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The President's View . . .

How You Vote Is Up To You, But We've Done Our Research



IFL President Charlie Wishman

Last time an issue of our newspaper came out, there were a small number of people who call up to say that we were "communists" because they did not agree with our endorsements. While this is a tiny, tiny group, of people, I think it is worth noting just exactly how our organization endorses a candidate. We are not communists, and far from it. It is kind of sad that people resort to name calling if they do not agree, but that is the world we live in these days I suppose.

Like any organization, a lot of people belong but never find out the rules or take the time to look them up. So, here is how our endorsements happen:

1. Candidates file for office of all parties and independents at the candidate filing deadline.

2. All candidates that have filed receive an invitation to a "worker's academy" where they learn about labor issues that affect all our affiliate unions.

3. Those candidates then fill out a questionnaire. To pass the question-

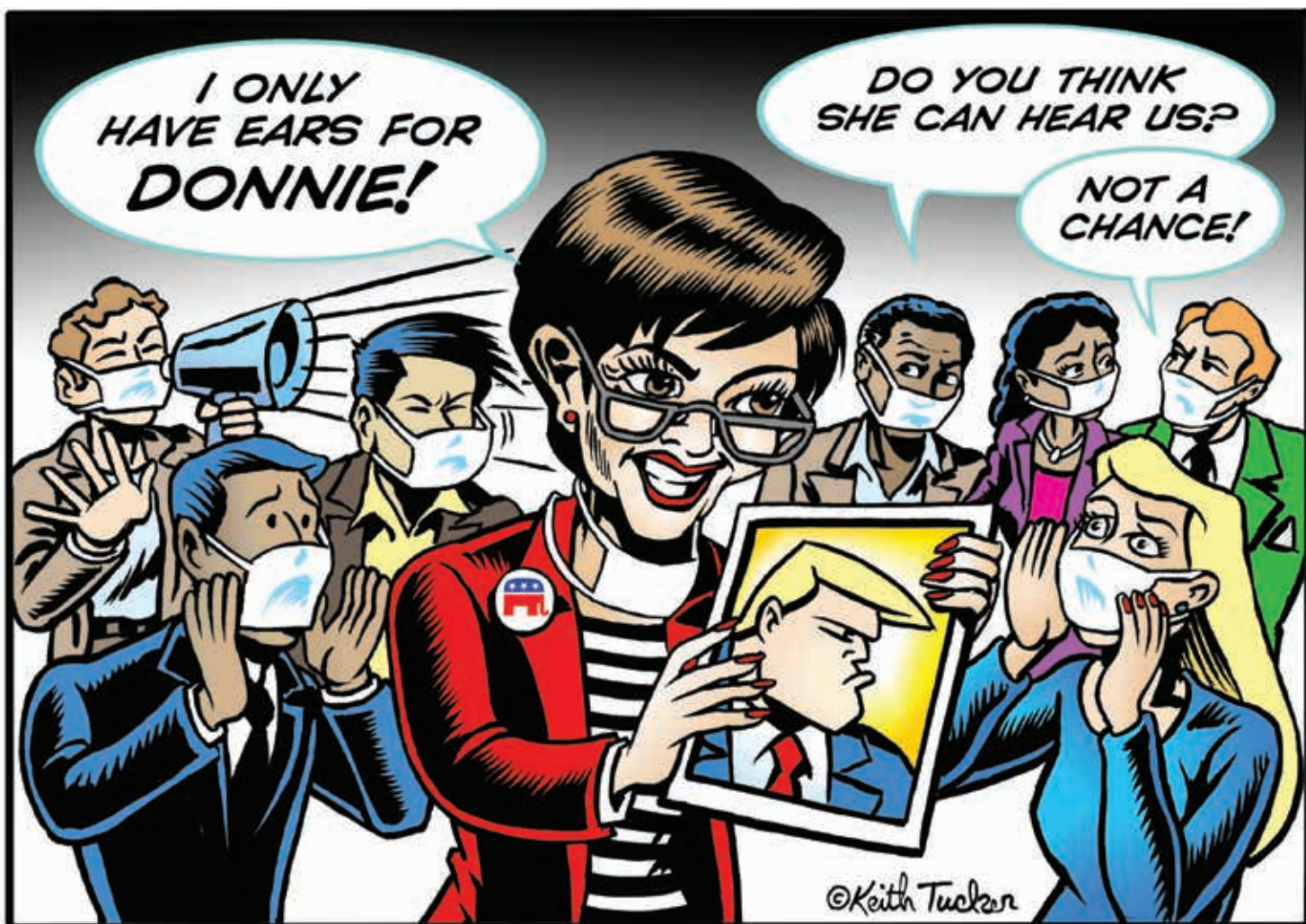
naire you must receive a 70% score.

