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News

your
VOICE

your
VOTE



2020

Special WORKERS' Edition

CANADIAN LEADERS ON POLITICS  PAGES 10-11



the PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Vote. Our Voices.

The 2020 election is already shaping up to be one of the most contentious and bitterly fought elections in history.

While in office, President Trump has secured tax breaks for his billionaire buddies and for corporations that move jobs overseas. He's put a union-busting lawyer in charge of the Labor Department, gutted workers' rights, and just recently the Trump Labor Board eliminated the special legal protections of union shop stewards. President Trump has totally and unequivocally deserted working people.

As we go to the polls this November, it is important to remember what is at stake for working people and what issues are vital to our union (See pages 4-5). It is time for working people to take back their government by mobilizing and voting in force.

Make no mistake, workers' rights, including safety and health and the right to unionize and bargain collectively are on the ballot this November. We cannot afford another four years of anti-worker policies being dictated to us by corporate-bought politicians in Washington.

I just want you to know, that as your President, I vote with my union cap on. I do this because I have been a member of this union for 47 years. I have seen firsthand from the shop-floor to the negotiating table how the union raises wages, secures life-saving health and safety measures, fights to improve health coverage and secures good pensions for workers and communities across this nation.

At this time more than ever, we need a President and congressional leaders who can deliver on retirement security, affordable health care and stronger protections for workers and unions.

The jobs Trump said he would deliver, never came. Instead of rebuilding America, he's torn it apart. His tax cuts for the rich accelerated the outsourcing of good-paying jobs in America and increased inequality.

From today until Election Day, we need to fight our hardest to beat elected officials who won't work for us.

I encourage our members whose preferred candidate did not receive the BCTGM International's endorsement to remain committed to our core principles. In a union as diverse as the BCTGM, it is OK to have different views with one common purpose: to protect our livelihoods and improve our standard of living as workers.

We are in the homestretch of the most consequential election of our lifetime.

Throughout this issue, we present the facts as they relate to matters that impact the lives of union members, working families and the communities in which we live. I believe that it is important to hear from our own members and leaders, so in this issue we also provide some political insight from local union leaders and BCTGM activists.

Every vote counts. Stay united in purpose, continue to educate yourself and your family and vote for American workers.

— Anthony Shelton, BCTGM International President

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Elections Have Consequences

By: David Woods, BCTGM International Secretary-Treasurer, John Price, BCTGM Director of Organization

... For Organizing New Members and Growing the Union

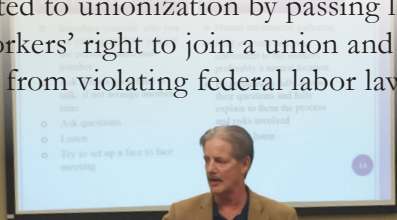
For more than 140 years, the BCTGM has been a leader in actively organizing workers in the food and agricultural industries. Over the last decade, this union has been organizing in new emerging sectors, like dairy, to improve our union density. This will be key to our future.

Fifty years ago, more than 35 percent of all workers in the United States belonged to a union. Today, less than ten percent of private sector workers belong to a union. Employer opposition to unionization and government policies and employer-friendly labor laws have been most to blame for this extreme drop.

The latest blow to union power in the workplace occurred in July when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) overturned 80 years of federal labor law, stripping union stewards of their “special status” under federal labor law. This law gave stewards equality of standing with their managers and supervisors and allowed shop stewards to engage in heated discussions with management. This could have a significant impact on how stewards can represent BCTGM members.

This is the latest in a long list of actions the Trump Board has taken to chip away at union rights.

For the labor movement as a whole, if we want to change course and regain working people’s power, we need a government committed to strengthening unions, not disempowering them. We need a government that will not take away workers’ rights, as the Trump Administration has done, but rather strengthen them. We need a government that is committed to unionization by passing laws that protect workers’ right to join a union and that stops employers from violating federal labor laws at will.



John Price, BCTGM Director of Organization



...and Protecting and Improving Your Hard-Earned Contract

We all know that a strong and growing labor movement has a direct impact on the type of benefits and paycheck you receive. There is a direct link between high union density within a company or an industry and the benefits and strength of our contracts and your paychecks.

