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AFL-CIO NEWS

Volume 20, Issue 1

Official Publication of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO

May 2020

Ken Sagar Retires as President of the Iowa Federation of Labor

After 12 years as President of the Iowa Federation of Labor (IFL), Ken Sagar is retiring, April 30, 2020.

Sagar began at the IFL in August of 1997, when he was elected as Secretary/Treasurer. Prior to that, he was Business Manager/Financial Secretary for over 12 years of IBEW Local 204, in the Cedar Rapids with a jurisdiction of 86 counties in Iowa.

He worked in the line department as summer help in 1973, substation department as summer help in 1974 and finally got on full time in the production department at Sutherland Generating Station east of Marshalltown.

He held a variety of positions at the power station including: Utility Man, Coal and Ash Handler, Mobile Equipment Operator, Operating Engineer Helper and finally Relief Operating Engineer. It was from that position he went on union leave on January 28th, 1985 to an Assistant Business Manager position in the IBEW, 204 office. He was elected in June of 1985 to Business Manager.

Sagar held many positions in the union while he was working at the facility including steward, chief steward, plant safety committee, joint safety committee for production department, and negotiations committee. After his election to Business Manager, he also served as: President of the Iowa Utility Conference; Presi-

dent of the IBEW State Conference; IBEW Committee on Utility Deregulations and on a number of Interna-

tional IBEW Convention Committees. well as other unions in the decision making of the Federation.

Sagar committed to George Kour-



pa, IAM President and 1st Alliance

for Retired Americans (ARA) President to build an Iowa chapter and was fortunate to have much support from affiliates, great presidents and staff in building the Iowa Chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He also appreciated the opportunity to help the restructuring of the Central Labor Councils and their transformation to Area Labor Federations which has provided full-time staff to grow and develop worker power.

He is looking forward to spending time with his wife Holly, his children and grandchildren and of course more camping, fishing and working to help workers get their fair share.

“I have served on many boards, committees, task forces and other efforts. Some have not lived up to expectations in terms of providing the intended benefits for working people. A few have done something for workers, the IFL Executive Council, the Labor Advisory Committee and the Iowa ARA board”, said Sagar.

“Working with trade unionists in Iowa has been the honor of my life.” Said Sagar. “I believe that working people deserve more than simply surviving, we need to paraphrase Samuel Gompers, ‘more.’ We need to rein in the corporate excesses and create a society that values work and those who do it. A society that puts our children, our seniors and those who need our assistance before the creation of more wealth for the wealthy. We can do this and so much more, together.”

“Ken has been a tireless advocate for worker’s rights, and the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO wishes him and his family a happy and healthy retirement. He’s been a voice for workers for decades, and he won’t stop that important work. While he may be retired from this position, anyone who has ever met him knows that Ken won’t be retiring from the fight.” said Charlie Wishman.

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Iowa AFL-CIO News
Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO
2000 Walker St., Suite A
Des Moines, Iowa 50317

HAPPY

Ken

RETIREMENT

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Iowa Legislature 2020



The Iowa AFL-CIO News is the official publication of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO
2000 Walker St., Suite A
Des Moines, Iowa 50317
and is published quarterly.

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By Peter Hird,
IFL Secretary/Treasurer

COVID-19 affected the Iowa legislature like other places where people gather throughout Iowa. The current legislative process at the Iowa capitol came to a halt on March 16th when the Senate and House adjourned until a time deemed necessary by the Legislative Council.

The previous week began like most busy weeks in the legislature. Students visited, advocacy groups set up presentations, lobbyists and legislators shook hands while normal business was being conducted in meeting rooms and on the floor of each chamber. As the week went on some people went about their normal business, but things were noticeably changing. The act of shaking hands moved to bumping elbows, the hand sanitizer placed in front of the House Chamber was running low and rumors started to float about a possible closure. The Iowa capitol building is home to hundreds of visitors from around Iowa, around the country and from different parts of the world. Shutting down the capitol was the right thing to do.

On March 16th, the Iowa legislature unanimously turned over some emergency powers to Governor Reynolds and appropriated money for regular business such as education, public health and public safety. This allowed public school districts to decide to close without having to make up extra days of school. Wisconsin, Illinois and South Dakota already closed their schools, so it was odd for Iowa to allow districts to choose whether to close their district or not. Only a few days later Governor Reynolds finally recommended closing schools for four weeks to slow the spread of the virus after a case of community contact was reported. The Governor also left it up to individual school districts to decide if they wanted to pay their workforce. Thankfully, districts did decide to pay their employees. Some did not initially, but community pressure helped push districts to continue paying many school employees. Districts have moved to online education or allowing parents to safely pick up materials. This has assisted teachers around Iowa to still help educate their students.