4. We then hold an endorsement convention, called the COPE Convention, where every affiliate local is invited to make their voices heard and vote on the endorsements. Local area labor federations make recommendations to the state body on who they wish to support, however it is non-binding and the COPE Body can overturn these. To gain the support of the Iowa Federation of Labor, a candidate must receive 2/3rds

of the vote, a higher bar than just a simple majority.

5. For those who do not make the filing deadline, those candidates who are nominated at special conventions (this is a small number of candidates) still must complete the worker academy as well as the questionnaire.

6. At the end of the COPE Convention, the duly elected IFL Executive Board is empowered to deal with endorsement decisions after the convention, being able to act on candidates who file late and get them into our program in a timely manner. So, as you can see, we have an open, transparent, and accountable process for deciding who our endorsed candidates. To be honest, many Republicans do not for whatever reason believe they need to learn about worker issues or fill out a questionnaire for our help and support. However, as the saying goes in relation to the lottery, you cannot win if you do not play. These candidate questionnaires are graded on labor issues, taken from affiliate interviews that make up the worker academy. There are not questions about guns, there are no questions about reproductive rights, there are no questions on social issues.



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How you vote is up to you, and it is your personal decision. As you can see, we have done our research on candidates, not simply picking "who we want" for issues unrelated to labor. It is time that people vote their union, vote their jobs, vote their retirement, and vote their pocketbooks. We merely lay out the facts, and you can choose to read them, or ignore them, it is up to you. We can safely say though, that our endorsements are representative of our affiliates who make up the federation, and not just a simple majority of them, it is a high bar of a supermajority.

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The Voices of the Working Class Still Matter

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IFL 2020 Election Endorsements

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64th Annual IFL Convention a Little Different

The 64th annual Iowa Federation of Labor Convention was just a little different this year.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the IFL Convention was held online via Zoom on August 26 and 27.

The IFL staff worked from the IFL office and the IAM meeting room at 2000 Walker, where the zoom meeting was being broadcast.

Charlie Wishman started the convention with his report of the IFL and comments.

One of the first orders of business is nomination of officers. With the retirement of IFL President Ken Sagar, Charlie Wishman was appointed president, and Pete Hird was appointed to replace Charlie as Secretary/Treasurer. There were a couple of vacancies on the Execu-

tive Board that needed to be dealt with. Charlie and Pete were nominated and elected by acclamation as President and Secretary/Treasurer.

A constitutional change added a position to the Executive Board, and allowed for board representation with the Association for Re-

presentation." This change excluded the ALF's and ARA from the only two delegates from any international rule on the IFL Executive Board. This passed.

The second proposed change was to increase the number of Vice Pres-

Iowa Labor Center

Mike Owen explained the merger of the Iowa Policy Project and Child and Family Policy Center That has formed "Common Good Iowa".

AFL-CIO Regional Director, Stephen Cousins, gave a report. IFL Political Director, Julianne Frosolone talked about the IFL plans for Labor 2020.

Candidate Theresa Greenfield closed out the first day.

IFL Secretary/Treasurer Pete Hird started off day two with his report.

Iowa House Minority Leader, Todd Pritchard and Iowa Senate Minority leader Janet Petersen addressed the convention.

Candidates Rita Hart, Cindy Axne and J.D. Scholton zoomed in to talk to the delegates and guests.

AFL-CIO Secretary/Treasurer Liz Schuler swore in the officers then gave some remarks.

Presidential candidate, Joe Biden sent a video that was shared.

The credentials committee gave their final report: 91 delegates and 40 guests.

The Resolutions Committee presented three resolutions: The first was Guaranteed paid sick leave and paid family medical leave. This would establish universal sick leave fund to ensure all workers have access to benefits. This passed.

The second resolution was titled Osha Pandemic enforceable Standard, which called on the Governor to enact a pandemic standard that can enforce CDC guidelines to protect workers. This passed.

The last resolution was to support all the IFL endorsed candidates. This passed.

All the Constitutional proposals and proffered resolutions can be found at iowaafclcio.org/ifl-convention-2020.



tired Americans and the Area Labor Federations, more latitude as what union they come from.