In high density industries like bread and cake, and tobacco, we have some of the best contracts in the manufacturing sector in the United States. This impacts not only wages and benefits, but our ability to take our strength to the shop floor. This is why organizing new members and non-union companies within our industries is so vital for this union and our members’ hard-earned benefits and wages.

Look at what the BCTGM has accomplished trying to protect our members from COVID-19. We were able to negotiate hazard pay and bonuses, strict social distancing, changes to employer attendance policies, paid time off, and temperature checks. Our “essential” members are keeping American and Canadian families fed and we are doing all we can to keep them safe at work. Unfortunately, the Trump OSHA has been largely invisible during the pandemic and refused to issue an emergency temporary standard.

More than 65 percent of Americans support unions, and yet most of these workers will be blocked in their attempt to join one. We need an administration that will expand the rights of workers.



VOTE

on Workers' Iss

WORKERS' RIGHTS

Let Workers Organize Freely: Workers' rights include the right to join and form a union free from harassment, discrimination, retaliation or surveillance; a good paying job; affordable health insurance; a safe and healthy workplace; paid leave; and retirement security among others.

Workers' rights include the freedom to join together to negotiate with co-workers for better wages and working conditions and negotiate a fair collective bargaining agreement.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

Support Life After Work: The BCTGM supports legislative solutions that would fund challenged multiemployer pension plans and avert a looming retirement crisis for millions of Americans. For the B&C Pension Fund, one of those solutions includes the Butch Lewis Act, which would offer federally subsidized loans to multiemployer plans without making any cuts to the earned benefits of current or future retirees. Plans would invest the

money from these loans and use the investment earnings to pay retiree benefits and improve the plan's financial health.

The BCTGM also opposes any legislation that would cut programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, including raising the retirement age for Social Security.

WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

Safe at Work: The right to a safe job is a fundamental worker right. Every worker should be able to go to work and return home safely at the end of the day. Worker safety is not optional; it should be a top priority for every employer in this country. Employers should not put profits over the safety of their workers.

It is vital for Congress to strengthen the Occupational Safety and Health Act to expand coverage to all workers, toughen enforcement and penalties, and reinforce

ues, **BCTGM** Priorities

protections for workers reporting injuries, illnesses and unsafe working conditions. The BCTGM supports increased funding for new safety inspectors, a new Combustible Dust standard, and increased penalties for violators of the Act.

FAIR TRADE

Enforce Trade Deals: The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has devastated manufacturing jobs in the U.S. and Canada, including thousands of BCTGM jobs, as corporations have moved jobs to Mexico to take advantage of low-wage, non-union workers and lax labor laws.

The new United States, Mexico, Canada Agreement (USMCA) is a step in the right direction, only because the labor movement stood up to the Trump Administration, demanded reforms that protected BCTGM members, and forced changes to Mexican labor laws to allow free union elections and increase worker protections and enforcement.

HEALTHCARE

It's Time for Medicare for All: For decades the BCTGM has strongly supported a single-payer, universal healthcare system as the best, most efficient way to ensure access to healthcare for all Americans. While the Affordable Care Act has been successful in providing access to millions of previously uninsured Americans, an estimated 29 million people remain without health insurance. The incredibly high cost of healthcare and pharmaceuticals in the United States creates major challenges at the negotiating table.

ECONOMIC FAIRNESS

Stop Tax Incentive for Outsourcing Jobs: The BCTGM supports repealing the huge corporate tax cuts for wealthy corporations and the top one percent. The corporate tax cut passed in 2017 provides an enormous tax break for U.S. multinational corporations that outsource production and American jobs. These provisions do nothing to close existing loopholes that encourage the outsourcing of U.S. jobs, but in fact encourage companies to move even more jobs offshore. Any real tax reform plan should eliminate these outsourcing incentives and promote investment in American manufacturing, production, infrastructure and jobs.