Before suspending this year's legislative session, many bills were still being discussed. Along with some negative legislation, there were a few positive bills for

working class folks making their way into discussions. HF 2361 was passed out of a Senate committee which prohibits employers from requiring employees have a microchip implanted and offering incentives to do so. Another bill being discussed, SF 2332, is a bill to prohibit employers from entering into noncompete agreements with low-wage employees. One thing to keep in mind, currently these and many other bills are left in limbo with the temporary adjournment. Very few bills have been signed by the Governor thus far this year. No one knows when the session will resume, and it's hard to predict what subjects will be discussed

ers at state-run facilities are being forced to work, even upon a doctor's guidance to self-quarantine or if they have been in contact with coworkers who had tested positive for COVID-19. The effects of gutting of the collective bargaining law have a real impact during this crisis. In 2017, thousands of state workers were stripped of their overtime eligibility. AFSCME has worked to strengthen working conditions for state employees. Nurses employed through the Department of Human Services, Department of Corrections and the Iowa Veterans Home will now receive overtime pay, which they weren't earning before. Our state workers protect



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when the session reconvenes. I can say that when discussions start again, barring any safety reasons, we will be there.

IOWA AND WORKERS SAFETY

Other states in the nation have issued executive orders and rules to protect their workers during this pandemic. Illinois Governor Prizker declared a Shelter-in-Place order to help flatten the curve but also allowed and defined essential workers to continue to go to work. Then the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission declared an emergency rule and presumed that if essential workers contract COVID-19 it would be covered under the rule of workers compensation. A ruling that is only fair to those who are risking their lives to serve the greater good. Other states, too, have enacted similar orders for essential workers and first responders. Iowa should keep up with other states to ensure workers are protected if the worst were to happen. Governor Reynolds needs to do more.

The safety of workers across Iowa is at-risk, but even the state's own employees face imminent danger in their workplaces. Work-

our citizens, serve our veterans, care for our disabled and elderly, guard our inmates and so many other tasks to keep our state running. Our public employees are risking their lives every day and working non-stop for us. Governor Reynolds needs to do more.

Some Executive Orders from Governor Reynolds were made to slow the spread of the virus. At the current time, mass gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited in the state of Iowa but there is no order for protecting workers from gathering in a workplace. There are no definitions of private sector essential or non-essential workers in Iowa. There is no order mandating employers to practice social distancing. There is no rule requiring employers to provide the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) according to CDC guidelines. Governor Reynolds has left your safety up to your employer, and they decide whether it is safe for you to work. Governor Reynolds needs to do more.

Throughout this crisis, Governor Reynolds has been more reactive in her decision making than proactive. It is clear, business is a higher priority to her than the workers she serves.

The President's View . . .

The Working Class Will Save This Nation



IFL President
Charlie Wishman

Every few decades, this nation is reminded of the power of the working class. Usually, it happens in times of crisis, like we are facing now. Tens of thousands of Americans have now died, and many of them were likely preventable. There will be plenty of time to figure out what could have been done and when it should have been done.

Right now, essential workers of all kinds are risking their lives to keep this nation running. There are too many countless workers that keep this nation and its economy running to name, but they deserve the thanks and appreciation of all Americans. Americans of all stripes and political persuasions have been reminded of this since the global outbreak of the Covid-19. It is the 99% who will save this nation, not the 1%, or the so called "job creators." Americans have found out just exactly who the job creators

are if they already did not know.

While many are fortunate to be able to work from home, or do much of their work from home, many are not. Too often we have heard of working conditions set by employers that put workers at unnecessary risk. The state of Iowa and its Governor have not provided leadership on worker safety since the outbreak, leaving it up to employers to ignore common sense safety standards during a time like this. Workers are essential, but they are not expendable.

The working class will save this nation in our hospitals, our streets, our public services, our retail and grocery stores, and many other workplaces and collective actions. The working class will also save this nation's economy, once again, like it eventually always does.

