

Main Street Alliance: Hosts small business roundtable with U.S. Senate candidates in Madison

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MADISON — Today in Madison the Main Street Alliance (MSA) hosted a small business roundtable at The Coopers Tavern. MSA small business members were joined by State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski, Outagamie Executive Tom Nelson, Steven Olikara and Kou Lee.

The purpose of these roundtables, with two more taking place in Milwaukee and Appleton, is to familiarize candidates with issues impacting small business and ask them questions about issues of importance to small businesses: health care, care economy (childcare & paid leave), capital access, tax fairness, and anti-monopoly. [Learn more about MSA's priorities here.](#)

[Watch the recording on the Wisconsin Eye.](#)

[Access pictures from the event here, taken by the Main Street Alliance. You have permission to use them.](#)

Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson on healthcare:

“To be clear, I oppose a for-profit health system because it doesn’t work. I don’t believe that a system should exist that preys upon the suffering of others. That said, I support the ACA, I support the enhanced subsidies and believe that we should expand Badgercare here in Wisconsin.”

Steven Olikara on child care:

“There is a study from the Kauffman Foundation that shows that over 50 percent of Americans want to start a business but a small fraction of them actually can and child care is at the center of one of the biggest barriers to helping people start and run their businesses.”

State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski on capital access:

“When I started my own impact investment firm we focused on providing access to capital for women and people of color and that’s what led me to the state treasurer’s office because when I found out the amount of capital that Silicon Valley gets in one day is more than Wisconsin gets in a year — that’s a problem. We need to support our small businesses here. The system is still not fair and we need to fix it.”

Kou Lee on reining in monopolies:

“I think about all the little businesses, including restaurants. When two summers ago when JBS was hacked overnight grocery stores were fighting for chicken, beef, but the shelves were empty. It impacted American families. It wiped the margin for

most restaurants. That's just one example of why we cannot have a monopoly controlling the entire channel."

From the Mandela for Wisconsin campaign:

"Thank you to the Main Street Alliance for always being a strong voice for Wisconsin's small businesses. From main street shops to family farms and everything in between, small businesses and the working families that power them are the heart and soul of Wisconsin. In the Senate I will always stick up for Wisconsin's small businesses and make sure everyone has a fair shot to compete and succeed."- Lt. Gov Mandela Barnes

Senator Ron Johnson, Alex Lasry and Lt. Gov Barnes were not able to join us due to scheduling conflicts; however, Alex Lasry and Lt. Gov Barnes will be joining the Main Street Alliance at our other upcoming events. We have extended an invite to Sen. Ron Johnson to meet with our members since he is currently not available to attend these events due to official business in Washington, DC.

This event was co-hosted with the Wisconsin Farmers Union.