TRUMP v

on the Issues that Matte

Made Workplaces more Dangerous:



The Trump administration has rolled back critical federal safety regulations; cut the number of OSHA inspectors to an all-time low; abandoned work on a Combustible Dust standard that the BCTGM has been fighting for for more than a decade; and most importantly, refused to issue an Emergency Temporary Standard that would guide employers, and protect “essential workers” like BCTGM members during the Pandemic.

Weakened Workers’ Rights:



President Trump has decimated the Labor Board and made it more employer-friendly; turned back decades of legal precedents protecting workers’ right to join a union; taken away the collective bargaining rights of public sector workers, and made it easier for employers to oust unions from their worksites. In July, the Trump Labor Board overturned 80 years of federal labor law, taking away protected rights of union stewards in the workplace.

Defended Right to Work Laws:



The Trump administration has defended “right to work” laws and supports a national Right-to-Work law. States that have RTW laws have lower wages, less retirement security and less employer-provided health insurance.

Threatened Retirement Security:



President Trump has put Medicare and Social Security at risk by proposing billions of dollars in cuts. Under the Trump administration, the multiemployer pension crisis has gotten even worse, stranding many older workers and putting BCTGM members’ pension plans at risk.

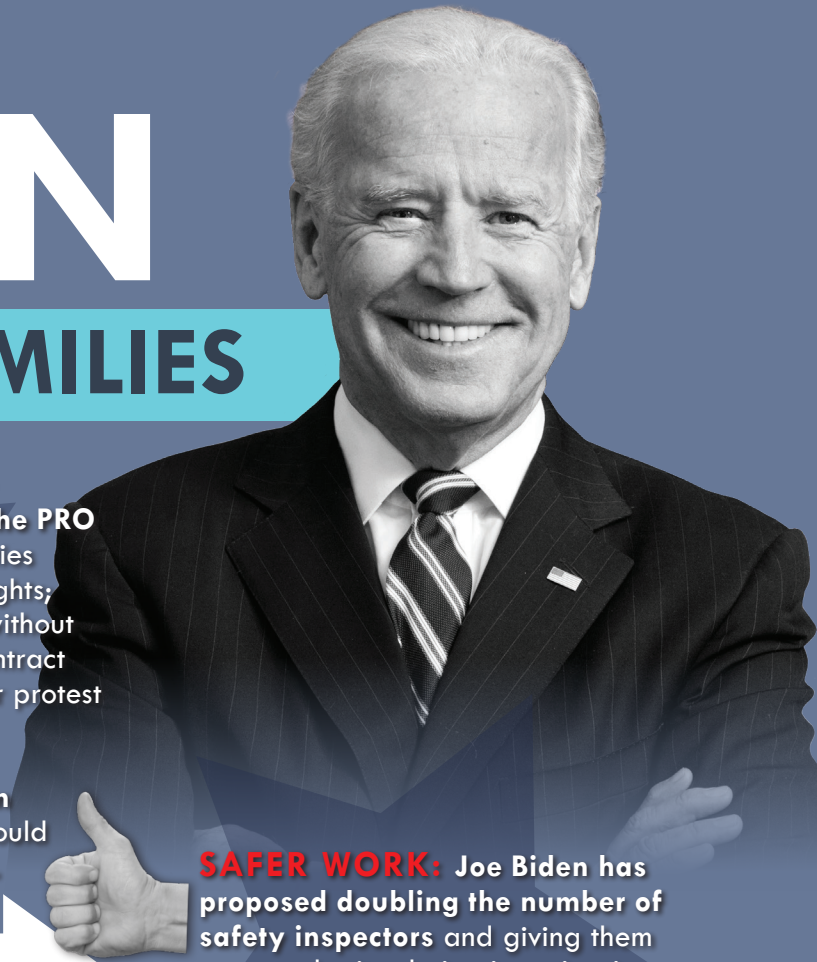
Supported Tax Bill Off-Shoring Jobs:



The Trump tax cut included a provision that encourages offshoring and investment overseas.

s. BIDEN

r to WORKING FAMILIES



STRONG UNION ORGANIZING LEGISLATION: Joe Biden supports the PRO Act that would implement stronger penalties when employers interfere with workers' rights; give workers more freedom to organize without employer interference; guarantee first contract agreements; and protect strikes and other protest activity by workers.

