

WisGOP: Republicans fight to get Wisconsin back to work

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[Madison, WI] – In case you missed it, yesterday local business owners joined Republicans in calling to help get unemployed Wisconsinites off of the sidelines as businesses continue to suffer from labor shortages. For weeks, Republican [legislators](#) and businesses, including 50 [Chambers of Commerce](#) from across the state, have asked Tony Evers to join the [dozens](#) of state governors who have opted out of the additional federal unemployment benefit that is stifling small businesses' ability to fill job vacancies and fully recover from the impact of COVID-19.

Meanwhile, despite small business owners' cries for help, Tony Evers is [threatening](#) to make their problems worse. According to the [Wisconsin Institute of Law and Liberty](#), up to 11 percent of Wisconsin's workforce can make more on unemployment than by working. After Tony Evers kept businesses locked down during the onset of the pandemic, it is his responsibility to ensure that Wisconsin businesses are able to return to normalcy.

“Struggling small business owners need workers, yet Tony Evers is threatening to kick them while they’re down,” said Republican Party of Wisconsin Communications Director Anna Kelly. **“Evers did enough damage with his costly lockdowns that hit Main Street the hardest. It’s time for him to do what’s right and help local economies recover.”**

Read more from Empower Wisconsin [below](#):

Republicans: Time to get unemployed back to work

[Empower Wisconsin](#)

Matt Kittle

May 19, 2021

Klondike Cheese in Monroe employs 171 people. But Ron Buholzer, president of the family-owned cheese company his immigrant grandfather started nearly a century ago, says Klondike should be employing a lot more people.

“We’ve got 34 open positions right now,” Buholzer said.

The cheesemaker, like so many other Badger State businesses, is mired in a severe worker shortage, hitting an economy emerging from the pandemic. The problem has been exacerbated by the generous, taxpayer-funded, \$300 weekly unemployment supplement the federal government is paying out as part of trillions of dollars in COVID relief.

Buholzer shared his story Tuesday at a Capitol press conference held by Republican lawmakers proposing to, like 21 other states, do away with the incentive. As Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) put it, “We need to get people off the sidelines and into the workplace.”

[...]

That may have something to do with the fact that the \$300 weekly federal supplement works out to about \$16.75 an hour in unemployment wages. Gov. Tony Evers got rid of a work search requirement to collect unemployment, so there’s much less incentive for some to get off unemployment and back into the workforce. The Legislature is looking to bring back the work-search mandate, too.

Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) said a significant employer in his district told him companies are not longer competing with other employers or other states, they are “competing with the couch.”

“If there’s one thing we’ve learned over the last year ... when you pay people more to stay at home, they stay at home,” Marklein said.

A study by the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty finds up to 11 percent of the state's workforce, which includes nearly 200,000 restaurant workers, could earn more on unemployment than by working.