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The President's View . . .

The Working Class Will Save Us, Again



IFL President Charlie Wishman

This Labor Day, we have a lot to reflect on when thinking of what workers have been through this year, more than any year I can remember. With crisis after crisis that has hit our nation and our state, it is always workers who are making sure our communities continue to run. With the devastating storms that just blew through Iowa, it is working class workers, public and private sector, that are cleaning up damage, restoring power as quickly as possible, and ensuring that our streets and neighborhoods are safe.

Earlier this year, when the COVID-19 crisis first hit this nation, we saw that many workers continued to leave their homes and perform "essential" work, despite not having proper protective equipment

and health and safety measures in place. Sadly, some of those workers died, needlessly. There is no acceptable number of workers that need to be sacrificed for the profit

our economy shows. We are in the worst recession that most people alive have seen, and this pandemic has shown just how important our unemployment program is and

will end. The working class of this nation will save it, again, as it always has. Through all the things that America has endured, it's always been the working class, not



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of a company. Somewhere along the line, "essential" became "expendable" to some employers. We have also seen that people who are sometimes paid the least have kept our communities running through all of this. People who work in retail, at grocery stores, hospitality, nursing homes, food production, health care and more, have sacrificed, and many have gotten sick. While it is nice to call them heroes (they are) and show our appreciation for them, what they need are higher wages. No one should have to risk their life to work, let alone not be compensated fairly for it. We have also seen that all workers are essential to our economy. With Iowa's current unemployment rate higher than it's been in a generation, those workers missing from

why it needs to be protected. It also shows that the sooner people take public health measures seriously, the sooner things can get back to as normal as possible.

We do not know exactly how all of this started, but I do know how it

the 1% that has saved us. Let us remember those that have left us this year in the name of keeping our nation's economy running, and vow to create better working conditions for everyone going forward. In Solidarity.

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# Election Day is Coming

By **Julianne Frosolone**,  
IFL Political Director

We say this every year, but 2020 truly might be the most important election of our lifetime.

Leading our ticket here in Iowa is Vice President Biden. The Vice President has stood with workers his entire life. This fight is personal for him. As AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said in the AFL-CIO's endorsement of Vice President Biden, "Our members know Joe has done everything he could to create a fairer process for forming and joining a union, and he is ready to fight with us to restore faith in America and improve the lives of all working people."

Our labor-endorsed candidate for United States Senate is There-

sa Greenfield. Theresa is here because unions had her back when her late husband, Rod, an IBEW lineman died on the job. Social security and union benefits got her through that difficult time, and Theresa has never forgotten that. She couldn't be more different from Joni Ernst, who throughout her career in the Iowa Legislature and the United States Senate, has consistently backed anti-worker legislation. Ernst recently voted against paid sick leave for Iowa workers during COVID-19. And, she was caught knowingly accepting illegal contributions from corporations and had to pay the largest penalty ever for an Iowa politician. Polls are showing this race as a toss up. That means everything we do between now and election day has the potential to change the balance of the United States Senate and elect Theresa Greenfield as our next United States Senator.

We also have great labor-endorsed congressional candidates like Representative Abby Finkenauer in Iowa's 1st Congressional District. Abby is the daughter of a proud UA member. She was one of our biggest champions during her time in the Iowa House and during her first term in congress. She's running against State Representative Ashley Hinson. Representative Cindy Axne faces a rematch against David Young in Iowa's 3rd Congressional District. Cindy has consistently stood with workers time and time again and we need her in Congress to con-

tinue to have our backs. Rita Hart is running to replace Representative Loeb sack in Iowa's 2nd Congressional District. She's running against Marianne Miller Meeks who has consistently sided against workers during her time in the State Senate. We have JD Scholten running against Randy Feenstra in Iowa's 4th Congressional District. Like Marianne Miller Meeks, Randy Feenstra has a history of being anti-worker during his time in the State Senate. Scholten has always stood with workers.

And at the state level, we must break the Republican trifecta at the Capitol. House Democrats give us a tremendous opportunity to do that as they are now just 4 seats away from taking back the majority. And the Senate Democrats have a great opportunity to pick up seats. Both chambers are running strong labor-endorsed candidates in winnable districts, many with union backgrounds.

