

State of Working Wisconsin: When unions are strong, they raise standards throughout the economy

Posted on Wednesday, Sep 1, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

As we head into our second Labor Day of the pandemic, COWS is releasing their annual State of Working Wisconsin report in a four part series this week. Today the focus is on unions: what role they play, and how the state's long history has been undermined by policy over the past decade.

Most notably:

- In the last decade, Wisconsin fell from above national unionization to well below it.
- Act 10 and decreasing public sector unionization explains much of Wisconsin's disproportionate union decline.
- Union density has fallen rapidly in Wisconsin, and in most neighboring states, but in Minnesota, union density has actually increased over the decade.

"When unions are strong, they raise labor standards not only in represented jobs, but throughout the economy." said Laura Dresser, Associate Director. "Despite deunionization over the last half century, unions continue to support workers, improve wages in worksites and often in entire sectors, and support policy that helps workers, families, and communities thrive."

View the full Unions analysis at <https://workingwi.org/soww-21/unions/>.

For more than two decades, the State of Working Wisconsin has presented the workers' perspective on the economy in the state: who is winning, and who is being left out; where is disparity growing; and what's happening to the economic chasm

separating Black and white workers in the state.

Up next:

- Wages: Thursday, 9/2
- Worker Experiences: Friday, 9/3

[Sign up here](#) to get updates sent straight to your inbox.