Every time you have ever heard someone say, "I've never had a poor person give me a job," it is been a ridiculous statement and completely untrue. Just how absurd that statement is, of course is on full display now. Economies prosper because of consumer, or worker demand for goods, not because of trickle-down economics. Previously we have all been told that tax cuts for the rich will stimulate the economy, but it is always been a lie. It is been a lie that masks the true intentions of much of the political class, which is to line the pockets of the rich. That's why so-called budget hawks who

wouldn't lift a finger to help the working class in their life are suddenly backing direct stimulus payments to working class Americans (but not all who contribute to the economy) – because they know someone has to have money to buy goods and services to keep this economy afloat. They know that the folks they normally help can-

literally cost lives and result in throwing our economy into a deep recession.

This crisis has exposed a lot to Americans, but what will they remember and learn from those lessons? What good is it to celebrate a stock market that is sky-high, when so many Americans are not benefiting from it? What good is it to cel-



not do it on their own.

In Wisconsin, thousands showed up to vote in unsafe conditions because they know their voice is important, and they want to be heard. When Iowans vote in its June primary, we have absolute faith that working-class voters will show up just like they did in Wisconsin. We have fought too long and too hard for everyone to be able to vote to disenfranchise ourselves. We have also seen the consequences of bad leadership on many levels of government. Elections have consequences, as we always say. Bad leadership that we have seen can

celebrate a low unemployment rate, when most of those who are unemployed are living paycheck to paycheck? What good is it to celebrate an app-based tech revolution in work, when faced with unemployment the companies who always considered them "independent contractors" and not employees leave them high and dry for taxpayers to help in their time of need?

When all of this is done, whenever that happens, will Americans remember? This crisis will transform America. It is up to all of us to make sure it is a better America than we had before all of this began.

Profits Over People

By Jay Smith & Dennis McElwain

During the course of the last seven weeks, in some ways, the world has changed profoundly. However, in other ways, it has not changed at all. And, it is the way in which the world has not changed at all that should remind us how important the stakes are in November's Election, and for that matter, in every election.

As many Iowans know, Iowa is a national leader in pork production. There are large pork meatpacking plants scattered across Iowa, including in Sioux City, Denison, Waterloo, Marshalltown, Ottumwa, Perry, Storm Lake, and Columbus Junction to name a few places. Some of these plants are represented by the Local Unions while others are not. In total, these plants and others are vital to the national food supply chain as well as the communities in which the plants are located. And, importantly, due to the close proximity in which employees have to work, these plants have the potential to increase the spread of COVID-19 dramatically without adequate standards in place to protect employees.

It would seem to make common sense that Iowa's Governor and the

President would take the opportunity to protect these critical cogs of the nation's infrastructure and food supply in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It would seem to make common sense that there would be rules, not guidelines, to attempt to make the plants safe for workers. And, it would seem to make common sense that enacting such rules would not only help safeguard the food supply and workers, but also the larger communities, including strained health systems, from the spread of COVID-19. It would seem to make common sense. However, it is apparent that common sense, and for that matter common decency, is in short supply when the use of common sense potentially interferes with profits.

Today, there are no OSHA standards to protect against the spread of COVID-19 in the meatpacking industry – none. OSHA and the CDC put out guidelines for the meat-

packing industry to deal with COVID-19. However, guidelines are not standards, but rather, guidelines are voluntary recommendations. As with any guideline, there is no legal basis to compel action. There is no legal basis to require compliance. In turn, employees of the meatpacking industry and the community are dependent upon employers, whose primary motive is profit, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Put another way, there is no enforceable, legal mechanism to require meatpacking employers to take precautions to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

To make matters worse, the President issued an Executive Order prohibiting states from shutting down meatpacking plants due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, which appears to have been done at the behest of John Tyson, Chairman of Tyson Foods, Inc. (Tyson has several meatpacking

plants in Iowa). And, the President also has indicated that he would like to see these employers shielded from legal liability as a result of employees contracting COVID-19 in their plants. Meanwhile, Iowa's Governor has stood shoulder to shoulder with the President urging him along. Simply put, it is apparent that the President and Iowa's Governor value profits over people.

Throughout its history, the Labor Movement has been a strong voice on behalf of working people. The Labor Movement has largely stood up to this challenge. COVID-19 is not going away any time soon. For the time being, our world will continue to be profoundly changed. However, the Labor Movement has the opportunity to help lend its voice once again to working people this November, to be a strong voice, and to say – "enough is enough, no more profits over people." The Labor Movement must act to mobilize its members, to speak on behalf of working people, and to help institute new leadership on both the Federal and State Level. In the November election, it is not too much to say that lives are on the line.



