



MICHAEL H. BOLTON, DIRECTOR

UNITED STEELWORKERS



DISTRICT 2

NEWS

AUGUST 2020 • VOLUME 10, ISSUE 8, PAGE 1

DISTRICT 2 CONTACT INFORMATION

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Northern WI & MI Sub-District Office

1244A Midway Road
Menasha, WI 54952
(920) 722-7630

Southern WI Sub-District Office

1135 South 70th Street, Suite 502
West Allis, WI 53214
(414) 475-4560

Northern MI Sub-District Office

503 North Euclid Avenue
Suite #10 - Euclid Plaza
Bay City, MI 48706
(989) 667-0660

Southern MI Sub-District Office

20600 Eureka Road, Suite 300
Taylor, MI 48180
(734) 285-0367

USW District 2 Council Steering Committee

The District 2 Council By-Laws established a District 2 Council Steering Committee comprised of a rank and file structure. It was set up to assist in the following:

- Development of agenda for Council Conference.
- Planning of the District Council Conference Educational Conferences.
- District 2 strategic planning.
- Determining and assessing educational needs within the District.
- Generating and leading activism and other purposes consistent with the mission and directives of District 2 and the USW.

The elected members of the Steering Committee are listed below by manufacturing sector. If you need to contact a Steering Committee Member, please do so by using the email provided below.

Name	LU#	Sector	Email Address
Ron Fancal	1296	Steel and Related	rfancal@yahoo.com
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is published by the

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AFL-CIO-CLC

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Articles and photos are welcome and should be sent:

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SEPTEMBER 21, 2020, is the deadline for submissions for the next issue.

"Your Union – Your Voice" Survey: Health Care

A Message from Michael Bolton



Before the covid-19 pandemic took over every news cycle, health care was set to be a major issue in the 2020 election; and with less than 90 days left in the campaign, I suspect it will still be an issue brought up by both candidates during each of the three scheduled debates. Health care was the issue you identified as your top priority during our "Your Union – Your Voice" election survey. With so many workers on layoff during this pandemic, health insurance is likely to be an important issue for the unemployed too.

Before I begin candidate comparisons on health care, let's make sure we are all on the same page by defining our goals for health care. As Union members who negotiate the health care benefits we enjoy, our issues are the rising health care insurance premiums and the costs that are driving premium increases. Each year the balancing act between bargaining for reasonable wage increases and maintaining our current benefits becomes more difficult. In other words, the high cost of health care is contributing to wage stagnation in America.

In negotiations our bargaining committees spend much of their time bargaining over healthcare in order to prevent higher premium contributions, co-pays and deductibles.

I have said this before and I am, again, saying, health insurance premiums are a trade issue that is not only contributing to wage stagnation, but is costing us good paying manufacturing jobs. Think about it. The majority of the trading nations we compete with have some form of single payer insurance that employers do not have to pay for; whereas, here in the U.S., employers are the primary source of paying the ridiculous high rates of health insurance coverage. How much of a cost is this to employers? Considering an employer with 350 employees is paying a monthly premium of \$750 per worker. The company starts each month with a \$262,500 insurance payment, which ends up being \$3.1 million annually that the competition is not required to pay. This is one hell of an advantage for the other guy.

To level the playing field with our trading partners and to start putting a little more money in our pockets, we have to elect the candidate who is going to work with us to lower both premiums and health care costs. So, let's look at where they stand.

In mid-July President Trump promised that in two weeks he would unveil a "terrific" new health plan for America. As you might have guessed, the two weeks have come and gone and no one has seen the proposal. He did issue an executive order on pre-existing conditions, but that is already covered by Obamacare.

I should also mention that several weeks earlier the President asked the Supreme Court to invalidate what's left of the ACA. He caught a lot of grief for that request due to the record number of unemployed who are struggling with health care right now, but it should not have come as a surprise to anyone. Since Obamacare became law in March 2010, Republicans have tried 70 times to repeal, modify or weaken the Act. After all the efforts of Republicans to repeal Obamacare and a President also looking for ways to end it, the GOP and its leadership have yet to go on record with a plan to replace the ACA.

If we don't know what the President or his right wing cronies have in mind for health care, then we can only look at some of the programs they have pushed to get a hint at what they have in mind. Let's take a look at some of the plans they have floated in Congress.

In 2017, while Republicans still had control of the U.S. House of Representatives, they passed a bill referred to as the American Health Care Act (AHCA), also referred to as Trumpcare. The bill was approved on a party line vote and, according to the Congressional Budget Office, would reduce the federal deficit by \$150 billion annually. It would also have resulted in 24 million Americans being added to the roll of the uninsured. The bill also eliminated the individual mandate, the portion of Obamacare that provided a tax penalty for individuals that didn't purchase insurance; and it ended taxes on prescription drugs, medical devices and some insurance plans. Republicans had been targeting these areas since the Act's passage.

On the downside, because of the lost revenue caused by the above repeals, 24 million Americans would be added to the number of uninsured. Trumpcare also allowed states to waive certain requirements. For example, Obamacare created a "list of essential services". The list, which included maternity and mental care, contained items insurance plans were required to offer. Under Trumpcare, a state could seek a waiver and be allowed to develop its own list. To gain a waiver, all the state would have to do is say that it is acting to reduce costs.

The GOP plan would also roll back the Medicaid expansion that took place under Obamacare. Under the ACA, eligibility requirements were changed to allow more individuals to qualify for the program. In return, states were provided more money to administer the plans.

Finally, under Obamacare, insurance companies were allowed to charge senior citizens up to three times the premiums paid by younger individuals with similar coverage. Trumpcare would have allowed insurance companies to pocket five times that amount.

The Trumpcare plan was even unpopular with the people in the House who passed it, so when they sent

— Continued on Page 2 —

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"

Did you know?

THE TOLL OF NEGLECT

The 2019 edition of the "Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect" report shows how too many workers remain at serious risk of workplace injury, illness and death.

5,147

The number of workers killed on the job in the United States in 2017.

50,000

The estimated number of deaths each year attributed to occupational diseases caused by chemical exposures.

807

The number of worker deaths caused by workplace violence in 2017, the third leading cause of death on the job.

