

AFL-CIO: Biden appoints OSHA leader, calls on agency to step up for workers on first full day in office

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(January 21, 2021, MILWAUKEE, WI) — Stephanie Bloomingdale, President of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO, released the following statement as President Biden issues an executive order calling on OSHA to immediately issue clear guidance on keeping workers safe from COVID-19 as well as enforce worker health and safety requirements.

“Wisconsin workers voted for Joe Biden because he pledged to be the most pro-labor, pro-worker President in history. On his first full day in office, President Biden backed up his campaign trail promises by appointing James S. Frederick, a former union safety official with the United Steelworkers, to lead OSHA and issued a long-overdue and badly needed executive order making worker safety a national priority. The executive order on workplace health and safety calls on OSHA to immediately issue clear guidance for workers and employers dealing with a deadly infectious disease in the workplace. Today’s executive order also asks OSHA to step up and do its job to enforce workplace health and safety and hold employers accountable for unsafe working conditions, something that has been lacking since the start of the pandemic.

Since March, the Wisconsin AFL-CIO has been calling for a workplace standard for stronger OSHA enforcement. Keeping workers safe on the job is a critical piece in the fight to beat COVID-19. Today’s order signals a sea change in tactics to protect workers in order to save lives. We look forward to a continued worker-centered approach and a renewed, reinvigorated OSHA, MSHA and entire Labor Department under the Biden Administration.”