As you can see, we have great opportunities to elect pro-worker candidates at all levels. Due to COVID-19, like the rest of the political world, we will be relying heavily on mail, digital, and phones to communicate our message to our members. We are excited to be working with a local mail and digital firm to put together a plan for our statewide targeted legislative candidates. A big thank you to all of our generous affiliates who chipped in.

If we are going to be successful in both voter persuasion toward and voter turnout, we need to

make at least 1 full pass through our universe of targeted voters. We need over 1400 volunteer shifts between now and Election Day to get through our program, so I hope you will join us in member-to-member phone banking and texting. We are also asking each local to send out three pieces of local union mail to members. We know this is an incredibly effective way to get our message out. We can help write these letters, and you can use our bulk mail permit if it's helpful.

Election Day will be here before we know it. Early Voting starts on October 5th, October 24th is the last day to request a ballot, and November 2nd is the Absentee Ballot Postmark Deadline. From October 31st through Election day, November 3rd, we will "Get Out the Vote" to make sure all our members either return their absentee ballots or vote in person. Please encourage your fellow union members to request absentee ballots and return their ballots early.

If we do this right, Joe Biden will be our next President of the United States. Theresa Greenfield will be our next United States Senator, helping Democrats retake the majority. Representatives Finkenauer and Axne will return to Congress, and Hart and Scholten will join them. We will take back the Iowa House, and gain seats in the Iowa Senate. We will put Iowa and our nation back on the right track for working people.

To sign up to help with Labor 2020, email Julianne Frosolone at [julianne@iowaafclcio.org](mailto:julianne@iowaafclcio.org)



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[iowaafclcio.org](http://iowaafclcio.org)

## Officers & Staff

President

**CHARLIE WISHMAN**  
[charlie@iowaafclcio.org](mailto:charlie@iowaafclcio.org)

Secretary/Treasurer

**PETER HIRD**  
[peter@iowaafclcio.org](mailto:peter@iowaafclcio.org)

Political Director

**JULIANNE FROSOLONE**  
[julianne@iowaafclcio.org](mailto:julianne@iowaafclcio.org)

Communications Director

**LANCE COLES**  
[lance@iowaafclcio.org](mailto:lance@iowaafclcio.org)

Organizing Director

**BEN MURRY**  
[ben@iowaafclcio.org](mailto:ben@iowaafclcio.org)

Bookkeeper

**JAMIE MILLER**  
[jamie@iowaafclcio.org](mailto:jamie@iowaafclcio.org)



(812) 923-1111

## Thank You for All Your Help

By **Rick Moyle**,  
Executive Director, Hawkeye Area  
Labor Council AFL-CIO

On August 10th a Derecho with 100-140 MPH winds ripped through Iowa leaving thousands without power, phones, internet and some left without homes. Some of the hardest hit towns in Linn and Benton County were Cedar Rapids, Palo, and Shellsburg.

The aftermath left from this storm cannot truly be described and pictures cannot come close to seeing it in person. People in these communities and people from all over the state immediately stepped up and started efforts to help those in need. Teamster Local 238 in Cedar Rapids opened up for supply donations as soon as they had power back on in their hall. Hawkeye Area Labor Council, CREA and many other unions in the area have assisted in the Teamster effort.

Hawkeye Area Labor Council AFL-CIO, Iowa Federation of Labor AFL-CIO, Teamsters 238, and Community Service Liaisons throughout the state worked with the National AFL-CIO to secure funding and supplies.

So many unions and their members from all over did what unions do in a time of crisis. They stood together and helped these damaged communities in any way they could. United Way of East Central Iowa Community Service Liaison Jay Larson worked with IBEW 405 in Cedar Rapids and local union contractors to pay for all the materials and cut the labor rate 25% to the Reconnect program to restore power to homes of those in our community who cannot afford this service

on their own. The Reconnect program was started by Alliant energy with a \$60,000 donation and United Way of East Central Iowa added an additional \$40,000 from their disaster relief fund.

There are far too many union sisters and brothers to thank, so we will simply say THANK YOU ALL. Not only for what you do in times of crisis but for what you do each and every day to make this world a better place.

In Solidarity.