Iowa Federation of Labor 2020 Election Endorsements



Keith Puntenney
Iowa State Senate SD24



Alvin Aragon
Iowa State Senate SD38



Theresa C...
US S...



Tom Courtney
Iowa State Senate SD44

IOWA STATE HOUSE

- Bjorn Johnson HD 4
- Deb Jensen HD 7
- NO ENDORSEMENT HD 11
- Chris Hall HD 13
- Steve Hansen HD 14
- Charlie McConkey HD 15
- Jen Pellant HD 16
- Jan Creasman HD 17
- Nick Miller HD 19
- Ryan Morrison HD 20
- Shawna Anderson HD 22
- Caleb Short HD 25
- Scott Ourth HD 26
- Cody Dilliner HD 27
- Wes Breckenridge HD 29
- Lori Slings HD 30
- Rick Olson HD 31
- Ruth Ann Gaines HD 32
- Brian Meyer HD 33
- Bruce Hunter HD 34
- Ako Abdul-Samad HD 35
- Marti Anderson HD 36
- Andrea Phillips HD 37
- Heather Matson HD 38
- Karin Derry HD 39
- John Forbes HD 40
- Jo Oldson HD 41
- Kristin Sunde HD 42
- Jennifer Konfrst HD 43

IOWA STATE HOUSE

- Kenan Judge HD 44
- Beth Wessel-Kroeschell HD 45
- Ross Wilburn HD 46
- Shelly Stotts HD 47
- Jack Friend HD 48
- Selden Spencer HD 49
- Dennis Evans HD 50
- Jane Podgorniak HD 51
- Todd Prichard HD 52
- Sharon Steckman HD 53
- NO ENDORSEMENT HD 54
- Kayla Koether HD 55
- Angela Reed HD 56
- Andy McKean HD 58
- Bob Kressig HD 59
- Dave Williams HD 60
- Timi Brown-Powers HD 61
- Ras Smith HD 62
- Carissa Froyum HD 63
- Bruce Bearinger HD 64
- Liz Bennett HD 65
- Art Staed HD 66
- Eric Gjerde HD 67
- Molly Donahue HD 68
- Kirsten Running-Marquardt HD 69
- Tracy Ehlert HD 70
- Sue Cahill HD 71
- Christina Blackcloud HD 72
- Lonny Pulkrabek HD 73



**Greenfield
Senate**



**Christina Blackcloud
Iowa State House HD 72**



**Vicki Lensing
Iowa State House HD 85**

**FEDERAL
CANDIDATES**

**Theresa Greenfield
US SENATE**

**Abby Finkenauer
Congressional District 1**

**Rita Hart
Congressional District 2**

**Cindy Axne
Congressional District 3**

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



**Chuck Isenhart
Iowa State House HD 100**

**IOWA STATE
HOUSE**

- David Jacoby HD 74
- Ruby Bodeker HD 75
- Sarah Smith HD 76
- Amy Nielsen HD 77
- Kimberly Davis HD 78
- Mary Gaskill HD 81
- Phil Miller HD 82
- Jeff Kurtz HD 83
- Jeff Fager HD 84
- Vicki Lensing HD 85
- Mary Mascher HD 86
- Dennis Cohoon HD 87
- Sandy Dockendorf HD 88
- Monica Kurth HD 89
- Cindy Winckler HD 90
- Kelcey Brackett HD 91
- Jennifer Kakert HD 92
- Phyllis Thede HD 93
- Marie Gleason HD 94
- Christian Andrews HD 95
- Ryan Zeskey HD 97
- Mary Wolfe HD 98
- Lindsay James HD 99
- Chuck Isenhart HD 100

**IOWA STATE
SENATE**

- CJ Petersen SD 6
- Steve Gorman SD 8
- Warren Varley SD 10
- Joey Norris SD 12
- Nate Boulton SD 16
- Janet Petersen SD 18
- Rhonda Martin SD 20
- NO ENDORSEMENT SD 22
- Keith Puntenny SD 24
- Matt Tapscott SD 28
- Eric Giddens SD 30

**IOWA STATE
SENATE**

- Pam Egli SD 32
- Liz Mathis SD 34
- Dave Degner SD 36
- Alvin Aragon SD 38
- Rich Taylor SD 42
- Tom Courtney SD 44
- Chris Brase SD 46
- Pam Jochum SD 50

VOTE!