69

The percent increase in the past decade in serious workplace violence injuries for workers in health care and social assistance.

For more information and facts about this column, go to page 5

A Message from Director Bolton - continued from page 1

it to the Senate for action, it is no wonder the act died a slow death on Mitch McConnell's desk.

The right is also looking to privatize Medicare with a voucher scheme sponsored by Mitt Romney. Under this system, seniors would receive a voucher to pay their annual health insurance coverage. The senior could opt to remain in Medicare or sign up for a plan offered by a private insurer. If the premium is higher than the voucher's value, the senior would be responsible to pay the difference. However, if the plan is cheaper, the senior can pocket the savings. Taking money from Medicare and giving it to for-profit insurers is a prescription for disaster. Also, requiring the elderly to make such choices might be too taxing and lead to seniors making costly errors.

When looking at the GOP plans for health care, two things are obvious:

- 1) They fail to offer our members the quality health insurance they are accustomed to receiving.
- 2) They do nothing to control premiums or lower actual cost of care.

There is only one thing that can accomplish those goals - Competition!

Lack of competition is the reason Obamacare has done nothing to lower premiums or cut costs. Joe Biden supports strengthening Obamacare by offering a Medicare-type public option. The plan would negotiate the cost of medical procedures and prescription drug prices and would offer plans at premiums that are lower than traditional providers. This competition would force private insurers to finally take action to lower costs and premiums.

Of course, the former Vice President supports expanding Medicaid, taking action to put Medicare on sound footing for the future and benefits to the government's list of essential service. In addition to lowering premiums, these steps will increase the number of insured Americans and improve existing plans. I believe that Biden's position on health care is thoughtful and goes a long way toward easing wage stagnation and leveling the playing field for American workers competing in the global market.

For these reasons, the USW is recommending that Steelworkers vote for Biden-Harris on November 3.

Next month, we will take a look at the Biden-Trump positions on the second most important issue from your responses on our "Your Union - Your Voice" survey - retirement security.

Trump's NLRB Bans Bargaining for COVID-19 Safety - by Brian Young, UCOMMBLOG



The board took away union rights to negotiate safety or closures

August 21, 2020 — The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has released a series of decisions regarding COVID-19. These decisions are the first guidance that the board has given since the pandemic started in March.

In a series of five memos to their regional directors the NLRB instructed them to dismiss various cases regarding COVID-19 related charges against employers. The board concluded that an employer is not obligated to engage in midterm bargaining regarding union proposals for paid sick leave and hazard pay because of the ongoing pandemic. They also said that an employer does not have to bargain about a temporary closure.

In regards to workers speaking up about a dangerous situation on the job, the board has decided that an individual speaking out about a company's COVID safety procedure is not protected speech. This means that they can be fired by their employer. This guidance came after a case was filed by a nurse who was fired after for refusing to work at a nursing home that was requiring workers to share isolation gowns.

While this decision is not unexpected by the NLRB, it does give employers much more freedom into unilaterally creating work standards during COVID-19. This gives employers significantly more latitude for forcing workers into possibly dangerous workplace situations as COVID-19 continues to rage across the United States.

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United Steelworkers District 2 AFL-CIO-CLC

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HAVE YOU BEEN TO DISTRICT 2'S PAGE ON FACEBOOK?
www.facebook.com/USWDistrict2



2020 District 2 Calendar of Events

JANUARY

- 8 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
USW Local 12075 Hall, 3510 James Savage Road • Midland, MI
- 9 **Town Hall Meeting**
USW Local 12075 Hall, 3510 James Savage Road • Midland, MI
- 16 **Town Hall Meeting**
USW Local 1299 Hall, 11424 West Jefferson Avenue • River Rouge, MI
- 17 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
USW Dist. 2 Southern MI Sub-Office, 20600 Eureka Road, Suite 300 • Taylor, MI
- 17-19 **AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil & Human Rights Conf.**
Washington Hilton, 1919 Connecticut Ave Northwest • Washington, DC
- 21 **Town Hall Meeting**
Lucky Dog's Labor Temple, 157 S. Green Bay Road • Neenah, WI
- 21 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
Kent Ionia Labor Hall, 918 Benjamin Avenue NE • Grand Rapids, MI
- 21 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
USW Local 2-21 Hall, 1201 Sheridan Road • Escanaba, MI
- 22 **Town Hall Meeting**
Clarion Inn, 3640 East Cork Street • Kalamazoo, MI
- 22 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
Old Morton Federal Credit Union, 516 Kosciusko • Manistee, MI
- 22 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
USW Local 2-148 Hall, 1201 Gillingham Road • Neenah, WI
- 23 **Town Hall Meeting**
Four Points by Sheraton - Milwaukee Airport, 5311 South Howell Avenue • Milwaukee, WI
- 24 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
Milwaukee Labor Council Building, 633 S. Hawley Road • Milwaukee, WI
- 24 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
Joann Lester Library, 100 Park Street • Nekoosa, WI

FEBRUARY

- 4 **Town Hall Meeting**
Eau Claire Labor Temple, 2233 Birch Street • Eau Claire, WI
- 6 **Town Hall Meeting**
Fraternal Order of Eagles, 1104 S. Oak Avenue, Marshfield, WI
- 11 **Town Hall Meeting**
Holiday Inn, 4079 US-10 • Ludington, MI
- 13 **Town Hall Meeting**
McRae Park Hall, 1301 N 2nd Ave, Alpena, MI
- 18 **Town Hall Meeting**
USW Local 4950 Hall, 1206 Baldwin Avenue • Negaunee, MI
- 25 **LM Review Session**
Milwaukee Labor Council Building, 633 S. Hawley Road • Milwaukee, WI
- 26 **LM Review Session**
Lucky Dog's Labor Temple, 157 S. Green Bay Road • Neenah, WI
- 27 **LM Review Session**
Kronenwetter Village Hall, 1582 Kronenwetter Drive • Kronenwetter, WI
- 28 **LM Review Session**
USW Local 2-21 Hall, 1201 Sheridan Road • Escanaba, MI