There was no need for an election and the following Sisters and Brothers were elected:

Mike McCarthy - ARA VP - AF-SCME 3450

Rick Moyle - HALC VP - IAMAW 831

Jeremiah Fitch - VP-At Large - IUPAT

Rosa Wilson - VP-At Large - CWA 7110

Patrick Wells - VP At-Large - IBEW 347

Simplice Kuelo - Next Up At-Large - UFCW 431

There were three constitutional proposals proffered and all three passed.

The first one called "Flexibility

idents at Large on the board, by one to a total of 18. The previous number was 17. This passed.

Clarification of Affiliate fees, was the agenda of the third proposed constitutional change. The change was to clarify that ALF's and Chapters can have their own representative/delegate at IFL conventions and meetings, and what the fee is to be. This passed.

The afternoon of the first day was filled with speakers. Rick Moyle talked about the formation of LUCC that was formed to replace the United Way representation in the Waterloo area.

Jay Smith reported on several legal issue facing the labor movement. Jays provided documents that are available on the IFL web page. Jen Sheer reported on the University of



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Have You Made Plans to Vote?

By Julianne Frosolone,
IFL Political Director

Union sisters and brothers, Election Day is quickly approaching. Have you made a plan to vote? This is one of the most important elections of our lifetime. We must elect our union endorsed candidates up and down the ticket.

If you have any questions, please email Iowa AFL-CIO Political Director at julianne@iowaafclcio.org.

VOTING BY MAIL (ABSENTEE BALLOT)

- The Iowa Secretary of State mailed every registered voter an absentee ballot request

- If you need a request form, visit www.workersfirstvoteunion.org/

- Deadline to submit your absentee ballot

request form: 5 pm on October 24th

- Ballots will be mailed to voters starting October 5th

- Once you return your ballot, mail back ASAP--the postmark deadline is November 2nd

- If you have not submitted your ballot by Election Day, take it to your County Auditor's office or surrender it at the polls to vote in person

Check the status of your absentee ballot here: <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/absenteeballotstatus/absentee/search>

VOTING EARLY IN PERSON

- Vote early in person at your local County Auditor's office

- Dates for Early Voting in Person: October 5th-November 2nd

VOTING ON ELECTION DAY

- Election Day is Tuesday, November 3rd

- Find your polling place at iwillvote.com

**LABOR
2020**
AFL-CIO

ISSUES MATTER, VOTE UNION

The Secretary-Treasurer's Notes . . .

The Voices of the Working Class Still Matter



IFL Secretary Treasurer
Peter Hird

As I think back to past elections with one month to go, I thought a lot about the finish line. The day after election day would be a day of celebration and a long break before the next round of candidates were running again. The reality is that we never stop. We never stop talking about issues that keep us safe at work, we never stop advocating for dignity in the workplace or the ways to help us organize other workers into our union family. Elections are a lot of work and as we work towards our goal of electing pro-worker candidates in 2020, let's go over what we are fighting for in Iowa and what our goals are after the election.

We all have something we champion, but let's review what happened just a few years ago. 2017 in Iowa was really bad for public and private sector workers. Getting back to where we were just four years ago is a priority, but our goal

is to do so much more for workers. While the ceiling for priorities will be limited by our current Governor, a union endorsed House and Senate majority will be able to pass proper pro-worker legislation. It can't be said enough, the Republican trifecta in Iowa led to public worker contracts being stripped of decades of negotiated language. Let's also remember that public sector unions must vote for the union for every contract and every person who doesn't vote is considered a NO vote. Recertification voting is costly and is rigged against workers who want a union.

The largest overhaul of worker's compensation in Iowa's history has the potential to affect every worker in Iowa. The law drastically changed how shoulder injuries are compensated, removed the burden of proof from the employers to prove an employee caused an accident after failing a drug or alcohol test and reduced interest that is paid on claims by insurance companies. According to The Labor Center's workers' compensation guide, on March 20, 2017, the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, a non-partisan agency of the legislature, estimated that changes

proposed would "decrease workers' compensation payments [for injured state employees]... by an estimated \$1.8 million annually beginning with FY2018."

A lot of other bad bills were

property owners/lessors, manufacturers and healthcare providers. School funding increased an average of 1.7% since 2011, well below what is needed to properly educate children and provide the resources they need. These issues along with many others can only be addressed with candidates who will stand up for working families.