See page 6 for more endorsements. Area Labor Federations are still making endorsements but some were not made before the deadline to print. They will be included in the next two issues of the paper.

Keeping Iowa Workers Safe During a Pandemic

By Charlie Wishman,
IFL President

The Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO publicly called on the Governor of Iowa to do the right thing by workers and take proactive measures to keep workers safe in all workplaces. If Iowa is ever going

work to keep our economy running who contracts COVID-19 should be entitled to Worker's Compensation.

We believe that if you are going to work during a pandemic, you are putting your life on the line. All work has dignity and value, but



to get its economy up and running again, it needs to take the following steps, and should have already.

- **OSHA should set guidelines for worker safety and health that protects workers from contracting COVID-19.**

Right now, OSHA in Iowa is operating from an outdated set of rules for this pandemic we find ourselves in. There are a number of other states that have taken it upon themselves to set these guidelines and enforce them. Iowa has not. Workers are dying and will continue to until employers are forced to ensure that worker safety is their top priority, not profits.

- **Any worker who is going to**

much of it cannot be done remotely and is what we now call "essential." If your work is essential, your health is too. Making COVID-19 infected employees eligible for workers compensation means that employers will take better precautions to protect employees, as well as ensure that no costs for recovery or other damages that come from COVID-19 fall on the workers.

- **Any employer that shuts down due to a COVID-19 outbreak must continue to pay employees as well as continue their health insurance coverage.**

If there is an outbreak in a workplace, it needs to be shut down so it can be cleaned and made safe for

humans to operate in again. While that is going on, no one should lose their house, not be able to pay rent, go hungry, face utility disconnects, or face other financial hardships because of the failure of employers to keep the work environment safe. Further, even if the entire workplace does not shut down, someone going into a quarantine situation should not have to worry about that, on top of having contracted a deadly disease.

- **Iowa should be ramping up testing for essential workers, especially in places like packinghouses and factories so that outbreaks like we have seen already do not further spread to our communities and workplaces.**

Everything that we do know about this virus tell us that you can transmit it when you are not show-

ing symptoms. In fact, you may be the most contagious at that time. Given that knowledge, if you are thinking you are able to stop the virus from coming in by doing symptom questionnaires and temperature checks, you are dead wrong. We need to test, test, test, until we can stop the virus from even entering the workplace and send those who test positive for proper medical care.

If Governor Reynolds does not act through putting in place some emergency rules, the legislature must act. If neither of them acts, we need to replace them with a new legislature, as well as a new Governor in 2022. Not putting these measures in place, especially setting an OSHA standard and enforcing it, is nothing but a dereliction of their duties.

WILF Endorses Tim Kacena

By Scott Puntaney
Western Iowa Labor Federation
President

Greetings from the Western Iowa Labor Federation.

Congratulations to IFL President Ken Sagar on his recent retirement. The Delegates and Affiliated Locals of the Western Iowa Labor Federation want to acknowledge and thank President Sagar for his dedication and commitment to making Iowa a better place for working families. Thank you President Sagar, your leadership will be missed.

The Western Iowa Labor Federation endorses Tim Kacena for Woodbury County Supervisor. Throughout his career as a Sioux City Fireman, President of IAFF local # 7, and as a State Represen-

tative, Tim has shown the leadership, character, and integrity that is needed on the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors. We also endorse Chad Sheehan in the Republican primary race for Woodbury County Sheriff. The Western Iowa Labor Federation is confident that Tim and Chad are the right choices for working families. Please support these candidates that support you!

The Western Iowa Labor Federation is excited to announce our newest affiliates: IUPAT DC # 81, CWA # 7108 and LiUNA # 1140! Welcome Brothers and Sisters!

Remember to request your ballots by mail and make your voice heard!

In Solidarity.

IFL 2020 Area/Local Election Endorsements

Area Labor Federations are still making endorsements but some were not made before the deadline to print. They will be included in the next two issues of the paper.