MARCH

- 2 **LM Review Session**
USW Local 12075 Hall, 3510 James Savage Road • Midland, MI
- 3 **LM Review Session**
Bungalow Inn, 1100 28th Street • Manistee, MI
- 4 **LM Review Session**
Clarion Inn, 3640 East Cork Street • Kalamazoo, MI
- 5 **LM Review Session**
USW District 2 Southern MI Sub-Office, 20600 Eureka Road, Suite 300 • Taylor, MI
- 10-12 **USW District 2 Collective Bargaining Training**
Four Points by Sheraton - Milwaukee Airport, 5311 South Howell Avenue • Milwaukee, WI
- 23-27 **CANCELLED & POSTPONED until April 2022**
District 2 Council Conference
Red Lion Hotel Paper Valley • 333 West College Avenue, Appleton, WI

MAY

- 3-8 **CANCELLED & POSTPONED until May 2021**
District 2 WOS Leadership Development Course (Levels I & II)
Zehnder's Splash Village Hotel & Waterpark, 1365 South Main Street • Frankenmuth, MI

OCTOBER

- TBD **Local Union Leadership Training (Wisconsin)**
Virtual Education Training will be offered. Dates and times to be determined
- TBD **Local Union Leadership Training (Michigan)**
Virtual Education Training will be offered. Dates and times to be determined
- TBD **Presidents Meetings (Michigan)**
Presidents Meetings will be Virtual on-line. Dates and times to be determined
- TBD **Presidents Meetings (Wisconsin)**
Presidents Meetings will be Virtual on-line. Dates and times to be determined

IMPORTANT NOTICES

SAVE THE TENTATIVE DATE

USW Collective Bargaining Training
is tentatively scheduled for
January 25-29, 2021
Blue Chip Casino and Conference Center
777 Blue Chip Drive - Michigan City, Indiana

All USW District 2 offices are now open. However, the guidelines listed below have been implemented as the health and safety of our members and staff continues to be our number one priority.

- Appointments are currently required. Please call your staff or the office to set up a meeting time.
- Face masks must worn inside all office areas at all times.
- Everyone will be required to sign in and out of the office.
- If you are not feeling well or have been in contact with a covid-19 positive person, please stay home for your safety and the safety of others.

We continue to be committed doing our part in preventing the further spread of coronavirus (Covid-19) while representing our members.

USW District 2 Office Hours

Modified summer hours for all District 2 offices will end Monday, August 31. Normal business hours (listed below) will resume on Tuesday, September 1, 2020:

Menasha, WI	8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. (Monday thru Friday)
West Allis, WI	8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (Monday thru Friday)
Taylor, MI	8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (Monday thru Friday)
Bay City, MI	9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. (Monday thru Friday)

While it may be an inconvenience, the health and safety of our members and staff is our number one priority. As we continue our commitment in doing our part in preventing the further spread of covid-19 while representing our members, we ask that you please call the office or your staff representative if you need assistance prior to visiting the office.

The schedule is designed to assist in planning this year's events. However, there is a possibility dates and/or locations could change due to unforeseen circumstances. Changes and corrections will be made ASAP and updated on the USW District 2 website.

Alliance for Retired Americans • Retiree News - by Jay McMurran, 1st VP, MI ARA & D2 SOAR Executive Board Member



SOAR Eyes on Washington

On May 15, the Democratic controlled U.S. House passed a \$3 trillion covid-19 stimulus package called the Heroes Act. The bill was extraordinary, but we are living in very extraordinary times. The bill would, amongst other things, extend the added \$600 unemployment benefit and eviction moratorium, provide another \$1,200 payment to qualified Americans, and get needed funds to hospitals, cities and states hit hard by the covid-19 virus. As is the

case with all legislation passed by the House, it was immediately sent to Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for consideration by the U.S. Senate. However, Mitch insisted the Senate was not going to act immediately to pass the Heroes Act. Instead, the Senate would wait to see how the last round of stimulus worked. In the meantime, Senate Republicans, led by Lindsay Graham of South Carolina, could be heard whining that if the Senate were to approve a \$600 unemployment benefit, it would discourage American workers from returning to work. After all, they reasoned, why work when you can make more sitting home?

So, they waited. And, they waited. And, they waited. Then, on July 30, the CARES Act, the name of the last round of stimulus, expired. Both the \$600 weekly unemployment benefit and the eviction moratorium ended, giving workers a fresh new kick in the ass to go with their joblessness. But, that wasn't an accident. Mitch McConnell allowed the CARES Act to expire in an attempt to get a better negotiating position with Democrats. Not only was he trying to cut benefits for workers, he was also trying to pass legislation that would eliminate a worker's right to sue their employer if they contracted covid-19 on the job.

Also, as with everything about the coronavirus pandemic, Republicans have politicized getting aid to struggling states as a "bailout for poorly run Democratic states". They seem to be ignoring the fact that Texas and Florida have become the epicenters for hospitalizations and new deaths. Florida's Republican governor, Ron DeSantis, said on August 9 that Florida and several large cities in the state are in financial trouble and in need of federal money to weather the covid-19 storm.

The United Steelworkers and its Rapid Response Network support the HEROES Act and are encouraging Steelworkers to call their U.S. Senators to demand their support of the HEROES Act and to push Leader McConnell to act now to pass the badly needed legislation. In District 2, our Democratic Senators Tammy Baldwin (WI), Debbie Stabenow (MI), and Gary Peters (MI), are all on board with us, just leaving Republican, Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, as uncommitted. Please contact Senator Johnson at (202) 224-5323 and let him know this is no time for political gamesmanship. America is hurting and needs the relief that the HEROES Act provides. Tell him to support the Act and get the U.S. back on track to defeat the coronavirus.

It's Time to Buy American!

At a time when a health crisis has crashed our economy, resulting in millions of Americans, including 750,000 industrial workers, being tossed into the unemployment lines, it is expected our political leaders would be working together to create new jobs. Unfortunately, that's not the case in Washington, D.C., right now, where the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is in the process of ordering new rail cars for its sprawling subway system.

You might also expect that those shiny new cars are being made right here in the USA because our tax dollars are being used to fund the project.

You could realistically expect both of these things, but boy would you be wrong.