### Check Out Our Podcasts



<http://iowaafclcio.podbean.com/>

## The Secretary-Treasurer's Notes . . .

# State Elections Matter



**IFL Secretary Treasurer  
Peter Hird**

It is simple for a legislator to say they will do what's best for working families. Supporting education, creating jobs and protecting people's healthcare are big issues for the working class. You hear many candidates talk about those issues. We believe that folks need more from a legislator than just talk, we need them to vote for bills that actually help. This year has been one crisis after another and 2020 will be remembered by Iowans for many years. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a wake up call for many of the issues unions have been fighting a long time for. Paid sick leave, paid

family medical leave, livable wages, a realistic amount for unemployment insurance pay, the right to organize a union, and more enforceable OSHA standards are just a few. None of these were addressed by the Iowa legislature in 2020.

This year's legislative session paused after the initial outbreak in March and returned to finish in June. Two months into the pandemic and the current Republican controlled legislature passed one of the most blanket liability bills we have ever seen. The bill relieves COVID-19 related liability from property owners/lessors, healthcare providers and anyone that manufactures, labels, sells, distributes products in response to COVID-19. The threshold of making a claim of exposure is difficult to establish. The bill does allow for potential work injuries related to COVID-19 but as of now, no case has been ruled on yet. Some states have set some standards for protecting workers and Iowa did no such thing.

We are always keeping a close eye on laws that may force workers out of being an employee and into being an independent contractor. SF2296 is a bill aimed at truckers and defines owner-operators as independent

contractors including those that are under a lease-purchase agreement and leaves openings for potential worker misclassification. This excludes the employer from having the responsibility to pay normal employer expenses such as employer liability insurance, workers compensation and minimum wage. Jeff Kurtz, a Democrat from southeast Iowa, offered an amendment to protect truck drivers from being pressured or coerced by their employer to enter into being an independent contractor but it was voted down.

The annual state school funding increased 2.3% for 2021 but it is short of providing the funding needed to properly address school needs during a normal year. In fact, since 2011 the average increase has been 1.7%. Funding at the levels like this do not allow schools to develop new programs, pay their employees properly or reduce class sizes. Thankfully the CARES Act provided funding for COVID-19 preparation for our schools. If the federal government hadn't stepped up, who knows what Iowa schools would look like.

I would like to tell you that Iowa's governor and the Republican con-

trolled legislature set an enforceable OSHA pandemic standard that protects workers. I would like to be talking about the expansion of unemployment for workers and that our state has a leave policy that doesn't force workers to go to work sick because they can't afford to stay home and care for themselves or their family. I would like to talk about a Medicaid system in Iowa that doesn't put the profits of wealthy healthcare insurers over the people who live here. Our current political leadership in Iowa is not about taking care of working class families. Fortunately we can change that. We can vote for Iowa Federation of Labor endorsed candidates. They value the Iowans who build our buildings, take care of our sick, prepare our food and educate our children. Our candidates support union bargaining rights for all workers, livable wages, and OSHA workplace protections. If we have learned anything from this pandemic it's that all workers are essential to our economy and our everyday lives. It's going to take all of us to make it happen so volunteer for a phone bank, sign up to be a poll worker if you feel it's safe, vote by mail and vote early.

## It's Time for Real Leadership

**By Bill Gerhard, President  
Iowa State Building and  
Construction Trades Council,  
Member of Laborers' Local 43,  
Cedar Rapids/Iowa City,  
319-621-0894**

I am a firm believer in our two party political system here in the United States. We need both the Democratic and Republican parties and we need them to be strong. Because it is through the tension between the parties and the discussions and debates, that issues get aired, compromises made and good laws are passed.

I grew up in a small farming community in Western Iowa, where almost everyone was a republican, including my father. It was a different Republican party then. The Republican party at that time fought for the working person and their ability to join and belong to unions. Iowa's Public Sector Collective Bargaining law, commonly called Chapter 20, was passed by a Republican controlled Iowa Senate and a Republican controlled Iowa House and signed into law in 1974 by Republican Governor Robert Ray. The minimum wage was raised many times in that era also.

Over the years the Republican party has evolved into a completely different party. It is now the party of the wealthy, the Corporations and the Special Interests. It is the Republican party of today, which controls both the Iowa Senate and

Iowa House and the Governor's office, that in 2018 completely gutted Iowa's Public Sector Bargaining Laws in an attempt to wipe out Unions in Iowa. The Republican party also has refused to raise Iowa's Minimum Wage (which is still for the past decade, \$7.25 per hour) and passed Legislation that lowered the Minimum Wage in the handful of Counties that had raised it to \$10. per hour or more.