NORTH IOWA NINE

Steve Hepperly Sheriff Winnebago County

HAWKEYE LABOR COUNCIL

Linda Langston Auditor Linn County

IOWA CITY FEDERATION OF LABOR

Brad Kunkel Sheriff Johnson County

SW IOWA LABOR FEDERATION

Lisa Lima Supervisor Pottawattamie County

NW IOWA LABOR FEDERATION

Marty Pottebaum Supervisor Woodbury County
Chad Sheehan Sheriff Woodbury County

BLACK HAWK LABOR ASSEMBLY

Chris Schwartz Supervisor Black Hawk County

WESTERN IOWA LABOR FEDERATION

Tim Kacena Supervisor Woodbury County

GREAT RIVER AREA LABOR FEDERATION

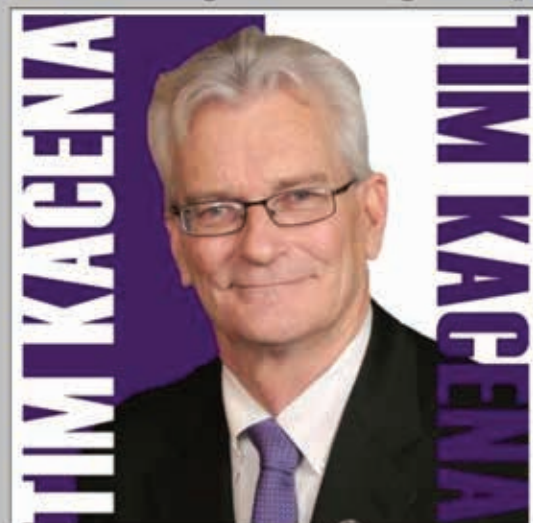
Tony Keefe Supervisor, Dist. 1 Lee County

The Western Iowa Labor Federation

Proudly endorses

Tim Kacena

for Woodbury County Supervisor



The Secretary-Treasurer's Notes . . .

The CARES Act: Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act



IFL Secretary Treasurer
Peter Hird

During a crisis, we look to our leadership for answers and we should all be grateful for having Iowa Democrats in Congress. There is no doubt, we wouldn't have many of the provisions of the CARES Act for workers without our friends at the table. This could not have happened without everyone's hard work in 2018 to get Representatives Axne, Finkenauer and Loeb-sack elected. Their support of working-class Iowans will be incredibly helpful during this crisis.

The CARES Act biggest benefit to unemployed and part-time workers will be the unemployment insurance expansion. In an unprecedented

ed situation, workers on unemployment will be receiving a \$600 weekly increase of unemployment benefit. We all know that the normal unemployment insurance benefit is far below what people normally earn. On top of that, direct payments up to \$1200 per person will be sent out to working class families.

Some items in the CARES Act may be not be getting the attention deserved. While much of the media remains focused on daily briefings, worker and transparency protections were put in place on government loans. There will be restrictions on any increases to executive compensation and no stock buybacks or dividends will be allowed for the length of the loan plus one year. Payroll payments for airline workers were provided and that the airline companies are under the same stock buybacks and dividend protections as other loans. Another point that should make everyone happy is that businesses controlled by the President, Vice-President, members of Congress and executive department heads will not be eligible for these loans. A new congressional oversight commission was created as well as a special inspector general.

Although these recent achievements are worthy of being proud, so much more can be done for the working class. Programs like OSHA have hard working people doing

to win re-election and get the right team to work with. We must elect Rita Hart and JD Scholten to Congress. We must do everything we can and put Theresa Greenfield in



the best they can but have been severely underfunded and without strong leadership. It is infuriating to think that the Department of Labor is being run by a union busting attorney. The NLRB is disenfranchising workers who wish to be in a union and siding with employers at every turn. Representative Axne and Finkenauer will need our help

Iowa's Senate seat. And most of all, we must work our tails off for our endorsed candidate for President of the United States and get them elected. The labor movement has fought through these terrible times, managed to hold our heads above water and stood our ground. Now, we will take back the democracy we deserve.

Voting by Mail in the June 2nd Primary Election

By Julianne Frosolone,
IFL Political Director

Sisters and brothers, voting by mail is the best way to have your voice heard in the June 2nd Primary Election. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, election officials across the state are encouraging Iowans to vote from home to ensure the health and safety of both voters and poll workers.

HOW DO I VOTE BY MAIL?

The Secretary of State's office has mailed every registered Iowa voter an absentee ballot request form. If you have not received a request form, you can download one on the Iowa Secretary of State's website. Regardless, your completed absentee ballot request form must arrive at your County Auditor's office no later than 5:00 pm on May 22nd. County Auditors began mailing Primary Election Ballots on April 23rd.

