

## **Made on the Iron Range: How Joe Biden Will Fight for Workers, Create Jobs, and Support Families on the Iron Range and Northeastern Minnesota**

Joe knows we need to get serious about defeating the pandemic, dig out from the worst jobs crisis in nearly a century, and rebuild the middle class so everyone comes along. He has a plan to Build Back Better by summoning a new wave of worker power and building an economy that serves the dignity of the hard-working people who make it run. Joe knows how to do it because he's done it before -- he oversaw implementation of the Recovery Act, then the single biggest stimulus in American history, to end the last big recession. The Recovery Act sparked a record 113 straight months of job growth and put union members back to work building American infrastructure. The Iron Range and Northeastern Minnesota received over \$500 million from the Recovery Act to invest in everything from schools to health services to infrastructure projects like highways, broadband, and drinking water. And the Obama-Biden Administration provided millions of dollars to increase the capacity of the Port of Duluth Superior, increase the economic competitiveness of the region, and move the Iron Range's iron ore and products throughout the country.

Minnesota's Iron Range has played a vital role in helping build America. U.S. manufacturing and mining was the Arsenal of Democracy in World War II. It must be part of the Arsenal of American Prosperity today, helping power an economic recovery for working families and build back better for future generations. As President, Joe will put millions of Americans, including Iron Rangers, to work in good-paying jobs with a choice to join a union.

### **TRUMP HAS BROKEN HIS PROMISES TO THE IRON RANGE AND NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA**

During President Trump's rally in Duluth, he told Rangers that they'd say "Mr. President, please, we're winning too much. The people of Minnesota cannot stand winning so much. Please, can we take it easy?" But it's not the Iron Rangers who are winning. Trump thinks if the stock market is up, his rich friends and donors are doing well, and corporations see their valuations rising -- then everyone must be doing well. But Joe knows from growing up in working class neighborhoods in Scranton and Delaware that the measure of our economic success is the quality of life of the American people. And right now people on the Iron Range are struggling.

While Trump deliberately lied about the seriousness of the virus and failed to do his job -- even though one study shows much of the Iron Range is at especially high risk -- lives have been lost. And instead of helping Iron Range families recover, Trump has driven our economy into the ground:

- Millions have been infected and more than 200,000 Americans have died -- including more than 92,000 Minnesotans who have been infected and more than 2,000 Minnesotans have died. America was hit worse than any other advanced nation.
- More than seven months into the virus, the Minnesota unemployment rate is still more than double what it was at the start of the year and thousands fewer people are employed on the Iron Range and Northeastern Minnesota in July than at the end of the Obama-Biden Administration.

- Trump's recovery is exacerbating inequality with the super wealthy and CEOs seeing their stocks go up, but for middle- and working-class Iron Rangers opportunities remain low. And employment among high-wage workers in Minnesota is nearly back at January levels while it is still down by 17% for low-wage and by more than 4% middle-wage workers.
- Small businesses throughout the Range and Northeastern Minnesota have shuttered. Statewide, there are more than 18% fewer small businesses open than there were in January and small business revenue has decreased more than 13%.

Even before the pandemic, the Trump Administration failed to deliver results for Rangers. Despite the economic recovery set in motion by the Obama-Biden Administration across the Iron Range, under President Trump, demand for Iron Range products has suffered, and Rangers are struggling to get by.