I know many of our members consider themselves to be Republicans and I respect that. I don't think it is the same Republican party they signed up for. One of our local Republican State Representatives from Jones County, Andy Mckean, thought that the Republican party had left him. Andy was the longest serving Republican Legislator in the Iowa Legislature, being first elected in 1978! Andy left the Republican party because it has become the party of Donald Trump and the Republican values of "compassionate conservatism" and fiscal responsibility had gone to the wayside.

Andy is not the only Republican that feels this way and has "buyer's remorse" for voting for Donald Trump in 2016 and the other Republicans on the ticket. There are so many fleeing the Republican party, that they have formed several groups. Two of which are: the Lincoln Project and Republican Voters Against Trump. If you are a little uneasy about voting for

Trump again or are unsure if you like the direction our Country is headed, then please google these

groups and check them out.

It is time for real leadership in our country.

## IOWA AFL-CIO

### JOIN OUR PHONE BANK

**Calling on our Union Sisters  
and Brothers to get the union  
vote out.**

**Sign up to volunteer at**

<https://www.iowaaficio.org/phone-banking>

**or call 515-262-9571**

Contact Julianne Frosolone to join Labor 2020, [julianne@iowaaficio.org](mailto:julianne@iowaaficio.org)



# 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
- UD 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 Garriott
- 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 11: Sara Huddleston
- HD 13: Chris Chris Hall
- HD 14: Steve Hansen
- HD 15: Charlie McConkey

## IOWA STATE HOUSE

- 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 58: Andy McKean
- HD 59: Bob Kressig
- HD 60: Dave Williams

## IOWA STATE HOUSE

- 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 Isenhart

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

# Peter Rachleff: Turbulent History Sheds Light on Labor Day's Relevance



**Peter Rachleff**

Monday, Sept. 1, will mark the 120th celebration of Labor Day as a legal, national holiday. The holiday had a turbulent, complicated beginning. Understanding more about this can help us rethink the significance of this holiday today.

American labor in 1894 was a volatile force. The industrial revolution had radically transformed work, replacing skilled labor with machines, and giving birth to two powerful new institutions: factories and corporations. The economy had been rocked by three deep depressions in the previous two decades, when millions lost their jobs and millions more experienced wage cuts. Massive numbers of immigrants arrived and applied for the low-paid, dangerous, unskilled jobs that were available. After the brief experiment in political and economic democracy called "Reconstruction," the 4 million freed slaves, their descendants, and their northern relatives found themselves stripped of their newly won rights. Women's suffrage advocates, who had hoped that the ending of slavery would quickly be followed by the extension of voting (and other) rights to women, were deeply disappointed. None of these developments took place without a struggle, and there were strikes, protests, marches and rallies continuously in the last decades of the century.

In the summer of 1877, railroad workers from Martinsburg, West Virginia, to St. Louis and Chicago went on strike against wage cuts. Tens of thousands, from highly skilled engineers to largely black and immigrant track-layers, struck. In some places, strikers fought with other workers, who were desperate enough to cross picket lines. When several state militias were called out to protect the strikebreakers, violent clashes ensued and there were deaths on both sides. In some places, militia members refused to fire on workers, and they put down their weapons and joined the protestors. For 45 days the nation's rail traffic, the heart of its transportation system, was disrupted.

While the railroad strike did not succeed, it planted new ideas about organizing and strategy among

workers. In the 1880s, as the economy recovered, a new labor organization, the Knights of Labor, swept the country. It took in the unskilled as well as the skilled, immigrants as well as native born, women as well as men and black as well as white. Its motto was "An Injury to One is the Concern of All," and in many communities its members actually practiced what they preached.

Activists in the Knights, frustrated with long hours (many toiled 12-hour days), low pay, little political voice and general social disregard, hatched a radical new idea: that all workers should strike on May 1, 1886, for a universal eight hour day, and that none would return to work until all had achieved the new standard. This dramatic, unified action would not only bring them the demands they wanted, it would transform their relationships with each other across the country, and it would change the ways they were perceived by the dominant culture. A lot was at stake. An estimated 340,000 walked off their jobs May 1, and the number grew each day.