The 2020 presidential candidate selection showed us that the voices of the working class still matter. We always say that you can't ignore the worker's voice and presidential candidate after candidate came to union halls and blue collar towns across the country to hear the stories of those who built this county. Your voice made a difference. So what do we want after the election? Samuel

Gompers, the first and longest-serving president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), said it so well, "What does Labor want? We want more school houses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more constant work and less crime; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures."



passed in the last few years. ID laws, shortened timelines for requesting an absentee ballot, limits on the authority of the elected County Auditor and signature verification are tactics that do not make it easier for folks to vote. Local governments were banned from using Project Labor Agreements, setting a minimum wage and creating paid leave standards. COVID liability was relieved for most

Backside of the Ballot: A Constitutional Convention – Yes or No, and What Are the Consequences?

Every 10 years it is mandated that the state of Iowa put on the ballot a question if Iowa would call for a constitutional convention. The question is simple – but in its simplicity it hides the seriousness and consequences of calling for revisions to the Iowa Constitution.

This provision, which can be found in Article X, Section Three of the Iowa Constitution has been in the constitution since its inception in 1857 and was reset in 1970 to have the question asked every ten years thereafter. Three constitution-

al conventions have been held in Iowa, one in 1844, one in the year of our statehood in 1846, and one a decade later in 1857. As a state have not had a constitutional convention in 163 years.

Here is what we know about the process - if a convention is called, constitutional amendments are then adopted at that convention, and they will be placed on the ballot for voters to ratify or reject them. Once an amendment is on the ballot, it must be approved by a majority of voters voting on the

question (not a majority of voters voting in the election) in order to become part of the constitution.

Right now, if a constitutional convention were to be held, anything and everything contained in our constitution would and could be subject to change and revision. The Legislature would appoint the convention delegates. Not knowing what the make-up of the Iowa General Assembly would be after the election, we have no idea who the make up of the electors to such a constitution would be, and there-

fore we have no idea what kind of amendments would be proposed. The entire question leads to more questions and uncertainty in the politically polarized time that we currently live in.

How you vote is your choice and is always up to you. The Iowa Federation of Labor has not taken a position on this question; however, you should know the facts about this question on the ballot and what its serious consequences would be, both known and unknown.



Iowa Federation of Labor 2



Abby Finkenauer
US Congressional District 1



Rita Hart
US Congressional District 2



Theresa Greenfield
US Senate

GENERAL ELECTION

- US Senate: Theresa Greenfield
- US CD 1: Abby Finkenauer
- US CD 2: Rita Hart
- US CD 3: Cindy Axne
- US CD 4: JD Scholten

IOWA STATE SENATE

- SD 6: CJ Petersen
- SD 8: Steve Gorman
- SD 10: Warren Varley
- SD 12: Joey Norris
- SD 16: Nate Boulton
- SD 18: Janet Petersen
- SD 20: Rhonda Martin
- SD 22: Sarah Trone Gariott
- SD 24: Cynthia Paschen
- SD 26: Deb Scharper
- SD 28: Matt Tapscott
- SD 30: Eric Giddens
- SD 32: Pam Egli
- SD 34: Liz Mathis
- SD 36: Dave Degner
- SD 38: Ivy Schuster
- SD: 42 Rich Taylor
- SD: 44 Tom Courtney
- SD: 46 Chris Brase
- SD: 48 Eric Green
- SD: 50 Pam Jochum

IOWA STATE HOUSE

- HD 4: Bjorn Johnson
- HD 7: Deb Jensen
- HD 8: Glenn Kiss
- HD 9: Charles Clayton
- HD 11: Sara Huddleston
- HD 13: Chris Hall
- HD 14: Steve Hansen

IOWA STATE HOUSE

- HD 15: Charlie McConkey
- HD 16: Jen Pellant
- HD 17: Jan Creasman
- HD 19: Nick Miller
- HD 20: Ryan Morrison
- HD 22: Shawna Anderson
- HD 25: Caleb Short
- HD 26: Scott Ourth
- HD 27: Cody Dilliner
- HD 29: Wes Breckenridge
- HD 30: Lori Slings
- HD 31: Rick Olson
- HD 32: Ruth Ann Gaines
- HD 33: Brian Meyer
- HD 34: Bruce Hunter
- HD 35: Ako Abdul-Samad
- HD 36: Marti Anderson
- HD 37: Andrea Phillips
- HD 38: Heather Matson
- HD 39: Karin Derry
- HD 40: John Forbes
- HD 41: Jo Oldson
- HD 42: Kristin Sunde
- HD 43: Jennifer Konfrst
- HD 44: Kenan Judge
- HD 45: Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
- HD 46: Ross Wilburn
- HD 47: Shelly Stotts
- HD 48: Jack Friend
- HD 49: Selden Spencer
- HD 50: Dennis Evans
- HD 51: Jane Podgorniak
- HD 52: Todd Prichard
- HD 53: Sharon Steckman
- HD 54: Karen Koenig
- HD 55: Kayla Koether
- HD 56: Angela Reed
- HD 57: Ryan Quinn
- HD 58: Andy McKean

