



Union 2020 Michigan  
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Union 2020 is a project supported by a group of unions aimed at researching the candidates' positions on issues important to working families in the 2020 election. It is not affiliated with and does not accept contributions from any candidates or political party committees.

## UNIONS IN THE NEWS

Our regular look at stories about unions and union workers from across the country. **Sign up for our newsletter at [union2020.com](http://union2020.com) for more!**

### The Detroit News

**“Opinion: Unions support workers during crisis”**

6/23/20



**“We are not disposable people.’ Farmworkers speak out on conditions that have led to outbreaks.”**

7/1/20

### Detroit Free Press

**“UAW local requests shutdown of major GM plant in Texas”**

6/30/20

### The Detroit News

**“Michigan absentee ballot requests increase 1 million from 2016”**

7/2/20

#### PROTECTING YOUR VOTE IN A PANDEMIC

We’ve heard concerns from many working people about exercising their constitutional right to vote amid a pandemic. Voting by mail is a safe, secure, and convenient way to cast your ballot. Want more information? Visit [michigan.gov/vote](http://michigan.gov/vote) for details.



#### DID YOU KNOW?

When you vote by mail, Michigan makes it easy for you to track your ballot online. Go to [michigan.gov/vote](http://michigan.gov/vote) to learn more.

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# IN UNION

**UNION 2020 MICHIGAN**

**3<sup>RD</sup> AUGUST 2020 EDITION** | **A NEWSLETTER OF, BY, AND FOR WORKING PEOPLE**

## THE POWER OF OUR VOICES

With all the uncertainty facing Michigan and the rest of our nation, there is also a great opportunity for change.

Workers are speaking out against injustice in the streets, continuing the fight against the pandemic in our hospitals, and having tough conversations with friends and neighbors about how we can rise to meet this moment.

Throughout American history, unions have been at the center of struggle and progress. History shows us that when working people come together across lines of race, gender, region, and ideology, we win.

To fight corporate abuses, we must fight systemic racism; to win a just and equitable economy, we must ensure that it is fair for all of us.



“We want our children to succeed and be able to make it in life, and some of that comes from us. We need to be educated about the issues, so we can help protect our babies.”



**- Lisa Watkins**  
Associate Teacher and Michigan Education Association Member

**INSIDE: IN UNION IS DIGGING INTO THE PERSONAL BACKGROUNDS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.**

Source: MEA.org, accessed 7/6/20

## THE *IN UNION* UPDATE

In any election, it's important to understand who our candidates are and what values they hold. Most of our readers are planning to do their own research. As a starting point, in this edition of *In Union* we're taking a closer look at Joe Biden's story: his background, accomplishments, and what drives him to public service.

# JOE BIDEN'S STORY:

## HARD WORK, HEARTBREAK, AND PERSISTENCE



### A Working-Class Upbringing

Born in Scranton, PA, Joe Biden has always been connected to his working-class roots. When he was ten years old, his dad was laid off and had to leave the family behind while he went to Delaware to search for a job. The family was reunited when his dad found a job that could support them, but the devastating effect that job loss had on his father's dignity and the impact it had on the family left a lasting impression on Joe.

### Early Public Service

Joe was committed to public service right from the beginning. He became a part-time public defender, then won his first campaign and was elected to the county council. As a local leader, Joe stood up to the oil companies drilling on the Delaware coast, and he fought against a large highway project that threatened to displace Wilmington families and pave over their neighborhoods.



### Overcoming Family Tragedy

Just weeks after winning his campaign for U.S. Senate, Joe's first wife Neilia and their daughter Naomi were tragically killed in a car accident that also critically injured their two young sons, Hunter and Beau. He began his career in the Senate commuting to and from Washington, DC every day by train, so that he could always be back home to put his sons to bed at night and be there when they woke up in the morning. In 1977, he married Jill Jacobs, a high school English teacher, who became a mother to Hunter and Beau. Three years later, Jill and Joe brought their daughter Ashley into the family.

## THE *IN UNION* UPDATE



### Continuing the Fight for Working Families as Vice President

Throughout his highly successful career in the U.S. Senate, Joe Biden was a consistent champion for working families, always remembering the lessons he learned from his dad about the dignity of work. Then in 2008, Joe was selected by Barack Obama to be his running mate. President Obama knew he could count on Joe to take on the toughest fights in support of workers. Among Joe's accomplishments:

- ✓ **Led the implementation of the Recovery Act**, saving the country from the worst economic disaster since the Great Depression through investments in public education, infrastructure, and sustainable jobs.
- ✓ **Helped pass the Affordable Care Act**, which gave 20 million Americans access to health insurance and guaranteed protections for people with pre-existing conditions.
- ✓ **Played a lead role in rescuing the auto industry in 2009**, which saved 1.5 million jobs.

*Sources: Obama White House Archives, accessed 7/5/20; NPR, 4/12/20; The Atlantic, 4/13/20; New York Times, 5/22/17*



## LEARN MORE ABOUT DR. JILL BIDEN

### A Lifelong Commitment to Public Education

- ▶ Served as an educator for more than 30 years
- ▶ Member of the National Education Association and a passionate advocate for unions
- ▶ Taught English in a public high school before marrying Joe and becoming a full-time mom
- ▶ Went back to school to earn her Doctorate in Education
- ▶ Became a professor at Northern Virginia Community College, where she continued to teach while serving as Second Lady
- ▶ Knows community colleges are "America's best kept secret," providing quality education, skills training, and a pathway to the middle class for millions of Americans

*Source: National Education Association*

**Want to check the facts for yourself?** The content for this newsletter and links to all the sources are available at [union2020.com](http://union2020.com).