

Trump's Broken Economic Promises to Wisconsin



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Wisconsin's economy is struggling amidst surging coronavirus cases, with health experts warning that it is likely to get worse. But the economic troubles facing Wisconsin's workers and businesses started long before the COVID-19 pandemic. President Trump has failed to deliver for Wisconsin's manufacturers, farmers, and workers throughout his entire administration.

"They are going to come through 100%," Trump said of Foxconn during an [interview](#) with Milwaukee's Charles Benson on October 17, 2020. "They will end up being a great investment for your state." But that high-profile business is just one of many examples that show Trump has failed to deliver promised jobs and economic opportunity.

Trump continues to hold rallies in Wisconsin, making promises – some of them very specific – that he hasn't kept. Still, his boasting of a strong economy in Wisconsin, no matter how fictional, has become central to his reelection bid. And [recent polling](#) shows that Americans

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That's why Democrats must tell the whole story to Wisconsin voters: the state's economy, jobs, businesses, and health care are all worse because of Donald Trump, and real people have been hurt. They can't take four more years of Trump's lies and broken economic promises.

If you want data – the facts and figures about Trump's impact on the economy of Wisconsin – the Center for American Progress Action Fund has put them all together. But to give your friends and neighbors the full flavor of Trump's betrayal, you should also tell them about how he has let these Wisconsinites down:

“They destroyed a lot of lives with false hope and promise for something that never happened,” a Foxconn employee said. Trump announced Foxconn's Mount Pleasant manufacturing facility in a lavish July 2017 White House ceremony, repeatedly pointed to the factory as proof he was reviving American manufacturing. While the President called Foxconn “the eighth wonder of the world,” job applicants and local businesses hoping to benefit from the manufacturing hub were left hanging. Chris, a Wisconsin veteran, quit his job after receiving a letter of intent to hire him after a Foxconn job fair for military vets. But after weeks of waiting for the promised job, he says, **“I just realized there was no there there.”** Despite receiving more in taxpayer subsidies than Wisconsin spends each year on its state university system and prisons combined, the company was found to have just 281 eligible employees at the end of 2019, prompting state officials to reject a subsidy application. **“I think all of us were on the verge of a major breakdown,”** one employee said of the stress and confusion among its few employees. By September 2020, the once-promised manufacturing hub “was reclassified as a massive storage facility.”

“Real families are being crushed by these tariffs right now,” West Bend owner of Regal Ware Doug Reigle said. Fifty jobs were put at risk at his company of over 300 employees, which had spent \$150,000 to cover the cost of Trump's tariffs. Local goods including Harley-Davidson motorcycles, cheese, yogurt, pork, ginseng, wood, and boats were impacted. “We are going to put American-produced steel back into the backbone of our country,” Trump promised in 2016. “This alone will create massive numbers of jobs.” But Trump's tariffs hurt Wisconsin, causing Harley Davidson to announce it would move production overseas as a result of the tariffs.

“A farmer he had spoken to before “Called to give me hell,” he recounted. “He called me while he was waiting to unload cows at the auction barn.” The dairy farmer said he was tired of not being able to pay his bills and was seriously thinking about killing himself because he saw very little hope ahead. “These are not the conversations we want to have when farmers can't pay their bills and they feel horrible about it”

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— Mark Stephenson told the Wisconsin State Farmer



“They’re not trying to hide it anymore. They’re telling us flat out: You’re not important,” Wisconsin dairy farmer and Trump voter Jerry Volenec says. President Donald Trump promised in 2018 bailouts would help family farms weather his trade war with China, but CNBC found roughly two-thirds of those payments went to the top 10% of farmers, leaving family producers at risk of collapse. **“We’re still losing over two dairy farms a day in the state of Wisconsin, so being over the hump really isn’t here yet,”** third-generation farmer and president of the Wisconsin Farmers Union Board of Directors Darin Von Ruden said.

“When they announced that they’ve cut off the \$600, I said ‘This is unsustainable,’” Milwaukee’s Allegra Troiano said after the federal stimulus payments ended. President Trump told WTMJ-4 he had a higher number than House Democrats for stimulus payments. But it was President Trump who tweeted on October 6, “I have instructed my representatives to stop negotiating until after the election” after lambasting the Speaker.

“I just want to punch him,” Oshkosh bar and restaurant owner Mark Schultz said of Trump from his ICU bed. **“I always had to keep my politics to myself, but from where I'm sitting now? Those days are over. I shouldn't be here.”** Schultz started feeling sick the same day the White House announced the President tested positive for COVID-19. He believes if Trump had warned about the dangers of the virus from the beginning and encouraged mask use, it could have prevented the spread in his community and perhaps to him and his fiancé. Small business owners are facing pressure on both sides: **“This could have been brought under control. But instead, Wisconsin is a hot spot. And we will be for the foreseeable future,”** Northwoods brewery owner Kirk Bangstad lamented.

“I’m nearly in a panic state about what’s going to happen to my patients,” Cynthia Haq told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel in 2017. Trump promised during his 2016 campaign, “there will be no cuts to Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid” and pledged as President, “We’re going to have insurance for everybody.” But the Republican health plan Trump championed would have cut \$880 billion from Medicaid and cause 24 million to lose their health insurance. **“We can’t overstate the impact this will have on the people we care about, provide services to,”** Madison nonprofit ABC for Health executive director Bobby Peterson warned.

Rural seniors in Wisconsin’s northern and western counties stood to lose more than \$7,000 in credits and subsidies under Trump’s plan that ultimately failed to pass. But even more Wisconsinites will suffer if Trump finally succeeds in his appeal before the Supreme Court to eliminate the Affordable Care Act. More than 212,000 Wisconsinites who have gotten the

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Trump has sold Wisconsin's workers and families a bill of goods. He has lied, broken promises, and betrayed their trust. And that was before his mismanagement of the coronavirus pandemic allowed the virus to spread through Wisconsin like wildfire. Wisconsin Democrats must make sure voters know it.

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