IOWA STATE HOUSE

- HD 59: Bob Kressig
- HD 60: Dave Williams
- HD 61: Timi Brown-Powers
- HD 62: Ras Smith
- HD 63: Carissa Froyum
- HD 64: Jodi Grover
- HD 65: Liz Bennett
- HD 66: Art Staed
- HD 67: Eric Gjerde
- HD 68: Molly Donahue
- HD 69: Kirsten Running-Marquardt
- HD 70: Tracy Ehlert
- HD 71: Sue Cahill
- HD 72: Christina Blackcloud
- HD 73: Lonny Pulkrabek
- HD 74: David Jacoby
- HD 75: Ruby Bodeker
- HD 76: Sarah Smith
- HD 77: Amy Nielsen
- HD 78: Kimberly Davis
- HD 81: Mary Gaskill
- HD 82: Phil Miller
- HD 83: Jeff Kurtz
- HD 84: Jeff Fager
- HD 85: Christina Bohannan
- HD 86: Mary Mascher
- HD 87: Dennis Cohoon
- HD 88: Sandy Dockendorf
- HD 89: Monica Kurth
- HD 90: Cindy Winckler
- HD 91: Kelcey Brackett
- HD 92: Jennifer Kakert
- HD 93: Phyllis Thede
- HD 94: Marie Gleason
- HD 95: Christian Andrews
- HD 97: Ryan Zeskey
- HD 98: Mary Wolfe
- HD 99: Lindsay James
- HD 100: Chuck Isenhardt

Go to: <https://www.iowaaficio.org/election-2020> for more election information

2020 Election Endorsements



**Greenfield
Senate**



**Cindy Axne
US Congressional District 3**



**J.D. Scholten
US Congressional District 4**

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL ENDORSEMENTS for LOCAL RACES