Once you receive your ballot,

be sure to vote for union-endorsed candidates like Theresa Greenfield in the U.S. Senate Primary. For a comprehensive list of Iowa AFL-CIO endorsed candidates, check

June 2nd Primary Election. You can download a Voter Registration form on the Iowa Secretary of State's website or register on their online form. The "Worry Free



pages 4-5. Your ballot must arrive at your County Auditor's office by no later than 9:00 pm on Election Day, June 2nd, so it's best to mail it back as soon as possible.

WHAT IF I'M NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE?

No worries! You can still register to vote and participate in the

Postmark Date" for mailing your completed registration form is Monday, May 18th. Like your absentee ballot request form, it must arrive at your County Auditor's office by 5:00 pm on May 22nd. To vote by mail, include a completed absentee ballot request form along with your completed voter registration form.

DO I HAVE TO PICK A POLITICAL PARTY?

Yes. Primary elections are closed to members of individual political parties, so when you request your absentee ballot, you will need to choose a party. Your voter registration will be updated to whichever party you choose to receive a ballot for.

IMPORTANT PRIMARY ELECTION DATES

- Thursday, April 23rd – First Day of Absentee Voting by mail for the Primary Election
- Monday, May 18th – Worry Free Postmark Date for Voter Registration Forms
- Friday, May 22nd – Deadline to request an Absentee Ballot by mail; Pre-registration Deadline for the Primary Election
- Tuesday, June 2nd – Primary Election Day

WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I HAVE A QUESTION?

Please feel free to reach out to Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO Political Director, Julianne Frosolone, at julianne@iowaafclcio.org with any questions.

Wishman, Hird Appointed by IFL

Charlie Wishman and Peter Hird were appointed by the IFL Executive Board at a special meeting on April 30, as President and Secretary/Treasurer. They both will officially take office May 1, 2020.

Charlie Wishman became Secretary/Treasurer of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO in January of 2012. Charlie is a member of AFT Local 716, and has also previously been a member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) as well as the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). He worked as the Community Liaison for the Food Bank of Iowa from 2003-2006, and then became a union member when he became an organizer for Iowa Citizen Action Network in 2006. In 2009 he became a staff member of AFSCME Council 61 as a Communications Specialist. In the fall of 2011 Charlie came to



work at the Federation as Communications Director before stepping into the role as Secretary/Treasurer in 2012.

"I'm excited to take on this new role and its challenges, however

fighting for workers' rights and safe workplaces were what I've always done. The team at the IFL is second to none, the unions that make up the Iowa Federation of Labor make us proud

every day, and I'm excited about what we will be able to accomplish together. The Federation was first formed in 1894, and we're excited to continue this work that's been going on for over 125 years."

Peter Hird is from the Dubuque area, where he worked as an inside lineman electrician with International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Union Local 704. He received an Associate's degree in electronics (2002). He served on the local apprenticeship committee. He was a trustee for pension and health & Welfare, on the executive board and Vice President. From 2014 thru 2020 he was a union organizer for the local, with two successful organizing drives with Dubuque hotels.

"Being an organizer gave me the opportunity to give people a path into a union workplace," said Hird. Peter recently moved to Des Moines with his wife Jess and his 1 year old son, Lucas.

Using Data to Make Good Decisions in the COVID-19 Crisis

By Mike Owen

These days the numbers seem to come in waves from the COVID-19 crisis. Sometimes they tell a story; sometimes they don't. Sometimes they offer insights; sometimes only noise.

The pandemic tests not just our leaders, but all Iowans for our ability to make forward-thinking decisions while dealing with an immediate crisis. That means we all need to be careful with data. Which numbers deserve attention? Which will help us decide it is time to return life to normal?

Governor Kim Reynolds thinks we are there already, not two months into the emergency. She talks about using data to make decisions. But how she does so has been at times a mystery.

Case in point: the Governor's use of a matrix of selected data points to determine risks on a regional basis, and her decision to relax social-distancing measures — already limited in comparison to those in most states — on May 1 for 77 of Iowa's 99 counties.

The regional matrix itself has been a mystery. As Iowa Policy Project Research Director Peter Fisher has noted, in a policy brief April 6 and on the IPP website (www.iowapolicyproject.org), it took an enterprising news reporter to expose the guidelines being used. And, once they were shown, Fisher pointed out any "shelter-in-place" order was unlikely because the cho-

sen metrics assured it would be difficult for any region to hit the magic score of 10 on a 12-point scale.