Federal laws require that projects receiving federal tax dollars must buy American made products, unless there are no manufacturers in the U.S. In this case, there are over 750 companies in 39 states that make subway components. Seems like a diverse market to choose from. But, instead, the WMATA contends that because it is also receiving state and local tax dollars for the purchase of the cars, it is not bound by the Buy American provisions and is ordering them from China.

With a record number of American workers on layoff, in addition to an economy that has seen a record 2nd quarter GDP contraction, the WMATA's decision to buy overseas cannot be allowed to stand. The Alliance for American Manufacturing is asking concerned Steelworkers to send a letter or make a call to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, urging them to "BUY AMERICAN".

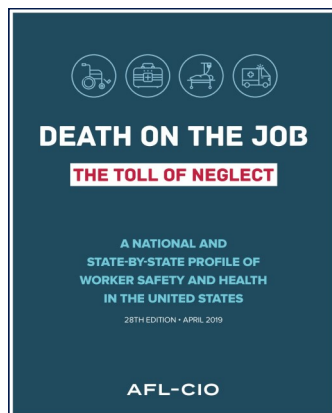
You can reach the WMATA offices by phone at (202) 962-1234 or write them at

WMATA
600 5th Street NW
Washington D.C. 20001

Tell them they are spending your money and you want to see it used to put Americans back to work!

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"

Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect, 2019 - by AFL-CIO Safety & Health Department



This 2019 edition of "Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect" marks the 28th year the AFL-CIO has produced a report on the state of safety and health protections for America's workers. This report features national and state information on workplace fatalities, injuries, illnesses, the number and frequency of workplace inspections, penalties, funding, staffing and public employee coverage under the Occupational Safety and Health Act. It also includes information on the state of mine safety and health.

Nearly 50 years ago, in 1970, Congress enacted the OSH Act, promising workers in this country the right to a safe job. More than 594,000 workers now can say their lives have been saved since the passage of the OSH Act. Since that time, workplace safety and health conditions have improved. But too many workers remain at serious risk of injury, illness or death as chemical plant explosions, major fires, construction collapses and other preventable workplace tragedies continue to occur. Workplace violence is a growing threat. Many other workplace hazards kill and disable thousands of workers each year.

In 2017, 5,147 workers lost their lives on the job as a result of traumatic injuries, according to fatality data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Each day in this country, an average of 14 workers die because of job injuries—women and men who go to work, never to return home to their families and loved ones. This does not include those workers who die from occupational diseases, estimated to be 95,000 each year. Chronic occupational diseases receive less attention, because most are not detected until years after workers are exposed to toxic chemicals, and occupational illnesses often are misdiagnosed and poorly tracked. All total, on average 275 workers die each day due to job injuries and illnesses.

In 2017, nearly 3.5 million workers across all industries, including state and local government, had work-related injuries and illnesses that were reported by employers, with 2.8 million injuries and illnesses reported in private industry. Due to limitations in the current injury reporting system and widespread under-reporting of workplace injuries, this number understates the problem. The true toll is estimated to be two to three times greater—or 7.0 million to 10.5 million injuries and illnesses a year.

The cost of these injuries and illnesses is enormous—estimated at \$250 billion to \$330 billion a year.

During its eight years in office, the Obama administration had a strong track record on worker safety and health, appointing dedicated pro-worker advocates to lead the job safety agencies who returned these programs to their core mission of protecting workers. The Obama administration increased the job safety budget, stepped up enforcement and strengthened workers' rights. Landmark regulations to protect workers from deadly silica dust and coal dust were issued, along with long-overdue rules on other serious safety and health hazards, including beryllium and confined space entry in the construction industry.

With the election of President Trump, the political landscape and direction of the job safety agencies shifted dramatically. President Trump ran on a pro-business, deregulatory agenda, promising to cut regulations by 70%. Since taking office in January 2017, the Trump administration has moved aggressively on its deregulatory agenda. Through executive orders, legislative action, and delays and rollbacks in regulations, the Trump administration has sought to repeal or weaken many Obama administration rules. For the first two years of the administration, with Republicans in control of Congress, there was little oversight and only a limited ability to block these regulatory attacks and rollbacks. As a result, important safety and health protections have been repealed or weakened. There has been little action to address hazards like workplace violence that need attention and new regulation.

Job safety and health enforcement at both the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Mine Safety and Health Administration largely has been maintained, with some cutbacks in OSHA inspections involving significant cases and complex hazards. At both agencies, the number of inspectors has declined significantly; at OSHA, the number of job safety inspectors is at its lowest level since the 1970s.

President Trump has proposed cuts in key worker safety and health programs in the budgets for FY 2018, FY 2019 and FY2020, seeking to cut funding for coal mine enforcement; eliminate OSHA's worker safety and health training program and the Chemical Safety Board; and slash the NIOSH job safety research budget by more than 40%. To date, Congress has rejected these proposed cuts.

President Trump nominated corporate officials to head the job safety agencies. David Zatezalo, a coal industry executive from Rhino Industry Partners, was nominated to head the Mine Safety and Health Administration and was confirmed by the Senate on Nov. 15, 2017. Scott Mugno, vice president of safety, sustainability and vehicle maintenance at FedEx Ground, first was nominated to head the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on Nov. 1, 2017, and most recently renominated on Jan. 16, 2019. Due to opposition from Democrats and the slow pace of Senate confirmations, Mugno has yet to be confirmed. Both of these individuals have long experience and involvement with the job safety agencies, and have records of opposing enforcement and regulatory actions.

With the election of a Democratic majority in Congress, the political environment for safety and health has greatly improved. Four months into the 116th Congress, Democrats are moving aggressively on a pro-worker agenda, introducing progressive legislation and conducting vigorous oversight of the Trump administration's policies and programs. In a divided Congress, it is unlikely that many of these legislative proposals will become law, but in the next two years the foundation can be set for making progress in coming years.