North IA Nine

Steve Hepperly, Winnebago County Sheriff

Hawkeye Area Labor Council

John Stuelke, Linn County Supervisor

Brian Gardner, Linn County Sheriff

Iowa City Federation of Labor

Brad Kunkel, Johnson County Sheriff

Rod Sullivan, Johnson County Supervisor

Lisa Green-Douglas, Johnson County Supervisor

Royceann Porter, Johnson County Supervisor

SW Iowa Labor Council

Lisa Lima, Pottawattamie County Supervisor

Fran Parr, Pottawattamie County Supervisor

NW Iowa Labor Council

Marty Pottebaum, Woodbury County Supervisor

Kevin McCormick, Woodbury County Supervisor

Rocky DeWitt, Woodbury County Supervisor

Chad Sheehan, Woodbury County Sheriff

Black Hawk Labor Assembly

Tony Thompson, Black Hawk County Sheriff

Chris Schwartz, Black Hawk County Supervisor

Tom Little, Black Hawk County Supervisor

Linda Laylin, Black Hawk County Supervisor

Clinton Labor Congress

Steve Diesch, Clinton County Sheriff

Mike Brown, Clinton County Supervisor

Eric Van Lancker, Clinton County Auditor

Bill Jacobs, Clinton County Treasurer

Des Moines Henry County Labor Alliance

Kevin Glendening, Des Moines County Sheriff

Terri Johnson, Des Moines County Auditor

Quad City Federation of Labor

Roxanna Moritz, Scott County Auditor

Pete Bawden, Scott County Sheriff

Jazmin Newton, Scott County Supervisor

Rogers Kirk Jr., Scott County Supervisor

Channon Michael, Muscatine County Sheriff

Brandy Harfst, Muscatine County Auditor

William Tharp, Muscatine County Attorney

Ed Askew, Muscatine County Supervisor

Servadio Elias Michelle, Muscatine County Supervisor

Dubuque Federation of Labor

Dave Baker, Dubuque County Supervisor

Joseph Kennedy, Dubuque County Sheriff

South Central Federation of Labor

Kevin Schneider, Polk County Sheriff

Jamie Fitzgerald, Polk County Auditor

Nick Barton, Polk County Supervisor

Betty Devine, Polk County Supervisor

David Miglin, Polk County

Broadlawns Hospital Trustee

Lee County Labor Chapter

Stacy Weber, Lee County Sheriff

Gary Folluo, Lee County Supervisor

VOTE! November 3rd

Eye of the Hurricane

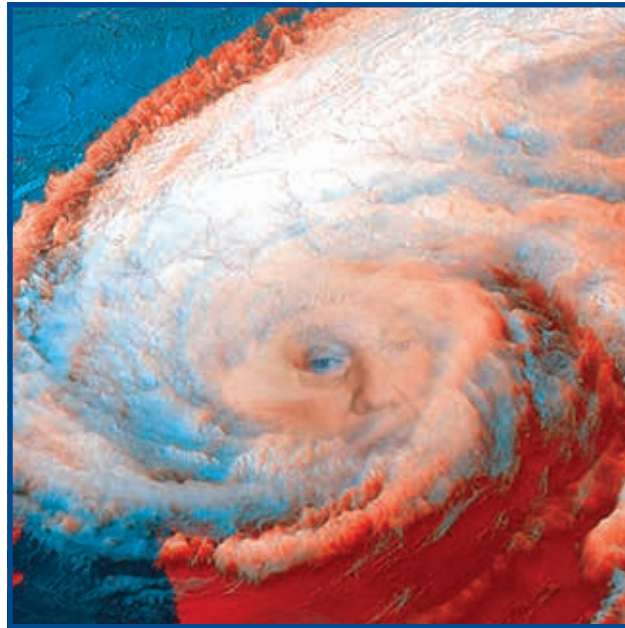
By Jay Smith & Dennis McElwain

It is October – we are less than one month away from the election. If you feel as if you have lived through twenty years within the last ten months given everything that has happened, you are not alone. Since January, the President has been impeached, there is a worldwide pandemic, which the President knew about and tried to downplay, over 200,000 Americans have died from the COVID-19 virus, the country was shut down, the Democrats finished their nominating process, there are out of control fires in the West, science has become a political issue, we wasted six months in the fight to get the COVID-19 virus under control, we have witnessed people taking a stand against racial injustice, the Postmaster General has sought to slow down the mail in an effort to aid the President's re-election campaign, Justice Ginsburg passed away, we learned that Presi-

dent Trump paid next to nothing in taxes, and as we write this Article, the President of the United States is in Walter Reed Military Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland with a COVID-19 diagnosis. But for the hurricane that has been the Trump Presidency, any one of these items would be the lead story on the evening news for weeks on end.

However, we do not live in normal times. We have not lived in normal times since President Trump won the election a little less than four years ago. Throughout the last four years, we have witnessed an attack on democracy and the political norms for which we worked for over two hundred years to create. In four years, President Trump and his minions have worked to destroy what took over two centuries to create.

Now, given everything that is Hurricane Trump, as a member of the Labor Movement, you may



have missed the President's attack on issues important to the Labor Movement. The following is a brief summary of the attack. First, Union

density has stagnated to the lowest level in U.S. History. Second, unemployment is at the highest level since the Great Recession. Third, despite having numerous "infrastructure weeks," an infrastructure bill has not been passed. Fourth, there are two members of the Supreme Court, nominated by the President, who were in the majority in the *Janus* decision. Fifth, the President's appointees to the NLRB are clearly anti-worker. Sixth, there has been no effort to enact workplace standards to protect workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Seventh, the President's Department of Labor gutted federal overtime protections.

Eighth, the President is seeking to invalidate important provisions of the Affordable Care Act, which amongst other things, protect those of us with pre-existing conditions. It is an understatement to say that the current administration and the President's lackeys in the United States Senate do not care for working people and our issues.

On November 3, 2020 (and for that matter in the weeks leading up to it), the Labor Movement will be in the eye of the hurricane. November 3, 2020 represents the opportunity for us, as a movement and as citizens in our great democracy, to determine how we are going to come out of the hurricane that is the Trump Presidency. We have the opportunity to send the President home. We have the opportunity to send Senator Ernst home. We have the opportunity to elect Labor Friendly candidates up and down the ticket. We have the opportunity to send members of the anti-worker regime home and the possibility to enact with new leadership in place a worker-friendly agenda.

But, in order to come out of the hurricane that is the Trump Presidency in better shape than we otherwise would, we have work to do. Significantly, there are three things that we must do. First, we must make a plan to vote and make sure we vote – whether that be by absentee ballot, absentee ballot in person at an early voting site, or in-person on election day. Second, we must make sure that our fellow members do the same. Finally, to the extent that there are any undecideds within our ranks, we must do the work and educate them on the issues and the reason their votes are important to the Labor Movement. If we do these three things, we have the opportunity to come out of the hurricane that is the Trump Presidency in a position to rebuild the Labor Movement and our democracy. Similar to any hurricane, our time in the eye of it is fleeting, we have one opportunity, which we cannot waste. Now is the time to get to work – go vote.



