

## Operating Engineers Local 139 Endorses Mahlon Mitchell for Governor

Written by Mahlon Mitchell Press

Monday, 04 December 2017 15:21 - Last Updated Tuesday, 05 December 2017 15:40

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***Largest Construction Union Says: "It's Time for Change in Wisconsin."***

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Today, Operating Engineers Local 139, the largest construction union in Wisconsin, announced their support for Mahlon Mitchell's campaign for governor. Local 139 is the first labor union to announce their support in the race for governor.

"It's time for change in Wisconsin. That's why we are supporting Mahlon Mitchell for governor,"

**Local 139 President Terry McGowan said**

. "Mahlon has stood up for the working men and women across Wisconsin when we needed it most. He knows that we can't move forward as a state if our workers and families fall behind other states. And he understands that we need to put Wisconsin back to work- whether it's on our schools or our roads.

"We can create an economy right here with good jobs--jobs can sustain our families and rebuild our state. But it requires all hands working. That's why we are proud to stand with Mahlon Mitchell in this campaign. We need his perspective and his leadership more than ever."

Mitchell, a 20-year fire fighter who heads the Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin thanked Local 139 for their support, saying:

"When I decided to run for governor, I knew we'd need all hands working. And that's what this

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endorsement from the Operating Engineers represents. They share my vision for building the most skilled workforce in the country, and creating good-paying jobs by getting to work on [our 49th](#) [-in-the-nation](#)

roads. It's time for change in Wisconsin and I'm proud to be standing with the Operating Engineers in this fight."

Most IUOE Local 139 members are heavy equipment operators working in the construction industry who run everything from tower cranes to forklifts. The local also represents a number of public sector employees in various towns, villages, cities, and counties.

### About Mahlon Mitchell:



Mahlon Mitchell was born in Milwaukee and grew up in Delavan, Wisconsin. He now lives with his wife, April and two children, Sie'anna and Karson, in Fitchburg.

Mahlon followed in his older brother's footsteps when he became a fire fighter in Madison twenty years ago. His two brothers are fire fighters in Atlanta and St. Paul. These careers came out of a family that instilled values of service and working for others.

This sense of service is also exemplified in Mahlon's other activities. He was a counselor at the Wisconsin Alliance for Fire Safety's Burn Camp, which he also directed for five years. This summer camp worked with burn-injured youth to help them cope with their unique situation and build a network of support.

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Mahlon also worked as a street outreach coordinator with Briarpatch and Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin, where he linked at-risk youth with services from their community.

Recently, Mahlon was instrumental to passing two pieces of legislation that were a huge victory for fire fighters across the state. The Infectious Disease Presumption fought to make sure fire fighters are covered if they contract a disease or disability on the job. Additionally, the legislature passed a bill that ensures families and spouses of fire fighters who die in the line of duty will have their health insurance premiums covered.

When the fight over collective bargaining began in 2011, Mahlon led the fire fighters in a monumental stand of solidarity with other public servants. Despite being exempted from the bill, Mahlon and his fellow fire fighters marched on the Capitol with fellow working families that were threatened by the Budget Repair Bill.

Mahlon took the opportunity to travel the state as a fire fighter spreading the words about Scott Walker's divisive policies.

In addition to his service in the community, Mahlon was a real estate agent for six years at First Weber in Madison. He currently serves as President of the Professional Fire Fighters of Wisconsin, being the youngest and first African American to serve in the post.