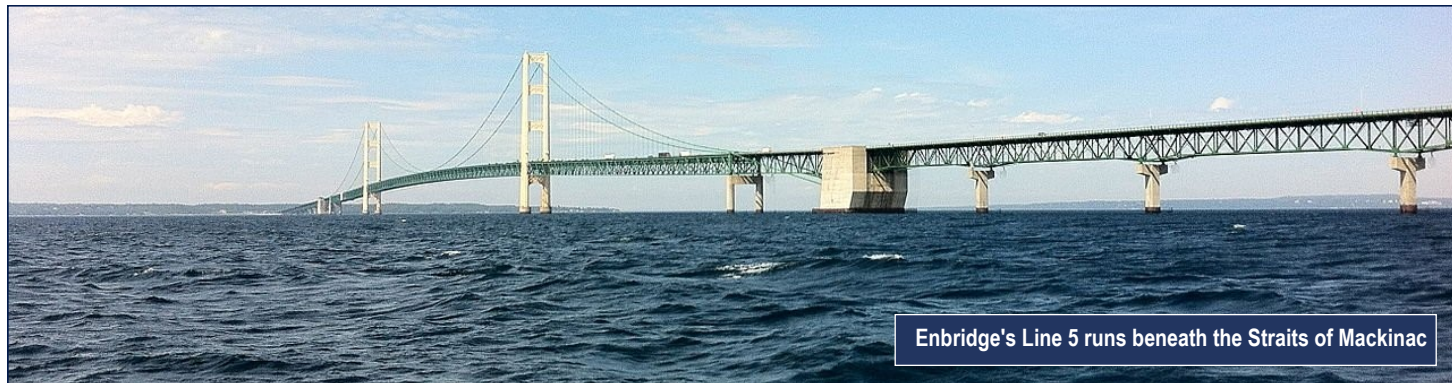
Nearly five decades after the passage of the OSH Act, the toll of workplace injury, disease and death remains too high. There is much more work to be done.

EDITOR'S NOTE: To download the entire report go to: https://aflcio.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/DOTJ2019Fnb_1.pdf

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"

Line 5 tunnel supporters, opponents clash at hearing- by John Flesher, *Crain's Detroit Business* • August 24, 2020

TRAVERSE CITY — Keeping a 64-year-old oil pipeline in operation by running one portion through a proposed Great Lakes tunnel would safeguard the economy and energy supplies, supporters said Monday, while opponents described the project as an unnecessary risk that would contribute to global warming.



Enbridge's Line 5 runs beneath the Straits of Mackinac

The two sides clashed during a public hearing before the Michigan Public Service Commission, one of several agencies that will determine the fate of Enbridge's plan. The Canadian company operates Line 5, which carries crude oil and liquids used for propane between Superior, Wisconsin, and Sarnia, Ontario.

A 6.4-mile segment divides into two pipes that extend across the Straits of Mackinac, which connects Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. While denying critics' claims that they are vulnerable to a catastrophic leak, Enbridge has offered to replace them with a new pipe encased in a concrete tunnel that would be drilled beneath the straits.

The public service commission has jurisdiction over the location of pipelines in Michigan. The panel in June rejected Enbridge's contention that it already had state permission to install the new line because of an easement granted in 1953 when the twin pipes were laid.

Instead, the commission is considering a separate application. It will take testimony for and against the \$500 million project and make a decision after final arguments in July 2021.

During the hearing Monday, the plan drew support from representatives of industry and labor groups including steelworkers, convenience stores and petroleum marketers.

"Families and workers are depending on construction of the Great Lakes Tunnel to preserve our natural resources, protect Michigan jobs, and keep energy prices affordable," Kike Alaimo of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce said in a written statement.

Shutting down Line 5 would choke off fuel supplies to refineries in Michigan and Ohio, cause jet fuel shortages at Detroit Metropolitan Airport and force more shipments of oil by truck and rail, project supporters said.

Beth Wallace of the National Wildlife Federation dismissed the warnings as false "fear mongering," saying Enbridge's other pipelines have enough capacity to handle Line 5's oil.

A recent slowdown of Line 5's flow because of damage to one of the twin pipes' support anchors caused none of the dire consequences predicted by Enbridge and its allies, said Sean McBrearty, representing Oil & Water Don't Mix and Clean Water Action.

"Planes continue to take off from Detroit Airport, and no refineries in Ohio have been shut down," he said.

Building the tunnel would require extensive construction work on the shorelines, damaging wetlands and wildlife habitat, while the project would suck millions of gallons of water from the straits and discharge it back into the waterway, said Patty Peek of the Straits of Mackinac Alliance.

Speakers during the online hearing also debated whether the loss of Line 5 would cause propane shortages in the Upper Peninsula. "In rural areas, propane is the only way to heat your homes — especially in our brutal winters," said Joe Bonovetz, a Gogebic County commissioner.

Anne Woiwode of the Sierra Club countered that a task force appointed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer had identified other ways to meet the U.P.'s energy needs.

Opponents said building a new oil tunnel was the wrong step at a time when the U.S. should be moving away from reliance on fossil fuels. "The science is clear that to avoid significantly worsening impacts of climate change, we must rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions," said Kate Madigan of the Michigan Climate Action Network.

Enbridge noted that the Republican-led Michigan House and 24 counties had endorsed the project. "Placing a pipeline in a new Great Lakes tunnel will provide extra layers of safety and environmental protection and make what is currently a safe pipeline even safer," the company said.

-- FOR MORE ON LINE #5, GO TO THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 7 --

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"

UNITED STEELWORKERS **USW News** UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

For Immediate Release:
August 17, 2020

Contact: R.J. Hufnagel,
412-562-2450
rhufnagel@usw.org,

USW Members Overwhelmingly Ratify Contract with Briggs & Stratton Bidder

Members of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 2-232 voted overwhelmingly to ratify a new contract with a newly formed affiliate of KPS Capital Partners, an investment firm that is trying to purchase the Milwaukee-area manufacturing plant and other assets from bankrupt engine maker Briggs & Stratton.

The five-year contract agreement, which covers about 300 hourly workers, is contingent upon U.S. Bankruptcy Court approval of the sale to KPS and is not transferrable to another bidder. Briggs & Stratton filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in July.

