

# Five pro-worker actions by the Biden-Harris administration

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## **Chose labor advocates, not corporate cronies, to lead worker protection agencies**

The Biden-Harris administration has nominated more people with union backgrounds to head federal agencies and sit on the federal courts than any administration in recent history. This includes the first card-carrying union member in decades to be confirmed as Secretary of Labor. They also made historic nominations of union lawyers to the federal courts. These appointments help ensure that workers' interests and perspectives are represented in executive and judicial decision-making.

## **Established a task force to protect workers looking to organize and join unions**

President Biden named Vice President Kamala Harris as chair of the first-ever White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment. Under Harris' leadership, over 20 executive branch departments and White House offices identified and implemented more than 100 actions to support worker organizing and collective bargaining. Through her leadership on the task force, Harris used the bully pulpit to showcase worker organizing and the benefits of collective bargaining to workers and employers, and invited workers and employers to the White House to hear about their experiences.

## **Saved worker and retiree pensions**

President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) into law in 2021, protecting upwards of 2 million union workers and retirees against deep cuts to earned pension benefits. Lawmakers led by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) had long sought a solution to the problem of financially troubled multi-employer plans in industries with shrinking numbers of union members, including trucking, steel, auto, food processing, and grocery. Though multi-employer plans, which are jointly managed by employers and unions, are federally guaranteed up to limits that vary by years of service, these are lower than the limits for single-employer plans. As a result, the typical participant in a troubled multi-employer plan faced a 40% cut in pension benefits before ARPA was signed into law. This cut would have hurt not only workers and retirees, but also hard-hit communities around the country.

## **Protected and raised workers' wages**

President Biden issued an executive order raising the minimum wage for federal contractors to \$15 per hour. The Biden-Harris administration issued and finalized several rules that raise and protect workers' wages, including expanding overtime protections, combatting worker misclassification, strengthening protections for tipped workers, and updating Davis-Bacon regulations, which bolster wages for workers on federal contracts.

## **Championed the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act**

The Biden-Harris administration has been vocal in its support of unions and the right to organize. The PRO Act is a set of critical reforms that would restore and strengthen workers' rights to form a union and negotiate with their employers for better wages and working conditions. The PRO Act was last considered for a floor vote in March 2021. The day before the House of Representatives passed the PRO Act, the Biden-Harris administration issued a Statement of Administration Policy in support of the bill. Further, the Biden-Harris administration has called on Congress to pass the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act which would provide public-sector workers with the rights to unionize and collectively bargain.