This struggle came to a climax at the country's largest factory, the McCormick Harvester Works in Chicago. There, Knights of Labor activists used rallies and picket lines at the plant gates to appeal to all the workers, especially the newly hired immigrants in the unskilled jobs, to join the great strike. On May 4 the Chicago police moved in, accused the union leaders of holding rallies without a permit, and ordered the crowd to disperse. Someone threw a bomb into the ranks of the police, who in turn opened fire on the crowd. Seven officers and four strikers died, and many more people were injured. The leaders of the strike were arrested and put on trial for murder. Eight were convicted; four of them were hanged. This repression sent a chill through the new labor movement, but it also made martyrs out of the strike leaders, and it made May 1 a labor holiday throughout the world, including parts of the U.S.

The new ideas and strategies, particularly the practice of broad-based solidarity, picked up again in the early 1890s. In cities across the country, central labor bodies united local unions from a wide range of trades and occupations, organizing solidarity when any union went on strike. In 1892 two dramatic strikes – in July at Andrew Carnegie's flagship Homestead Steel Works, and in November in New Orleans, beginning on the docks but spreading throughout the city into a general strike – again saw the kind of solidarity between immigrants and native born, white and black, skilled and unskilled that had characterized the

Knights of Labor. Among railroad workers, a new organization, the American Railway Union, led by a charismatic speaker, Eugene V. Debs, gathered all railroad workers together into one industrial union. In April 1894, facing the kind of wage cuts which had spurred the 1877 upheaval, ARU members struck James J. Hill's Great Northern Railroad. This conflict led to a showdown in St. Paul in which a striker, Charlie Luth, was shot and killed by a strikebreaker outside an East Side boardinghouse. Charles Pillsbury, head of the huge flour company, called Hill and Debs together and mediated a settlement, in which Hill rescinded the 10 percent wage cut he had imposed. Railroad workers around the country were inspired – and sprang into action.

In June, the workers who built sleeping cars in a Chicago suburb called Pullman – a company town in which the employer owned the houses, picked the police and controlled the schools and stores – rebelled when their wages were cut 25 percent without a reduction in rents. They sent word to Debs and asked to join the ARU. Debs welcomed them in and then called on railroad workers across the country to "boycott" Pullman cars – that is, refuse to move any train with a Pullman car. Some 125,000 railroad workers joined what was, in effect, a nationwide railroad strike. President Grover Cleveland called out the National Guard to police the railroad yards and the roundhouses, but they could not force the strikers to return to work. Pullman's corporate attorney, Richard Olney, the former U.S. Attorney General, sought a federal injunction ordering an end to the strike. The grounds? The strikers were interfering with the shipment of the nation's mail! Most trains had not only Pullman cars but also U.S. mail cars. The federal judge issued the first ever federal injunction against a strike, and ordered Debs to call off the strike. When Debs refused, the judge found him in contempt and sent him to prison, where he spent the next 18 months. In a matter of days, the strikers went back to work.

It was within this context that Cleveland asked Congress to pass legislation making the first Monday in September Labor Day. With one hand he allowed the country's greatest labor leader to sit in a prison cell, and with the other he created a national holiday celebrating labor. Cleveland was also careful to direct workers' celebration away from May 1, which had become an international labor day. He took his cue from the New York City Central Labor Union, which had been celebrating an early September "Labor Day" since 1882. A number of other

city and state labor organizations had followed this example. They stayed away from May 1 because it had been so badly tainted by the anti-radical backlash that swept the country and the labor movement in the late 1880s.

Despite its official and non-radical identity, Labor Day offered the occasion for the labor movement to express solidarity. Parades, pageants, picnics and rallies marked the day across the country, complete with banners emblazoned with the symbols of particular trades or expressing labor slogans and mottos. Workers listened to speeches, engaged in political debates, and joined in collective songs. Union members' families were an integral part of the labor movement. Labor Day allowed for the building of a labor culture.