"The USW supports the KPS bid, and we look forward to a long and productive partnership with the company here," said Michael Bolton, director of the USW's District 2, which includes tens of thousands of union members in Wisconsin and Michigan. "The company has a solid track record of success in running manufacturing facilities like this, and this contract will put the company and the workers on that same track."

The agreement includes wage increases of more than 11 percent over the term of the contract and maintains the workers' existing health care coverage. The contract also includes a strong retirement plan, increased sick and accident coverage, and the establishment of a voluntary employees' beneficiary association (VEBA) to fund retiree health care coverage.

The new contract also includes a number of union-friendly provisions such as dues check-off, new employee orientation, and neutrality on union organizing in the event that the reorganized Briggs & Stratton owns or operates similar facilities.

"The USW is very familiar with KPS from its past operations and acquisitions," said USW International President Tom Conway. "Our union will welcome their ownership, and we expect to have a strong relationship with the company as we work with them to turn this business around."

The USW represents 850,000 workers in North America employed in many industries that include metals, mining, rubber, chemicals, paper, oil refining, the service, public and health care sectors and higher education.

USW Representatives Speak Out In Support of the Line 5 Replacement - by Sue Browne, D2 Rapid Response Coordinator

On August 24, USW Representatives from Michigan and Ohio provided comments of support for the replacement of Line 5 at a virtual public hearing before the Michigan Public Service Commission. Enbridge Line 5 is a pipeline that delivers crude oil to the Toledo Refining Company (TRC) and the BP- Husky Toledo Refinery in Toledo, Ohio. USW members from Locals 912 and 1-346 work at those facilities. In recent years, a segment of line 5 which runs through the Straits of Mackinac has come under scrutiny because of its potential to cause a major environmental disaster should it rupture. If this line permanently shut down, BP- Husky could find another way to get crude, however, TRC would be devastated. They have no other feasible alternative to sustain their operation.

Line 5 also supplies 65% of propane demand in the Upper Peninsula, heating 24,000 Upper Peninsula and northern Michigan homes. About 30% of the light crude on Line 5 stays in Michigan, where it powers industry and is refined into gas, diesel, jet fuel, and other products. The light crude that is supplied to PBF Toledo is primarily refined to jet fuel and makes up the bulk of jet fuel supply to Detroit Metro Airport.

"At a time where we have watched employment opportunities shrink with the effects of the COVID pandemic, the construction of the Line 5 Straits Replacement Project will supply new jobs for Michigan workers and make our waters safer in the process". - Assistant to the Director, Kevin Mapp

The permanent shutdown of this line would have devastating impacts and the USW will continue to work to see that not just our members are protected, but also our economies, communities, and our environment are as well.

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"



FEEDBACK REPORT

August 25, 2020

Once Again, the House has Passed a Solution.

[The Senate needs to act now! \(usw.to/SaveUSPS\)](https://usw.to/SaveUSPS)

Over the weekend, the House passed the Delivering for America Act ([HR 8015](https://usw.to/3dM)) (usw.to/3dM), a \$25 billion, bipartisan bill, that would prohibit the United States Postal Service (USPS) from implementing or approving any changes to the operations or service levels that would impede prompt, reliable, and efficient service.

In last week's [ActionCal](https://usw.to/3dR) (usw.to/3dR), we laid out the reasons we need to stand in solidarity with the over 600,000 workers of the USPS. The Postal Service is among the most trusted entities in America when it comes to protecting privacy, and is by far the public's favorite agency in the federal government with an [approval rating of 91 percent](https://usw.to/3e1). (usw.to/3e1)

Since the Coronavirus crisis hit, the USPS has become more essential than ever, from delivering life-saving medicine, to sustaining small businesses. It has also become more endangered than ever, facing a massive budget crisis. The House has offered a solution – it's time for the Senate to act!

How did your Representative vote?

Click [HERE](https://usw.to/3dM) (usw.to/3dM) to see.

Our Work Must Continue.

Thank you for your efforts so far on this action, and thank you for the work you do going forward as we continue to demand that workers come first and [we push for passage of the Delivering for America Act in the Senate](https://usw.to/3dL). (usw.to/3dL) 600,000 postal workers and hundreds of thousands of Steelworker retirees depend on the Postal Service for their prescriptions, pension checks, and Social Security. *They need urgent support - we need to have their backs.*

SAVE OUR POSTAL SERVICE

TAKE ACTION NOW!



Protect Our Postal Service!

[Click here to send an email to your Senators today! \(usw.to/SaveUSPS\)](https://usw.to/SaveUSPS)

You can also contact your Senators by dialing 877-607-0785.

NOTE: Your zip code will direct you to your Senator. Tell the office who you are and where you are from, and ask them to step in and provide the postal funding that our communities need. Be sure to make a second call so you can speak to both Senators.

USW Rapid Response • (412) 562-2291 • <http://www.uswrr.org> • www.facebook.com/USWRapidResponse

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"

This Month In History • The 19th Amendment Adoption was Certified on August 26, 1920 - by National Archives

100 years ago: Women gain the right to vote in the U.S.

The 19th Amendment guarantees American women the right to vote. Achieving this milestone required a lengthy and difficult struggle; victory took decades of agitation. Beginning in the mid-19th century, woman suffrage supporters lectured, wrote, marched, lobbied, and practiced civil disobedience to achieve what many Americans considered radical change.

Between 1878, when the amendment was first introduced in Congress, and 1920, when it was ratified, champions of voting rights for women worked tirelessly, but their strategies varied. Some tried to pass suffrage acts in each state—nine western states adopted woman suffrage legislation by 1912. Others challenged male-only voting laws in the courts. More public tactics included parades, silent vigils, and hunger strikes. Supporters were heckled, jailed, and sometimes physically abused.

By 1916, most of the major suffrage organizations united behind the goal of a constitutional amendment. When New York adopted woman suffrage in 1917, and President Wilson changed his position to support an amendment in 1918, the political balance began to shift.

THE WEATHER
Fair tonight and Thursday;
not much change in tempera-
ture; fresh northerly winds.

