsin legislative Republican leadership was never about policy responses to a pandemic. It was all about taking away authority from our duly elected Governor Evers. What a shame, again, for our great state to have politicians playing partisan games at the expense of regular people.

“The reopening of Wisconsin’s economy must be grounded and centered on protecting worker health and safety. If workers aren’t safe, the public isn’t safe. Right now, far too many essential workers are working without adequate personal protective equipment; their workplaces are not sufficiently cleaned and sanitized; and recommended social distancing is not universally practiced. We’ve seen the result—many workers have contracted the virus while at work and a growing number have died. Workers are not expendable. We cannot open our economy until we have a constant and adequate supply of PPE to protect the lives of every single essential worker and all of us in the community. We need to immediately implement robust, clear, and enforceable infectious disease standards to contain the spread of the virus.

“We urge the Wisconsin legislature to work together in a truly bipartisan fashion with Governor Tony Evers and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and to listen to the voices of Wisconsin’s frontline essential workers to craft a measured,

responsible, and safe plan that focuses on worker safety. We must keep frontline workers safe and secure with PPE and increases in testing and tracing. Every essential worker, whether on the front lines, working with the public, or simply working closely with coworkers, must have personal protective equipment, thoroughly cleaned and sanitized workplaces, and appropriate social distance from one another to save their own lives and the lives of all Americans.”