One region did reach 10, but the Governor's order — for that region — was well short of a shelter-in-place order that many hoped to see. When the Governor acted in

tween the first 21 weeks of the 2007-09 Great Recession and the last 21 weeks, covering start of the COVID emergency. And the data are telling — the last six weeks are far heavier, with over 260,700 claims.

So, as we consider when to expect people to go back to work in

further send an intimidating message to administrative law judges outside the parameters of legal processes that have been established to set laws and the regulations designed to enforce them," we stated.

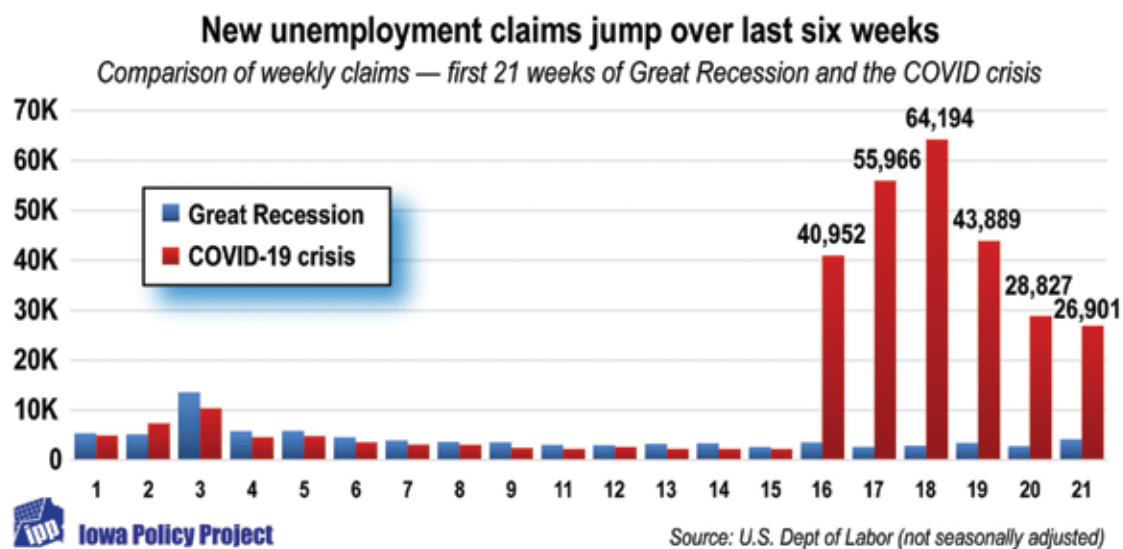
From the numbers, we know that by the end of April, less than 2 percent of Iowans had been tested for a highly contagious virus that has claimed at least 162 lives and infected over 7,100.

What will these numbers and this emergency policy making process teach us for the future, for good decision making? These are always questions for policy making, but in the spring of 2020, all Iowans may have a better appreciation of it. This is not about politics, but about governing. If this governor or a future governor makes good decisions with data in an emergency, lives are saved.

Because of the strong support of Iowa labor unions and individuals, IPP researchers have helped Iowans understand the numbers and to offer context for the making, and evaluation, of decisions. We will continue to do this work. We hope you will consider a substantial contribution in 2020, from your union organization and — if you can — personally as well.

Contact me at mikeowen@iowapolicyproject.org for more information about our work.

Mike Owen is executive director of the nonpartisan Iowa Policy Project in Iowa City.



late April to relax previous limits, she focused not on the regions but on counties where case numbers appeared low. So now, we do not know if the regional data is worth following — or if it is just noise.

Some data tell us much about the challenges ahead. Consider weekly unemployment claims. IPP Senior Research Consultant Colin Gordon — who produces our State of Working Iowa analysis and has examined working family issues such as wage theft — has noted the weekly claims give a far better picture of real-time changes than the monthly job reports.

Gordon also compiled a comparison of the jobless claim changes be-

a responsible timeframe, consider those numbers: The quarter-million-plus claims represent people, not all of those who will be affected by loss of jobs, but people facing real-life decisions, some very difficult ones.

So it matters when the Governor and her administration are discouraging some of that number from daring not to return to work in what they consider an unsafe working condition, as IPP noted in pieces posted April 30 and quoted in The Des Moines Register.

"The Governor's comments have the effect of bullying workers into work arrangements that they could never have expected. Her comments