ESTABLISHED 1878

THE LOWELL SUN

LOWELL, MASS. WEDNESDAY AUGUST 18 1920

6 O'CLOCK

PRICE TWO CENTS

SUFFRAGE WINS

Tennessee House Ratifies Federal Amendment

Giving Women of Entire Nation Vote This Fall

NASHVILLE, Tenn., August 18.—The women of the country will participate in the coming presidential election for the first time in history, as a result of the action of the house of representatives today, in voting to ratify the federal suffrage amendment. Tennessee is the 36th state to ratify the amendment, thus it now becomes the law of the land. The vote in the house was 49 to 47. The senate ratified the amendment last Friday, by a vote of 25 to 4.

Arrangements Completed For Sale Of Harvard Co. Plant to Group Of Local Business Men

BURRELL YIELDS TO COOLIDGE
State Treasurer Announces He Will Divorce Himself From Advertising Business

DAVID ZISKIND ONE PURCHASER
Transfer of Entire Plant Involves Turn-over of More Than \$250,000

AMERICA STILL IN THE LEAD
Finland Second, Great Britain Third—800 Metre Race Greatest Ever

NUMBER OF FREE TELEPHONES CUT
Six Instruments Must Either Be Removed or Paid for, Mayor Tells Council

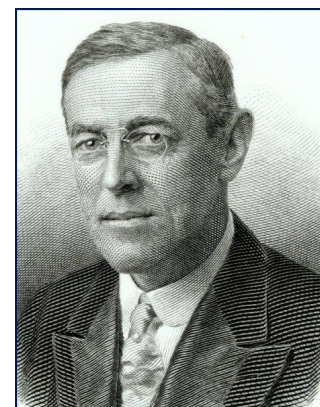
New Census Figures Make Move Obligatory, Says Local District Manager

The referendum, initiated in the house of representatives of the state of Tennessee, which there is no chance, with either house to be removed or paid for, Mayor Tells Council.

New Census Figures Make Move Obligatory, Says Local District Manager.

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HERE'S TENNESSEE CAPITOL



President Woodrow Wilson

On May 21, 1919, the House of Representatives passed the amendment, and two weeks later, the Senate followed. When Tennessee became the 36th state to

ratify the amendment on August 18, 1920, the amendment was adopted. While decades of struggle to include African Americans and other minority women in the promise of voting rights remained, the face of the American electorate had changed forever.

Though no restrictions based on race were included in the amendment text, in practice it mainly enfranchised white women. Poll taxes, literacy tests, intimidation, violence, and other discriminatory practices effectively prevented many women of color from voting until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and beyond.

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"

Steelworkers picket with care workers for a contract in Michigan - by USW New Media • August 24, 2020



Workers of the Bishop Noa Home in the shoreline city of Escanaba, Mich., gathered in both the sun and rain for an informational picket last Wednesday, August 17. The caregivers' goal was to raise awareness about their need for a contract after voting to join United Steelworkers Local 2-21 two years ago.

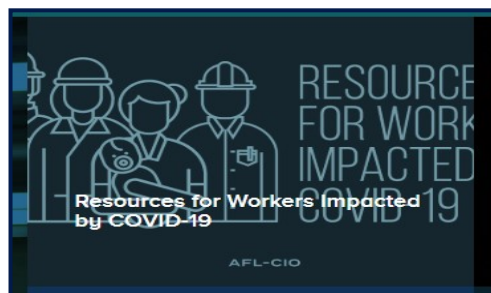
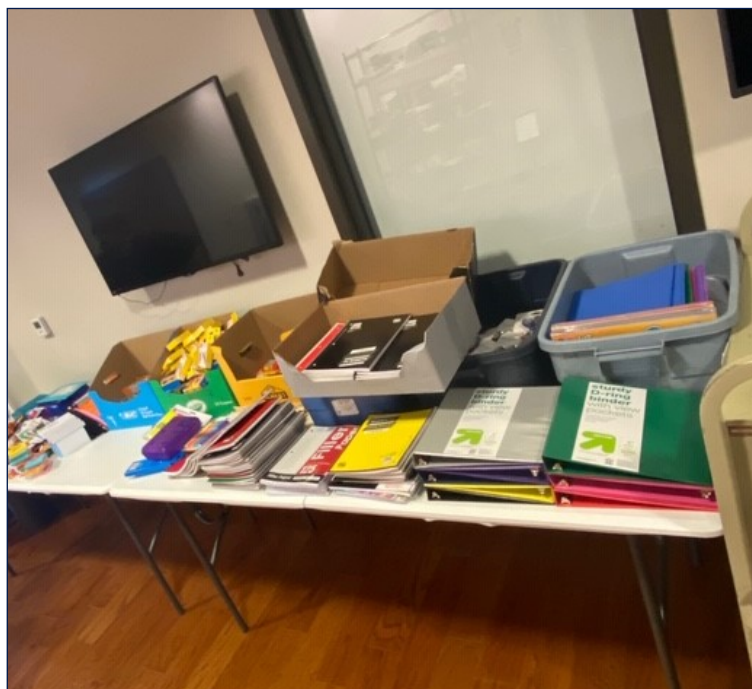
"The Bishop Noa Home and the administration have chosen to take a very aggressive approach against our employees for simply trying to have a seat at the table and we're here to support them along with our 700 members from the paper mill," said Local 2-21 President Gerald Kell.

The activists have had to get creative in their efforts to push the Bishop Noa board to the table. Earlier this year, they hosted a dinner and invited all the board members—not a single one showed.

You can stay up to date on the workers' campaign and support their efforts by visiting and liking the We Support Bishop Noa Workers page on Facebook.

USW Local 2-20 Holds a School Supply Drive - by Ken Fischer

KAUKAUNA, WI - USW Local 2-20's Next Generation and the Women of Steel Committees had a school supply drive. Below left picture are: Tyler Rutten, Amanda Rosner and Librarian Ashly



The coronavirus pandemic has impacted the lives of millions of working people and our families. Go to the AFL-CIO Website or: <https://aflcio.org/covid-19/state-resources>

Select your state to find the resources, programs and benefits available in your area to assist you during this crisis.



"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"



MESSAGE FROM PITTSBURGH



Thomas M. Conway, International President

August 19, 2020 • Page 1 of 2

As Un-American As You Can Get

Joel Buchanan's stomach turned when he watched poll workers deny ballots to Latinx voters ostensibly because the names and addresses on their driver's licenses didn't match those on election records.