Unions around the country often have products printed for their members. Whether they are sold by the union or given away at meetings and conventions, they all should have one thing in common: the union "bug." The Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO, frequently receives requests for a list of union printers and providers of promotional products.

YOU CAN USE THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES TO FIND UNION PRINTERS:

- www.cwaprintshops.com – website that allows you to submit a request for a bid from union vendors for printing, embroidery, silk screening, engraving and other promotional products. The site is run by the Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector-CWA (PPMWS).
- www.Alliedlabel.org – a database of GCC and CWA union printers that allows you to search by city, state, or even label number to find a printer near you.
- Other unions, including the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT), United Auto Workers (UAW), and International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), can print with a union label.

LOOK FOR THE UNION "BUG" ON YOUR PRINTED MATERIALS



IBEW Members Leading the COVID-19 Response

CHICAGO & IOWA LOCALS KEEP COMMUNITIES FED

From delivering groceries to retirees to helping feed their larger communities, efforts by members in Chicago and Dubuque, Iowa, are snapshots of the kindnesses that IBEW brothers and sisters have been extending around the country since the early days of the coronavirus pandemic.

In Chicago, a Local 134 crew that included Business Manager Donald Finn filled carts and pallets at Costco in late March with food for IBEW retirees and widows.

"We know that the older generation can be more susceptible to severe complications from this disease, so we wanted to make it as easy and safe as possible for them to get the supplies they need," said Elbert Walters, who coordinated the project as director of Powering Chicago, the local's labor-management partnership.

Apprentices and business agents headed to more than 100 homes throughout Local 134's large ter-



ritory with care packages, mainly non-perishables such as peanut butter, tuna, crackers and granola bars. They set boxes on doorsteps, rang bells, and hustled away as grateful recipients shouted, "Thank you!" from a distance.

It felt a little like "reverse trick-or-treat," Walters said, calling it "an amazing experience for everyone."

In Iowa, Local 704 and the Dubuque Area Labor Harvest, a food pantry that unions have run since the 1980s, are helping meet their community's growing needs.

Business Manager Tom

Townsend and his wife, Judee, have packed hundreds of boxes with everything from canned goods and pasta to meats, cheese and eggs.

Households on a list provided by a community service agency get a box of non-perishables and another with refrigerated items that Townsend and other volunteers leave at the doors. Worried about older people managing the heavy packages alone, Townsend on occasion has carried them inside, keeping a safe distance. "If I'm delivering, it just depends," he said. "I struggle with that."

In addition to the home deliver-

ies, the Labor Harvest still runs its primary programs: hot breakfasts served on Saturdays, except for once a month when there's a walk-in food giveaway. The difference now is that breakfast is packaged to-go, as are food boxes that people pick up at the door.

Retired Local 704 Business Manager Dan Hammel, an original Labor Harvest board member, is on hand every weekend. "Organizations in Dubuque have been

very gracious, going out of their way to help," he said. "Businesses have been making extra donations. And we've got lots of volunteers — lots of union people, retirees, their sons and daughters."

Unions are family, after all.

"That's really how this all started," Townsend said, referring to the Labor Harvest's origins in the 1980s. "The unions started collecting food for unemployed members, and then as the economy started getting better and people started going back to work, they said, 'Why not start giving back to the community?'"

Iowa Labor History Society 2020 Membership Campaign

Securing Labor's History In Historic Times

Iowa Labor History Society



By John McKerley, President, Iowa Labor History Society

We are living through historic times and historic challenges for Iowa's workers and labor movement.

For months, Iowa workers in communities and workplaces across the state have struggled to stay safe amid a worldwide pandemic, confronted the consequences of our lingering racial inequalities, and, most recently, worked to rebuild in the aftermath of a storm of devastating proportions. All of this comes on top of the continued struggles to defend workers' rights against the legal changes of the last several years.

Even as we attend to these very real and pressing issues, ILHS has continued to advance our mission of preserving and promoting Iowa's labor and working-class history. Over the last several months, we and our partners have:

- Encouraged middle and high

school students to engage with labor history through the Jim Wengert Award for best labor history projects at National History Day, this year held virtually

- Begun work on two new websites based on interviews with Iowa workers found in the Iowa Labor History Oral Project

- Started planning our first virtual conference, to be held on November 7, 2020

- Joined an international group of labor history organizations to share Iowa's labor history and to learn from work being done all across North America

As always, none of this work could be done without your support!