Over the next century, the vitality of Labor Day ebbed and flowed with the overall energy and life of the labor movement. After a rather quiet 1920s, Labor Day revived in the 1930s and 1940s only to fade in significance in the 1950s and 1960s. In the tumultuous 1980s and early 1990s, stimulated by PATCO, Hormel, Staley, Caterpillar, the Chicago and Detroit newspapers and the struggle against the North American Free Trade Agreement, not just picnics and parades, but also expressions of solidarity and militancy became widespread once again. These patterns were as apparent in St. Paul as they were anywhere else. As we mark the 120th celebration of Labor Day, the labor movement is in an extraordinary period of change. The movement is pressed by changes in the structure of the economy and the organization of work on the one hand, and by virulent anti-union hostility typified by the Koch brothers, the Tea Party, Walmart and many other corporate giants on the other. But labor is also energized from within by fast food and retail workers who demand a living wage, immigrants who seek to be recognized for their work and paid appropriately for it, public employees who know that their work contributes to the public's quality of life and are sick of being scorned in the political pulpits and mass media, college professors who want full-time jobs with economic security and the opportunity to control their own classrooms, and home health care and child-care providers who want to throw off their invisibility and be appreciated in our society for the important work they perform.

A great history lies ahead. Happy Labor Day!

— *Union Advocate*, 8/25/2014

*Peter Rachleff is a professor of history at Macalester College and president of the East Side Freedom Library in St. Paul, MN.*

# Common Good Iowa

By Mike Owen

Nineteen years after the Iowa Policy Project produced its first major report, *The State of Working Iowa, 2001*, the latest version in this long series is now out — but under the banner of a new organization: Common Good Iowa.

It's really a coincidence of the calendar that the timing of the merger of IPP with the Child and Family Policy Center sets up our regular Labor Day look at the climate for working families in Iowa, but it is fitting nevertheless. Because even as names change and times change, some things will not with our new organization that combines the talents, expertise and contacts of IPP and CFPC.

As with our separate organizations before, Common Good Iowa will be on the job as long as:

- ▶ wages are too low and Iowans can't make ends meet,
- ▶ pensions and Social Security are threatened,
- ▶ access to health care and child care is inadequate,
- ▶ denigration of our water and our climate are ignored,
- ▶ our tax system is unfair, and
- ▶ our public services are short-changed.

We will be doing so with a special emphasis on equity — not just to spread the word, but to learn our-

selves — how we can move Iowa to an anti-racist climate that offers opportunity for every single Iowan, no matter the color of their skin, their heritage, their identity or their ZIP code.

That is how we can use public policy to build an agenda that truly is based on the “common good” — hence the name we chose for our new organization.

As always, we believe that starts with the fundamentals of rock-solid information and rigorous analysis that helps everyone, whether in the coffee shop or the Capitol, at the kitchen table or over the backyard fence, to talk about issues and solutions from a common understanding.

That is how the Iowa Policy Project originally started. Many of you have heard the story: David Osterberg, a former state representative from Mount Vernon, had a meeting in 2000 with Mark Smith, then president of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO. David thought he was going in to seek funding for a report about corporate welfare. Instead, he learned Mark had bigger ideas, to start a “think tank” to address working family issues in a sustained way. “I walked out with a job,” Osterberg recalls.

That meeting spawned what became IPP, which from its earliest

days began working with the Child and Family Policy Center, building on the legislative relationship between Osterberg and CFPC founder Charles Bruner, a former state senator from Ames.

While both organizations had areas of work that only one or the other pursued, there were also strong areas of overlap, particularly in budget and tax policy. So we branded our combined work under the label of the Iowa Fiscal Partnership.

It's where many Iowans learned about the legal scandal of tax credits and tax loopholes that have drained resources away from services that help struggling Iowans and enhance opportunity for all. As we have noted many times, for example, checks to big companies to do research they would do anyway — and that pay no Iowa income taxes — cost the state over \$40 million a year. That is the cost of a 1 percent increase in school aid, which the Legislature routinely shortchanges. Our organizations worked to put that issue in front of policy makers and the public, and now it is understood — if not yet corrected. Work is yet to be done on that and other work of our two organizations together, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit for low- and moderate-income working

families, and child care assistance, and food assistance (SNAP), and better school funding.

All by way of saying, the relationship between the two organizations — now one — has always been strong. The new arrangement should make it stronger, seamless, building on what CFPC has done for three decades and IPP for two.

Everyone from both previous staffs remains with the new organization, as do our commitments to the range of issues we have worked in the past. We will retain offices in Des Moines and Iowa City.