And his blood boiled when election officials closed polling stations in poor neighborhoods, deliberately disenfranchising citizens unable to travel to other communities to cast their ballots.

"It's ugly, and as un-American as you can get," the retired Steelworker and Navy veteran said of the voter suppression he's observed as a campaign activist and poll watcher in various states.

Although dismayed by the duplicity he witnessed during two decades of political activism, Buchanan never expected to see an American president openly try to steal an election by disenfranchising millions of voters.

But that's what's happening. Donald Trump's repeated attempts to tear down the U.S. Postal Service and cast doubt on the legitimacy of mail-in ballots are nothing but a desperate attempt to undermine American democracy.

"We're talking about an assault on our rights and our form of government," noted Buchanan, a longtime member of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 2102, who first got involved in politics because local elected officials failed to support union members during a 1997 steel mill strike in his hometown of Pueblo, Colo.

"When a president tries to manipulate the post office to benefit himself in an election, what's going to happen if he wins that election?" Buchanan asked. "What's the next step? These are scary times."

Trump and his new, hand-picked postmaster general, Louis DeJoy, dismantled critically important mail-sorting machines, banned postal worker overtime, reduced hours at some post offices and eliminated trips to intentionally delay the delivery of mail-in ballots beyond election deadlines.

That would disenfranchise millions of Americans who want to vote by mail this year because they fear contracting COVID-19 at the polls.

Amid a ferocious public backlash and threats of lawsuits from more than 20 states, DeJoy this week agreed to suspend the changes.

But the danger of Trump suppressing votes during a crucial election remains very real.

There's no guarantee that DeJoy will return postal operations to normal levels, as he promised to do, and the Trump toady and big Republican donor continues to hobble the mail in other ways.

Although he has no experience at the postal service, DeJoy fired or reassigned nearly two dozen seasoned executives who intimately understood the agency and knew how to ensure it operated at peak levels during the election season.

Attacking the postal service directly isn't Trump's only front in his war against mail-in ballots. His campaign already sued Pennsylvania and all 67 of its counties, for example, to keep voters from depositing mail ballots in convenient drop boxes.

Trump repeatedly claims without so much as a shred of evidence that a surge in mail-in votes will lead to widespread fraud favoring his opponent, Joe Biden.

"It's all just crap," Buchanan said, noting Colorado has one of the most voter-friendly, equitable voting systems in the nation—thanks to the mail.

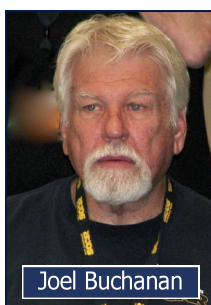
Colorado is one of the few states that not only mails ballots to all voters but encourages residents to return them the same way.

If they prefer, citizens can still cast their ballots at polling places or deposit them in secure boxes, similar to the ones in Pennsylvania that Trump wants to eliminate. But many Colorado residents simply drop them in the mail.

"Most people, Republicans and Democrats, like the system we have here," said Buchanan, vice president of Chapter 38-3 of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) and District 12 representative to the group's executive board. Members of both parties win elections in Colorado, he added, clearly demonstrating that the system works for Republicans and Democrats alike.



Getty Images



Joel Buchanan

— Continued on Page 12 —

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"



MESSAGE FROM PITTSBURGH



Thomas M. Conway, International President

August 19, 2020 • Page 2 of 2 - continued from page 11

As Un-American As You Can Get

If the system is tilted toward anyone, it's the voters.

Universal mail-in balloting provides equal convenience to all citizens, no matter where they live or how busy their Election Day schedules.

Mail-in balloting prevents election officials from questioning voters' legitimacy and disenfranchising them on the spot, as Buchanan observed four years ago at a polling place where one of the elections officials had the audacity to display a Trump hat right on his desk.

And people voting in the privacy of their homes face no intimidation from overzealous campaign workers thronging the doors at polling places or activists who stage noisy rallies nearby.

"When somebody's 75 years old and drives up and sees that happening, they just turn around and leave," Buchanan said.

Because of the convenience of mail-in voting, Colorado has one of the nation's highest turnout rates.

Although Trump claims mail-in ballots invite fraud, the opposite is true.

In Colorado, candidates may appoint watchers to observe election officials as they check voters' signatures on ballot envelopes against signatures already on file. If signatures appear not to match, the unopened ballot receives further review.

Foreign governments cannot hack mail-in ballots, as they did some electronic voting systems four years ago, and the post office has its own police force, the Postal Inspection Service, to guard against mail fraud.

Last spring, one of Colorado's county elections officials invited presidential candidates to visit his office to see how mail-in ballots are counted and learn about the safeguards ensuring the integrity of the delivery and tabulation systems.

Trump never took him up on his offer.

Instead of working to improve election security, an issue he claims is a top concern, Trump continues to assail the legitimacy of mail-in ballots and use the president's bully pulpit to undermine public confidence in the election system.

And instead of encouraging higher turnout to ensure as many Americans as possible have their voices heard at a pivotal time in the nation's history, Trump refuses to say even whether he'll accept the outcome of the Nov. 3 vote.

Buchanan worries that Trump's attacks on the system will lead to yet another form of suppression—Americans refusing to cast ballots because they lose faith in the election process or fear their votes will go uncounted. He just hopes enough voters understand that the real threat to democracy comes not from fraudulent voting but a president pulling every conceivable trick to suppress votes and usurp the people's will.

"That's exactly what this is all about," he said. "I just never thought I'd see this kind of situation in this country."

*

This Month in Labor History: August 14, 1935 • The Social Security Act is Signed - [by todayinlaborhistory.tumblr.com](https://todayinlaborhistory.tumblr.com)



On August 14, 1935: President Franklin Roosevelt signs the Social Security Act.

This Act "to provide for the general welfare by establishing a system of Federal old-age benefits, and by enabling the several States to make more adequate provision for aged persons, blind persons, dependent and crippled children, maternal and child welfare, public health, and the administration of their unemployment compensation laws."

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