

Trump's Broken Promises Leave Wisconsin Families and Manufacturing Behind

Written by WisDems Press, Philip Shulman
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Wisconsinites speak out on how, even before the pandemic, Trump's chaotic trade wars, tax giveaway to billionaires, and incentives for corporations to offshore American jobs devastated Badger State communities.

MADISON - Donald Trump made grand campaign promises to Wisconsin, yet his administration and failed leadership have failed to deliver for Wisconsin's working families and manufacturing sector.



As Mike Pence visits the state to tout the economy, Wisconsinites are highlighting how even before the pandemic, Trump's chaotic trade wars, tax giveaway to billionaires, and incentives for corporations to offshore American jobs devastated Badger State communities. Now, in the midst of a global pandemic, Trump's failed leadership is putting Wisconsinites in an even more dire economic bind. Here are what some Wisconsin manufacturing businesses are saying:

- [Patricia Miller, vice president of Baker's Quality Pizza Crusts, a Waukesha-based](#)

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[manufacturer](#) : “In all the years we have been in business, we have never laid anyone off — ever,” Millers said. “Our business has typically done well in recessions. In the 2008-09 recession, we experienced growth. We have never seen a decline like this.”

- [Mick Lucareli, vice president and chief financial officer of Modine Manufacturing in Racine](#) , who said the pandemic has been more disruptive than the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009: “I thought we had seen it all in the recession of 2008 and 2009.”

- [George Bureau, vice president at WMEP Manufacturing Solutions](#) : “Manufacturers are having a difficult time”

Get the facts on Trump's economic failures below:

FACT: Donald Trump's trickle-down economics approach to manufacturing has undermined Wisconsin's unions and its blue-collar workers.

Despite claims of being a champion for workers, Donald Trump has done nothing to improve conditions on the ground. Instead, he has looked to [restrict](#) the role of unions in the federal workplace and undermined workers' ability to collectively bargain for good wages and essential benefits. During this pandemic, unions have played an essential role, fighting hard on behalf of their members for essential PPE, paid leave, and workplace safety.

FACT: Several Wisconsin manufacturing companies have filed for bankruptcy or laid off workers, in no small part due to Trump's trade policies and failed response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wisconsin manufacturers are struggling to make it under Donald Trump. Last month, Harley Davidson [announced](#) 700 layoffs. Additionally, small engine manufacturer Briggs & Stratton [filed](#) for bankruptcy and plans to sell its assets. A recent [survey](#) showed that nearly 80 percent of Wisconsin manufacturers say business is down greatly, down significantly or down somewhat compared to their normal state of business for this time of year.

Donald Trump has also kept wages stagnant for low-income and middle class households, instead pushing [benefits](#) to the top 1% of earners in Wisconsin. **Before COVID-19, 22% of Wisconsin families in manufacturing production occupations**

[received](#)
federal assistance to make ends meet

. Now, those families are in an even tighter bind to keep food on the table and a roof over their heads due to Donald Trump's bungling of the coronavirus pandemic.

FACT: Wisconsin communities, not other countries, paid the price for Donald Trump's

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erratic trade wars.

Donald Trump's devastating trade policies have closed hard-earned markets and, according to some estimates, [cost](#) Wisconsinites more than \$825 million in additional taxes -- and that was before the COVID-19 pandemic further crushed the economy. From 2018-2019, in the height of the trade war, mass layoffs in Wisconsin [jumped](#) 25% over 2016-2017 levels, to 18,949 workers. In 2019, the manufacturing industry saw its worst performance since the nadir of the Great Recession--with five straight months of [contraction](#) and cost Wisconsin thousands of Manufacturing jobs.

FACT: Donald Trump's mismanagement of the coronavirus pandemic has devastated working families and sent the American economy into free fall.

Donald Trump's bungled response to COVID-19 has contributed to higher coronavirus cases, more deaths, and greater overall economic harm in the US compared to any of its peer countries. The Congressional Budget Office's 10-year outlook now [projects](#) that the unemployment rate will not return to pre-pandemic levels before 2030. Prior to the pandemic, **GDP was** [projected](#)

to grow 2.3% in 2020

(in line with the 10-year average), despite Trump's claims that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act would bring 4%, 5%, or even 6% growth.

CBO now predicts that GDP will shrink by 5.8% in 2020

In Wisconsin, businesses are feeling the weight of the Trump Administration's failure to lead an effective response. As factories are then forced to close, like a [paper mill in Wisconsin Rapids](#) which just laid off its 900 employees, workers and communities along the supply chain bear the brunt of the harm.

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue [forecasts](#) that wages will fall 4.2% in the state in 2020

(compared to 3.5% nationwide) and that private employment will decline 7.8% in 2020 (and grow back just 4.8% in 2021). These projections come as Wisconsin families are struggling to make ends meet and Trump and Republicans have allowed federal benefits to expire. In

[July](#)

, 8% of Wisconsin households reported not having enough food to eat and 12% of all renters in Wisconsin reported being behind on rent.