- **President Trump gave big tax breaks to the super wealthy and corporations over hardworking Rangers.** Corporations that won billions of dollars in tax cuts still slashed jobs, shifted production overseas, and passed profits through to wealthy investors.
- When campaigning in Minnesota in 2016, Trump promised “We're gonna put our miners back to work. We're going to put our steel workers back to work.” But, as he failed to effectively respond to the virus, Iron Range mines idled and according to the United Steelworkers, nearly half of Iron Ranger miners were laid off. U.S. Steel Keetac, is still idle, with hundreds of workers still out of a job. But even before the pandemic, U.S. Steel was laying off Rangers from mines and plants, citing “challenging market conditions.” In 2019, the **manufacturing sector went into a recession** and Minnesota lost 3,800 manufacturing jobs. There are now nearly 10,000 less manufacturing jobs in Minnesota than there were at the end of the Obama-Biden Administration.
- Trump said “We're going to put new steel into the backbone of our country, and we're going to make that steel right here in the United States. We're going to breathe new hope into our communities. And our workers are already so proud again.” But **steel shipments are down more than 25% nationwide from last year, and all while China produced the largest monthly volume of steel on record.**
- Trump said he would get tough on China, **but his tariff war with China cost the U.S. 300,000 jobs in one year.**
- Trump said he would bring jobs home from other countries, but **he created a tax loophole that actually rewards companies for shipping jobs and profits overseas**, and he reshored fewer jobs last year than in the final year of the Obama-Biden Administration.
- President Trump promised a big infrastructure bill when he ran in 2016 and every year since -- including a promise standing in front of a crowd in Duluth -- but he has **failed to pass a major infrastructure package**. Meanwhile, Minnesota lost 9,800 construction jobs in the last year.

## HIGHLIGHTS: HOW JOE WILL WORK FOR MINNESOTA'S IRON RANGE

**Lead a decisive public health response to COVID-19.** While a deadly disease ripped through our nation, President Trump knowingly and willingly lied to the American people about the seriousness of the virus and failed to do his job. Now, more than 92,000 Minnesotans have contracted COVID-19 and more than 2,000 have died since the beginning of the crisis.. Joe knows how to mount an effective crisis response and elevate the voices of scientists, public health experts, and first responders because he has done it before. Joe will:

- Ensure **wide availability of free testing and eliminate cost barriers to preventative care & treatment for Covid-19.**
- Fight for the development of a **safe and effective vaccine** and the full production and fair distribution of necessary supplies.
- Provide **emergency funding for public schools to support schools to reopen safely** for in-person instruction, while ensuring [Iron Range students without adequate broadband](#) get connected.
- Be honest with the American people, as he has since the beginning, about what is necessary to beat this challenge: **the choice between the economy and public health is a false one** — we need to beat this virus to get back to full economic strength and protect the health and safety of the American people.

**Ensure the future is “Made in America” by all of America’s workers.** Joe will create millions of jobs by mobilizing the talent, grit, and innovation of Rangers and American workers across the country and the full power of the federal government to bolster American industrial strength and ensure the future is “Made in All of America”-- including on the Iron Range. Joe believes Rangers and other American workers can outcompete anyone, they just need their government to fight for them. Joe will:

**Buy American -- creating more opportunity for Iron Range manufacturing jobs.** In his first week in office, Biden will sign executive actions to strengthen Buy American where Trump has failed, so that the massive amount of taxpayer money the federal government spends every year on everything from defense equipment to steel to auto fleets is used on products made in America. Iron Rangers and other American workers will mine and manufacture the materials - including steel - to power that effort.

- Under the Trump Administration, government contracts awarded directly to foreign companies are up 30% and our military has become more reliant on foreign suppliers, increasing DOD foreign contracts 12%.

**Support small businesses and small- and medium-sized manufacturers on the Iron Range to foster job creation.** Trump has pursued an economic agenda that favors Wall Street over Main Street, and benefits those with monopoly power over entrepreneurs running small businesses. Trump’s tax giveaway went to the largest corporations and wealthiest families, whose profits have soared, while neglecting the needs of Main Street small businesses, whose profits have stagnated. When the virus began to spread, Trump made sure that Wall Street — not Main Street — was taken care of. This year, 1 in 6 small businesses remain shuttered - many of which are on the Iron Range - and many may never reopen in the wake of Trump’s tragic mismanagement of the current crisis. And while the Trump Administration has created huge new programs for any large multinational corporation to get cheap capital with no job commitments –

it has no strategy to help smaller manufacturers invest and stay competitive. Joe will level the playing field for small businesses so that entrepreneurs of all backgrounds can compete. Joe will:

- Overhaul the Paycheck Protection Program to **guarantee every qualifying small business with 50 employees or fewer gets relief**; help small businesses obtain relief quickly and easily; issue flexible grants, not loans, for true small businesses that have lost substantial revenue; and address the rampant fraud and unjust enrichment that's taken place under Trump's watch.
- **Leverage \$150 billion in new capital to small businesses in disadvantaged areas**, including public-private venture capital, private equity investment, and low-interest business loans. And he will launch a **historic \$400 billion procurement effort designed to support small businesses and drive demand for American-made products**
- **Expand capital targeted specifically to rural areas** by funding for the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program and increasing the number of Rural Business
- **Support small and medium-sized manufacturers.** More than 98% of manufacturers in Minnesota have under 500 employees. Joe will provide capital for small-medium manufacturers so they can modernize and quadruple funding for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, a program designed to provide small and medium-sized manufacturers with the technical expertise needed to compete. Even though the program has helped Minnesota manufacturers, Trump has proposed eliminating it.

**Create good-paying union jobs by building modern, sustainable infrastructure, while also creating new demand for iron and steel mined and manufactured on the Iron Range.** The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) rates Duluth's roads very poor and gives Minnesota's ports, which are mostly on Lake Superior, a C+. This infrastructure is not only vital to jobs on the Iron Range and northern Minnesota but to Americans across the country who depend on the iron mined and all the materials manufactured on the Iron Range. As President, Joe will create millions of jobs rebuilding infrastructure. Critically, he will expand and tighten Buy America rules for public infrastructure projects, **ensuring that all of the steel, iron, and manufactured products used in transportation projects are melted, mined, and manufactured in the U.S., providing increased demand for the Iron Range.** And he'll ensure infrastructure jobs are good jobs by guaranteeing Davis-Bacon prevailing wage and benefit requirements, so that workers can earn family-sustaining wages and prioritizing Project Labor and Community Workforce Agreements to ensure projects use local workers and that collective bargaining agreements are in place before a project starts. Joe's investments will:

- **Make our seaports, inland waterways, and airports the finest in the world.**
- **Expand high-speed broadband, or wireless broadband via 5G, to every American,** benefiting tens of thousands of Rangers without it.
- **Revitalize roads, highways, and bridges,** and spark the second great railroad revolution.
- **Modernize schools,** making them healthier places to learn with technology and labs to prepare our students for the jobs of the future.
- Upgrade our water infrastructure, which the American Society of Civil Engineers says is in poor condition on the Iron Range, **so all Iron Range residents have clean water to drink.**
- Create jobs in climate-smart agriculture, resilience, and conservation, including jobs plugging abandoned oil and natural gas wells and reclaiming abandoned mines –

providing good work with a choice to join or continue membership in a union in hard hit communities, including rural communities, reducing leakage of toxics, and preventing local environmental damage.

**Pursue tax policies that reward work over wealth.** Trump gave away hundreds of billions of dollars to the largest companies and richest Americans --- tax experts estimate that over the long run, 83% of Trump's tax giveaway will flow **to the top 1%** of earners in this country, leaving middle-class families behind.

- Joe Biden won't ask a single person making under \$400,000 to pay a penny more in taxes. Instead, he will require corporations and the wealthiest Americans to finally pay their fair share.
- Joe will also enact middle class tax cuts that finally give working families the financial support they deserve. He will support a significant expansion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC) for the duration of the crisis, providing thousands of dollars of tax relief for hard-pressed working families and middle-class households. Specifically, Biden will increase the CTC to \$3,000 per child for children ages 6 to 17 and \$3,600 for children under 6. He will provide tax credits to help families buy their first homes and build wealth — up to \$15,000. And he will provide thousands of dollars in tax credits that help working families afford health insurance, child care, and long-term care.

**Invest in a pro-worker tax-and-trade strategy**, to fix the harmful policies of the Trump Administration and give our manufacturers and workers the fair shot they need.

