

# Barnes campaign: With 100 days to go, Wisconsin unites behind Mandela Barnes

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It's official: Wisconsinites from every corner of the state know Mandela is the strongest choice to defeat Ron Johnson — the most vulnerable incumbent Republican senator in the country — because he is building a grassroots campaign of Wisconsinites who are ready for a leader with middle class roots who will put working families first.

## **Here's What to Know About the Wisconsin Senate Race:**

Mandela connects with Wisconsinites because he's a proud product of Wisconsin's middle class, raised by a public school teacher and a third shift auto worker. He spent the last decade fighting for working people as a community organizer, state legislator, and as Lt. Governor. Unlike Ron Johnson, Mandela isn't a multi-millionaire and hasn't spent his career enriching his donors. Like Sen. Tammy Baldwin — who Republicans said was too "liberal" for Wisconsin when she first ran for Senate — Mandela Barnes will be an authentic champion for working people in the Senate.

From the beginning, top analysts have agreed that Mandela Barnes gives Democrats their best chance at flipping this seat. The day after Mandela launched his campaign, the Cook Political Report changed their rating of the race from Lean Republican to Toss-Up.

Just like he did when he joined Tony Evers to defeat Scott Walker in 2018, Mandela Barnes can mobilize a coalition strong enough to retire Ron Johnson in November.

Mandela is the only candidate in the field who can excite and inspire voters in

Democratic strongholds to turn out in record numbers and connect in a credible way with critical working class and swing voters around issues of the economy, jobs, and trade.

## **Ron Johnson is the Most Vulnerable Senator in the Country This Cycle**

Washington has changed Ron Johnson. He's the most vulnerable incumbent Republican Senator because he is an out-of-touch, self-dealing multi-millionaire politician who spent his decade in Washington enriching himself and his wealthy donors.

For over a year, Johnson's approval rating has been underwater, and a majority of voters disapprove of the job he's done. Polling from [Marquette University in April '22](#) showed only 36% of voters having a favorable view of the senator.

Johnson sided with his rich campaign donors, writing a provision in the tax bill that gave handouts to his biggest donors. Johnson even refused to support bipartisan efforts to keep the US competitive with countries like China, defended companies that outsource, and supported companies that move jobs out of Wisconsin saying Wisconsin has "enough jobs."

Unlike Ron Johnson who is focused on his own agenda while working families pay the price, Mandela is running for Senate to rebuild the middle class and give everyone a fair shot at the American dream. That's why Mandela is leading Johnson 46-44 in a head to head matchup in the latest polling — and Mandela is the only candidate in the Democratic primary beating Ron Johnson among Independent voters.

## **Mandela Unites Unprecedented Coalition**

From family farmers to organized labor to law enforcement and national security leaders including Lt. Colonel (Retired) Alexander Vindman, Mandela continues to unite the broad-based coalition of support necessary to unseat Ron Johnson in November.

- Mandela has demonstrated an unprecedented ability to unite the Democratic Party in Wisconsin.

- Mandela has been endorsed by his top three main primary opponents, [Alex Lasry](#), State [Treasurer Sarah Godlewski](#), and [Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson](#).
- Mandela has also earned the endorsement of [Senator Tammy Baldwin](#), who cited his “unprecedented ability” to unite a “coalition that includes farmers, union leaders, teachers, small business owners, and working people all across this state.”
- Labor unions are behind Mandela, including SEIU Wisconsin State Council, AFSCME Council 32, a conglomerate of county, state, municipal, and private sector unions across Wisconsin, Wisconsin AFL-CIO, AFT-Wisconsin, IBEW Local 2150, AFT Local 212, and Wisconsin Federation of Nurses & Health Professionals (WFNHP)
- Mandela is supported by law enforcement and national security experts including Dane County Sheriff Calvin Barrett and Former Director for European Affairs for the United States National Security Council Lt. Colonel (Retired) Alexander Vindman.
- On the heels of his [Barnes for Barns](#) statewide agriculture tour, Mandela earned the endorsements of a [coalition of family farmers](#) from across Wisconsin.
- Over 140 state and local leaders have stood with Mandela from the beginning, including the Mayor of La Crosse, Mayor of Wausau, and Mayor of Superior.
- Mandela has united an unparalleled base of support from every corner of the Democratic Party — which includes members of Congress from Sen. Cory Booker to U.S. Rep Gwen Moore and Majority Whip Jim Clyburn.

## **Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide**

Beating Ron Johnson means winning back key rural voters. Mandela has been reaching out to rural swing voters early and often in this campaign — building off rural outreach he has been doing during his term as Lt. Governor.

This spring, Mandela hit the road for his [Barnes for Barns](#) tour, a statewide listening tour highlighting issues faced by Wisconsin's farming and agriculture industry. As part of the tour, Mandela met with dozens of family farmers, meat processors, and agriculture businesses to discuss their experiences and challenges.

The tour informed Mandela's [Grow Wisconsin' agriculture plan](#) to empower the family farmers and meat processors who have been put on the backfoot by self-serving politicians like Ron Johnson and his big corporate backers.

The product of a union household who has traveled to every county in the state multiple times, Mandela knows that Wisconsinites have far more in common with each other than they do with a self-dealing multi-millionaire like Ron Johnson.

## **Running on Economic Issues**

In June, Mandela unveiled "[Milk](#)," the first television ad of his campaign. "Milk" highlights how Mandela is not like the millionaires in the Senate. Mandela's second ad, "[Doors](#)," highlighted his record of helping hard-working people across the state as Lt. Governor, his Wisconsin story, and his commitment to working for working people in Washington.

Mandela is keeping a laser focus on economic issues affecting Wisconsinites every day. That means bringing manufacturing back home, supporting Main Street, supporting family farms, and opposing special interests that want to ship jobs overseas.

- "Mandela Barnes, a Democratic Senate candidate in Wisconsin, connects with voters when he talks about his dad's middle-class life working the third shift at an auto plant that has since been replaced with a strip mall." [The New York Times, [7/18/22](#)]

Mandela has released economic policy proposals that will [lower costs and give middle class families a tax cut](#), rebuild the middle class, [create jobs by reviving Wisconsin manufacturing](#), support [small business](#), and prioritize working people:

## **Conclusion**

Wisconsin has united behind Mandela Barnes because they want a candidate who understands their challenges first hand. Wisconsinites know they can trust Mandela Barnes to fight for their fair shot at the American Dream.