UNION RECOGNITION: Joe Biden supports card-check recognition that would make it easier for workers to join a union.

SAFER WORK: Joe Biden has proposed doubling the number of safety inspectors and giving them more authority during investigations by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA).

PROTECT MEDICARE: Joe Biden plans to protect and strengthen Medicare for the more than 60 million older Americans who rely upon it.

STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SECURITY: Joe Biden plans to strengthen Social Security and expand it for those most vulnerable: widows, life-long workers with low benefits, and old-age beneficiaries with minimal assets.

PROTECT PENSIONS: Joe Biden supports the Butch-Lewis Act, legislation which would protect and strengthen multiemployer pension plans like the B&C Pension Fund.

BUY AMERICAN: Joe Biden has proposed a "Buy American" plan, that includes a \$400 billion procurement investment for American-made products.

STAND UP FOR AMERICA: Joe Biden has a plan to revitalize American manufacturing that will ensure future goods are made in America and will create at least 5 million new jobs in manufacturing.

SUPPLY AMERICA: Joe Biden will bring back supply chains to America so we aren't dependent on China or any other country for the production of critical supplies in a crisis.

FAIR TRADE FOR AMERICA: Joe Biden will pursue a pro-American worker tax and trade strategy to fix the harmful policies of the Trump administration and give American manufacturers and workers the fair shot they need to compete for jobs and market share.

SAFER WORKPLACES: Joe Biden supported an emergency health and safety standard to protect workers from COVID-19 and supports a comprehensive standard to protect workers from infectious diseases in the workplace.

BCTGM LEADERS & INFLUENCERS SOUND OFF ON THE 2020 ELECTIONS



LISA GREGORY,
INTL. REPRESENTATIVE
Toledo, Ohio

This election is one of the most important elections in the history of America. The past four years under this administration have been extremely challenging for union organizing. We need the Biden administration to get us back on an even playing field.

This election can restore decency and respect to our country. From the rising level of hate and intolerance to the roll back of LGBT rights, attacks on immigrants, racism, and the reversal of environmental protections, there has never been more at stake for our country. I believe we are better than what we've seen these last four years and in November, we can start to repair the damage that has been done. It's time for every single American to GET OUT AND VOTE!

I am a
UNION
WOMAN
who
VOTES!
#100YEARSOFVOTING



KENNITA JONES, L
Baltimore

We need an administration that is going up for opportunity based on talent, equal diversity in all communities, neighborhoods, work places. We need a president and a vice president that are willing to work across the aisle for the good of the American people. I feel it is a personal responsibility as an American to get out and vote in November and encourage everyone else to know to do the same.

JOHN JORDAN, LOCAL 334
Portland, Maine

In my lifetime, I have never seen this country so divided and ineffective on resolving so many important issues that face us. Regardless of party affiliation, we all agree on the premise of taking care of America's working men and women, most recently referred to as "essential". Elections have consequences and we are now living with those consequences. The Trump administration has attacked our Social Security, health care, environmental protections, worker rights and so much more. We must not stand by and allow this assault on workers to continue. We need change. Voting is the only remedy for change. Vote wisely America — our children are counting on us and the world is watching.




ND OFF ON WHAT THE 2020 ELECTIONS VITAL



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DONALD WOODS, LOCAL 1
Chicago, Ill.

In order to stop the mass export of American jobs to Mexico, the Biden administration would need to renegotiate a fair-trade agreement. We need to impose tariffs on imports from Mexico. This would start a trade war and raise the prices of imports from Mexico. In the end, this would benefit companies that make all products in America. Without tariffs, it can be difficult for American-made goods to compete with cheaper foreign goods.