We welcome your queries and perspectives, and we will continue to seek your support. Good research and analysis does not just happen — it must be supported and promoted.

Please stay in touch with us and watch for news about our coming website, [www.commongoodiowa.org](http://www.commongoodiowa.org). In the meantime, you can continue to reach us at our existing emails and find our previous work on our websites, [www.iowapolicyproject.org](http://www.iowapolicyproject.org) and [www.cfpciowa.org](http://www.cfpciowa.org). Feel free to contact me or Common Good Iowa executive director Anne Discher, [adischer@cfpciowa.org](mailto:adischer@cfpciowa.org).

*Mike Owen, former executive director of the Iowa Policy Project, is deputy director of Common Good Iowa. Contact: [mikeowen@iowapolicyproject.org](mailto:mikeowen@iowapolicyproject.org).*

## Sign Up to Power the Polls Today

As coronavirus continues to impact Americans across the country, there has been a staggering decrease in the number of people who



are able to work the polls — which could mean closed polling places and long delays during the November election.

The AFL-CIO is proud to partner with Power the Polls, a first-of-its-kind initiative to recruit poll workers to ensure a safe, fair election for all voters.

**Will you help us address our nation's critical poll worker shortage? You can help make sure we have a safe, fair, efficient election for all voters, and potentially get paid to do it. Sign up to Power the Polls today. <https://www.powerthepolls.org/aflcio>**

Once you've signed up, depending on your jurisdiction, you will either be contacted by Power the Polls, a partner organization, or your local election administrators regarding your application.

The process to become a poll

worker can be a bit complicated, but don't worry: the Power the Polls team will help you along the way. In the coming weeks, Power the Polls will host briefings to provide you with more information about the application process and what to expect when you become a poll worker.

In the meantime, we also ask that you encourage your friends and family to sign up to be poll workers and help ensure a safe and fair election. Click below to share Power the Polls with your network:

The AFL-CIO is proud to partner with Power the Polls to help

combat the shortage of poll workers in the upcoming election. **Sign up to Power the Polls today. <https://www.powerthepolls.org/aflcio>**

Thanks for being a part of this.  
In solidarity,  
Team AFL-CIO

### We Need You to be an Iowan Pollworker This Election

Helping voters vote, answering their questions, guiding them through the voting process and guarding the integrity of our elections is paramount in determining the will of the voters in selecting our leaders. The precinct election officials who are tasked with these duties are dedicated to our democracy and to making sure elections run smoothly.

So what would you do as a precinct election official? On Election Day, you would check in voters and issue them ballots. Most counties use a computer to walk precinct election officials through the steps. Designated precinct election officials give instructions on how to use special ballot marking devices for people with disabilities. Voters also may vote their ballots from their cars, so you might be sent outside with another

precinct election official to assist with curbside voting. You also help maintain proper distancing at the polling site.



You will work for your county auditor and under the direction of the precinct chair. The polls are open from 7 AM to 9 PM. Election officials start setting up at 6 AM. You will be paid for your training session and your work on election day.

#### Iowa Precinct Election Official Requirements You must:

- Be registered to vote in Iowa
- Be at least 17 years old
- Be a resident of the county you serve in

- Complete the required training

For more information go the Iowa Secretary of State web page. [Pollworker.iowa.gov](http://Pollworker.iowa.gov).

# Vote in the 2020 November 3rd Election

by **Scott Puntaney, President**  
**Western Iowa Labor Federation**  
 402-657-1007  
 spuntaney@wilfaflcio.org

The mission of the Western Iowa Labor Federation is to bring together area unions as one force to improve the lives of workers, their families, and our community. To bring economic justice to the workplace and social justice to the nation. We accomplish this mission by working to build worker power through political education and action, union organizing, community service programs, participation in the United Way's annual campaign, and educational programs for the entire community.

As the covid-19 pandemic has affected everything in our daily lives. The Western Iowa Labor Federation has also adapted to keep everyone safe. We have moved all our meetings to 100% virtual, we have cancelled our large gathering events,

including our Labor Day Picnics in each of our Chapters, but our work has not stopped.

The Western Iowa Labor Federation held several community services projects throughout the summer including donation drives partnering with local homeless shelters and educators. We have organized and supported actions to help save the USPS and to support a safe plan for our Teachers and Children to return to school.