- Joe will ensure **every decision made about trade is to build the American middle class**, create jobs, raise wages, and strengthen communities.
- Biden will **take aggressive trade enforcement actions against China** or any other country seeking to undercut American manufacturing. He'll rally our allies in a coordinated effort to pressure the Chinese government and other trade abusers to follow the rules and hold them to account when they do not. And he will **reverse the Trump Administration's policies that encourage offshoring**, and instead penalize companies who offshore and reward companies who invest in workers and jobs at home.

**Bring back critical supply chains** to America so we aren't dependent on China or any other country for the production of critical goods in a crisis -- bringing home jobs in the process.

**Provide Access to Affordable, High Quality Health Care.** Joe worked with President Obama to pass the Affordable Care Act, protecting as many as 2.3 million Minnesotans who can no longer be denied coverage because of preexisting conditions - including more than 1 in 4 people in the Duluth area even before Covid-19 - and halved the number of uninsured non-elderly Minnesotans from 10% to 5% between 2013 and 2016. But Trump is in court trying to overturn the entire law in the middle of a pandemic. Joe will protect and build on the Affordable Care Act. He will:

- Give Americans more choice - including through a **new public option**.
- **Reduce health care and prescription drug costs.**
- **Expand access to health care in rural America.** Joe Biden will work to protect rural hospitals from closing -- starting by defending the Affordable Care Act. He will also

provide rural health care providers with funding and flexibility necessary to keep their doors open. He'll expand the pipeline of rural health care providers, double funding for community health centers, build new health clinics in rural America, and expand telehealth.

- **Double the federal investment in community health centers, improve care for patients with chronic conditions, and expand access to mental health care.**

**Build a 21st century care infrastructure**, making it easier for aging relatives and loved ones with disabilities to have quality, affordable home- or community-based care, offering full-day preschool universal to all 3- and 4-year olds, and making high-quality child care affordable and accessible for working families.

**Protect Retirement Security.** The middle class isn't a number: it's a value set. After a lifetime of hard work, Americans shouldn't have to live out retirement afraid of losing the roof over their heads. During this pandemic, that uncertainty is creating new stresses for seniors worried about getting sick or losing a paycheck. And now, Trump is threatening to gut Social Security - which roughly nine in ten Minnesotans over the age of 65 rely on - by "terminating" the tax that funds it. As president, Joe will:

- **Protect Social Security**, putting it on a path to long-term solvency, and increase benefits for those most at risk in retirement, including low-wage workers, widows and widowers, and those who have enjoyed long lifespans.
- **Protect pensions** by stabilizing the multiemployer pension system and implementing structural reform because workers deserve to have the promises their employers made to them about their pensions fulfilled.
- **Protect Medicare and Medicaid** from continued attacks.
- **Lower prescription drug prices**
- **Expand access to a broad array of long-term services & supports**

**Encourage, not only defend, union organizing and collective bargaining.** We must recognize the contribution of union members who helped build decades of growth in our country. That's why Joe is proud to be endorsed by Iron Range unions across the labor movement — from the United Steelworkers to the AFL-CIO — and to stand with organized labor. Joe knows the only way to take on abuses of power by corporations and Wall Street and to restore America's middle class, is with worker power. As President, Joe will send economic recovery legislation to Congress that will make it easier for workers to organize a union and bargain collectively with their employers.

- President Trump has waged a war on unions -- including by increasing taxes for union members who can no longer deduct union dues, promising to veto the PRO Act, and stripping federal workers of their right to unionize.

**Raise wages.** Joe will raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and stop employers from denying workers overtime pay they've earned. President Trump abandoned the Obama-Biden overtime expansion, costing more than 126,000 Minnesota workers over \$75 million in lost wages already.

**Increase workplace safety and health.** No one should get sick, injured, or die simply because they went to work. But Trump has attempted to weaken several occupational and safety regulations established during the Obama-Biden Administration. For example, he rolled back regulations requiring companies to report their workplace injuries so they are disclosed to the public. Biden will increase the number of inspectors at the Mine Safety Health and Administration (MSHA) and OSHA. He will also direct MSHA, OSHA, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other relevant agencies to develop comprehensive strategies for addressing the most dangerous hazards workers encounter in the modern workplace.

###