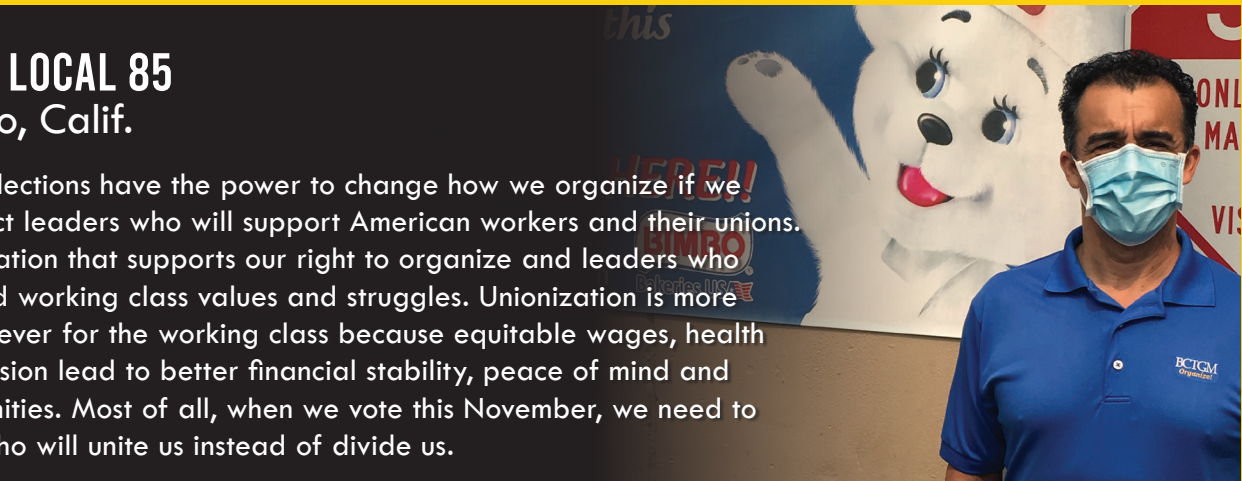


RANDY FULK, INTL. REPRESENTATIVE
Elon, N.C.

With this vitally important presidential election, we have a chance to empower and strengthen the collective bargaining process. We need to regain a worker friendly Labor Board and implement laws that will strengthen a worker's right to organize freely and form a union. I want to see this country united again, with everyone showing love for their fellow man.

GERRY GIL, LOCAL 85
Sacramento, Calif.

The 2020 elections have the power to change how we organize if we successfully elect leaders who will support American workers and their unions. We need legislation that supports our right to organize and leaders who truly understand working class values and struggles. Unionization is more important than ever for the working class because equitable wages, health care and a pension lead to better financial stability, peace of mind and healthy communities. Most of all, when we vote this November, we need to elect leaders who will unite us instead of divide us.

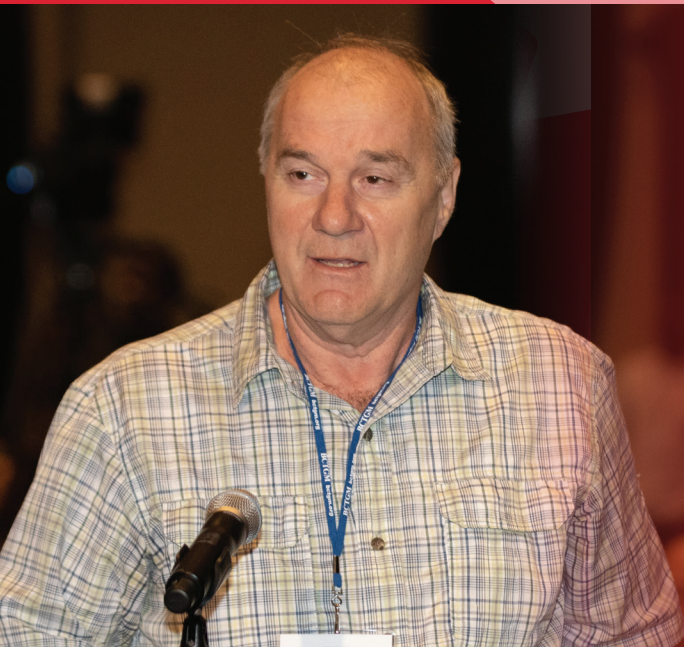


GERRY GIL, LOCAL 85
Sacramento, Calif.

Canadian Leaders on the Impo

From health care, to pensions, to daycare, to affordable housing, to taxes, to workplace rights and more, BCTGM political action means advancing a strong voice for positive change and a better future for working people in Canada.