It is clear our Governor and President do not care about working people. They are fine with sacrificing lives in order to win an election. I never imagined I would see a day where a President would stand with Russia over our deployed troops, where our government would turn its military force against its own citizens. This is happening now. It is past time to sit on the sidelines and be complacent. Now more than ever we must come together and fight back. The Labor

movement is all about Solidarity and having a collective voice, not about hate and division.

With this I urge all labor leaders to contact their members about the upcoming elections. Get them registered to vote. Send local union letters about our endorsed candidates, and the issues they stand for. If anyone needs help with crafting letters or unregistered voter lists, please contact me. I am here to help you get the

message to you members.

With everyone working together we can flip the Iowa House and Senate; we can send a real leader in Teresa Greenfield to Washington; we can remove hate from the White House; we can elect Rita, Abby, Cindy and JD as our congressional delegation; and we can elect Labor friendly candidates up and down the ballot this fall.

In Solidarity.

## Busy Times at Hawkeye Area Labor Council

by **Jerry Hageman,**  
**Hawkeye Area Labor Council**

As a part time political field coordinator for the Hawkeye Area Labor Council, my territory covers from Mason City to Iowa City. Our ALF

is different than the GRALF, the WILF, or the SCIFL. I try to stay active in the Waterloo and Cedar Falls area, mainly with an occasional trip to Mason City or Marshalltown in the past.

This covid-19 situation has made it challenging to carry out many of our normal activities. Our Labor Day picnic has been cancelled as have all other picnics. Hawkeye Labor has been able to go ahead with their Honor Flight Poker Run Fundraiser and their Wild Cat Glen Golf Tournament.

With a lot of research and hard work by Rick Moyle, we have a new 501c3 set up for our Local Union Community Charities (LUCC). This has taken over a year to set up in reaction to the Cedar Valley United Way not hiring a labor liaison after John Padget moved on. This 501c3 may prove useful for other fundraising efforts due to natural calamities that may happen in our area. The total destruction of trees, power infrastructure and buildings in Cedar Rapids has put a hard stop on activities there for awhile.

So, online meetings have become a normal way to get things done like our Iowa Worker Safety Council meetings to help Tyson workers and our Save Our Postal Workers days of actions coming up soon to fight back against the Trump administration's efforts to keep us from voting in the coming election.



**IOWA**  
Labor Center

**Building the labor movement through education**



Fall 2020 Programs		Offered via Zoom	
<p><b>New Stewards</b></p>  <p><b>SEPT 22 - 24</b>                      Tues - Thurs                      12 - 4:30PM</p> <p>Union Values                      Role of Stewards                      Legal Rights                      Weingarten Rights                      Grievance Handling</p>	<p><b>Iowa Workers' Compensation</b></p>  <p><b>OCT 14 - 16</b>                      Wed - Fri                      12 - 4:30PM</p> <p>IA Law/Recent Changes                      Injuries &amp; Disabilities                      Calculating Benefits                      Union/Atty/Dr Roles                      Return to Work</p>	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p>  <p><b>NOV 17 - 19</b>                      Tues - Thurs                      12 - 4:30PM</p> <p>Legal Rights                      OSHA/Other Laws                      Safety Committees                      Removing Hazards                      COVID-19 &amp; Safety</p>	<p><b>Financial Officers</b></p>  <p><b>DEC 7 - 9</b>                      Mon - Wed                      12 - 4:30PM</p> <p>Recordkeeping                      IRS 990 Forms                      LM/PERB Forms                      Reporting Rules                      Audits</p>

**TO REGISTER:**  319.335.4144  [labor-center@uiowa.edu](mailto:labor-center@uiowa.edu)  [http://bit.ly/LC\\_Program\\_Registration](http://bit.ly/LC_Program_Registration)

**COST: \$200 per person per program**  
**Participants must provide an email address, have an internet connection, and join using a computer**

When registering, please include the participant name(s), union title/position, union name and local #, mailing address, email, and daytime phone #. Registration fees should be paid by check (made payable to The University of Iowa) and mailed to Labor Center, The University of Iowa, 100 BioVentures Center, Room W130, Iowa City, IA 52242-5000.

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa-sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation in order to participate in a program, please contact the Labor Center in advance at 319.335.4144.

