

A Better Wisconsin Together: Right-wing members of state budget committee miss the mark on workers' rights

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MADISON, Wis. — Restoring workplace freedoms for thousands of workers and increasing retirement security for employees of small businesses could have taken a step towards becoming law today. But, action earlier this week by the Republican majority on the legislature's budget committee is preventing a vote, or even debate, on these proposals included in Governor Tony Evers' budget plan.

Among over 540 budget proposals Republicans struck from Gov. Evers' 2023 budget plan are pro-worker items to:

- Restore collective bargaining rights enjoyed by Wisconsin workers for decades, ensuring that employees in the Badger State have the freedom to broker safe working conditions, good wages, and benefits;
- Create a retirement savings program for small business workers across the state who are not currently covered under employer-sponsored retirement plans, because nobody should have to worry about whether they can afford to live after years of hard work.

According to the Republican co-chairs of the committee, their action to strip these measures from the budget prevents a vote or even any further debate on them, even when the portion of the state budget where they would be included is under consideration by the committee.

“Workers deserve rights as employees and a secure retirement for a lifetime of

work,” said Mike Browne, deputy director of A Better Wisconsin Together. “Gov. Evers has a plan to do just that, and start mending the damage right wing politicians have done. But Republicans won’t even allow a conversation about it, much less vote to support workers.

“To make comprehensive workers’ rights a reality in Wisconsin, we need our elected representatives to fight for it. That means creating things like better paying jobs, retirement, and safe working conditions,” Browne continued. “But right now, we are seeing certain right-wing politicians in Wisconsin playing partisan politics instead of siding with Wisconsin workers.”

Whatever the job, we should have the freedom to have our voices heard in our workplaces and know that we can safely retire at the end of our careers.

Together, we can demand that working in safe and healthy conditions and a comfortable retirement are fundamental freedoms in Wisconsin. Call your legislator today at 1-800-362-9472 and demand they stand up for workers’ rights this budget season and beyond.