Canadian local union leaders provide member-activists and stewards with the tools and resources needed to support and elect political leaders who understand the issues that affect BCTGM Canadian members and their families. Here is what some of our Canadian leaders have to say about political action and electing pro-worker candidates.



EARL LUBLAW, LOCAL 468 Vancouver, British Columbia

Right now, we have a labour-friendly provincial government – they are doing well for us. But they have a shaky coalition and we expect an election soon. To get good candidates like this elected – we had to work hard. The election was 50/50, the Green and Labour Parties, so they put a coalition together. We are only one seat short of a pro-business government. But we have held them there and they make the right decisions. We keep them in check with workers' issues. They promise a lot but don't deliver. We are constantly there to remind them of the issues and the people they were elected to represent.

PIERRE LUC DUCET, LOCAL 261T Québec City, Québec

We are affiliated with the Québec Federation of Labour (Fédération des Travailleurs et Travailleuses du Québec, FTQ), whose mandate is to speak on behalf of its affiliates at the political level. We are also affiliated with its Regional Council. We attend the FTQ Convention in order to be informed of the political positions of our Labour Federation and to share our opinions. We participate in protests against the bills which go against the labour movement.

We also participate in meetings of BCTGM local unions in Québec where we determine a common political position. It was decided at the last meeting that the local unions were going to regroup during future labour events so that the BCTGM would be more representative in Québec. We inform our members of our political direction at general assemblies and via social media. We are very politically active and communicate regularly with our members about the importance of being proactive.



Importance of Political Involvement



DAN REMPEL, LOCAL 389
Winnipeg, Manitoba

More than ever, we need to support the rights of all workers by educating and motivating our own members, their families, friends and our communities to stand together and support our Labour Federations, Councils and labour-friendly parties.

I feel that educating our members on how political parties impact our labour laws is crucial. With union density decreasing and the media becoming more partisan than ever, educating our communities is more challenging. But when we educate and encourage workers to take an active role in political action throughout their daily lives, be it through social media or workplace communication, we can help build knowledge in our communities on the importance of supporting a party that has workers' best interests in mind. After all, laws are changed by the parties in government. In most cases, a change in government is needed to change those laws.



SYLVAIN GAGNÉ,
INTL REPRESENTATIVE
Québec City, Québec

In order to improve labour laws in Québec, we must elect a majority pro-workers Political Party in the National Assembly and prevent an anti-union Party from taking power. To do so, we support the Fédération des Travailleurs et Travailleuses du Québec (FTQ), our labour affiliation in Québec, in its recommendations to the federal and provincial governments and opposition parties.

I sit on the General Council of the FTQ, where I can share our convictions and political orientations with the other members. In Québec, we have meetings twice a year for all the local unions where we discuss the political environment and take a collective stand and plan actions around important issues.

GEORGE LEHMAN, LOCAL 406 Moncton, New Brunswick

We need to motivate the political parties in power to legislate worker friendly legislation. However, our house of labour (either the CLC and/or the Federations of Labour) has a few roadblocks. We have unions in Canada that are not political in nature and therefore, do not get motivated politically. Also, there are locals that feel it is better to lobby parties only for what they need right now. Both of these schools of thought have their reasons for how much or how little they have to do with our political system and it is a big

concern of mine as a Vice President of the New Brunswick Federation of Labour for the past 21 years.

As for Local 406, we have continued to support the party that has supported labour issues and given workers a seat at the table; the New Democratic Party. The biggest issue for our continued success as a union is membership involvement and education. We rely on our stewards on the shop floor to engage in conversations with our union members on the important issues that will make our working lives better.




ARE YOU READY TO **VOTE?**

America's labor movement is committed to championing democracy — in the workplace and at the ballot box.



**REGISTERING TO VOTE IS THE FIRST
CRUCIAL STEP IN THIS PROCESS.**

Head to workersfirstvoteunion.org
to check your voter registration
status and get the information
you need to vote, including
polling place locations and
resources to vote by mail safely,
securely and on time.



WorkersFirstVoteUnion.org