With this article you will find a membership form and instructions for how you can help get us the resources we need to continue making sure that the struggles and joys of Iowa's workers—in the past and present—are celebrated and made accessible to new generations.

We need resources, but we also need you! We invite you to get involved. Join a committee or run for a position on our board of directors.

You can find out more about ILHS and all of these opportunities at our website, iowalaborhistory.org.

In solidarity.



Iowa Labor History Society

Membership Application

___ Become an individual member

- \$10/year Student, Retiree, Unemployed
- \$20/year Individual
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The COVID Crisis Has Only Raised the Challenges of Recovery

By Mike Owen

In a month we will have a better idea of who will be calling the shots in Des Moines and Washington on a host of issues affecting economic security, opportunity, and equity for working families.

The COVID crisis has only raised the challenges for recovery.

- By mid-October, Iowa likely will have passed the 100,000 mark in positive COVID cases, which grew on average by over 800 a day through the last half of September.

- Initial unemployment claims rose in Iowa by nearly a half million (469,000) through the first 35 weeks of the current recession. That's more than three times the number for the comparable 35 weeks of the Great Recession.

- While the unemployment rate is down to 5.9 percent, that "progress" is created by Iowans dropping out of the labor market, and not going back to work.

- The state revenue picture remained uncertain through the first three months of the fiscal year, with the Revenue Estimating Conference due to meet Oct. 16, and another forecast set for December to determine what is available for the next budget.

- While not promoted by the Reynolds administration, Iowa Department of Revenue analysts see weakness in the state economy, which posted a net job loss in

2019 — before the COVID crisis hit. DOR's latest Leading Indicators report cites signs that "strongly suggest the Iowa economy will continue to weaken into second quarter

March 2020, and we are still picking through the wreckage and tallying the damage," Gordon wrote in the September report.

"The depth and suddenness of

targeted where the need is greatest — at those held back by a long history of systemic racism, at those struggling to make ends meet even before the current crisis, and at those hit hardest by the COVID recession."

Further analysis by Common Good Iowa's Peter Fisher confirms the point about "back to normal" policy responses. Fisher's recent report "Where do jobs come from?" illustrates that businesses and jobs survive longer in firms born in the state, rather than those migrating to the state.

"If state policy could affect one of the components of job growth, it would seem apparent that policy should be directed at increasing the formation of new firms," Fisher wrote.

Using policy to stimulate independent entrepreneurial efforts would represent a shift in Iowa economic development

policy in Iowa, which focuses on cutting taxes to chase development by out-of-state firms.

To meet the challenges ahead, we must learn from experience and solid research for effective responses. These recent reports from Common Good Iowa offer a good perspective.

While a new — and necessary — COVID-relief program remains in doubt in Washington, Iowans can act at the state level to strengthen worker rights, opportunity for all, family prosperity, and safety-net supports. The low-hanging fruit is obvious — a stronger minimum wage, expanded Earned Income Tax Credit and better access to Child Care Assistance.

The heavier lift will come with tax reform that increases both fairness and revenue, so we can restore our lagging investments in education at all levels and in environmental quality. We need stronger health and safety protection in the workplace, resolving both longstanding issues and new ones raised by the COVID crisis.

As noted in *The State of Working Iowa*, we must target resources "where the need is greatest," a sensible principle for public policy and resources if we are to assure equity, opportunity and prosperity for all Iowans.

Mike Owen is deputy director of Common Good Iowa, a nonpartisan public policy analysis and advocacy organization formed by the merger of the Iowa Policy Project and the Child and Family Policy Center. For more information, see www.commongoodiowa.org.

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FY 2021, and weakened employment growth over the next three to six months.

Colin Gordon examined Iowa's economic landscape in Common Good Iowa's pre-Labor Day "State of Working Iowa" report, a series that started under the former Iowa Policy Project (IPP). The State of Working Iowa is one of several initiatives that will continue with Common Good Iowa, formed by the merger of IPP and the Child and Family Policy Center.

"The economy fell off a cliff in

the economic collapse, alongside the unprecedented public health crisis that precipitated and accompanied that collapse, exposed glaring gaps and weaknesses in our public policies, and underscored systematic inequalities in economic and policy outcomes."

Gordon noted a need for "more than just a rush back to normal, featuring tax breaks and regulatory relief for business and the thin promise of trickle-down benefits for the rest of us. Our political attention and resources should be

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