



Building America Back Better Biden's Agenda is Working for the IBEW

How President Biden's actions benefit working families and IBEW members

CELEBRATING LABOR DAY WITH IBEW MEMBERS

President Biden spent the day dedicated to workers with members of the IBEW.

Along with IBEW President Lonnie Stephenson, President Biden delivered sandwiches to members of Wilmington, Del. Local 313 on Labor Day, Sept. 6.

He played cornhole and chatted with about 35 members of the local union. An article about the event described a moment when "the president began talking into an iPhone to a union member's mom, telling her that he'd been with the union since he was first elected to public office in the early 1970s."



Meghan Hays
@MegHays46

.@POTUS stops by IBEW local 313 in Delaware on this Labor Day.



Joe Biden joined President Stephenson, left, and members of Wilmington, Del. Local 313 for Labor Day.

"I'm with your son," Biden said. "Mom, I wish you were here. I just stopped by to thank these guys. Happy Labor Day."

IBEW International President Lonnie Stephenson called Biden "a longtime friend of working families and the IBEW."

"Joe has a long record of standing up for union members, and we believe it's in the best interest of IBEW members to elect him our next president," Stephenson wrote in February 2020, adding: "Joe Biden has listened to IBEW members, and his energy policy has been shaped by deep, meaningful conversations with the professionals who will build and maintain the energy grid of the future."

In his Labor Day proclamation, [President Biden said](#) that hard-working Americans are the backbone of the country.

"Everything that supports a sustainable middle-class life was made possible by unions, and on Labor Day we honor all those workers — and their enduring movement — that keep our economy moving and make our nation strong."

SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE LEGISLATION TO SHORE UP AMERICA

America's rundown infrastructure is heading for a makeover following the passage in the Senate of the sweeping historic legislation in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act on Aug. 9.

Together with the budget bill under consideration in the House of Representatives, hundreds of thousands of jobs will be created as the Biden Build Back Better agenda comes to fruition.

In a statement, IBEW President Lonnie Stephenson said the IBEW is pleased with investments modernizing the electrical grid, transit, and rail, in addition to the plan to construct the charging infrastructure necessary for widescale adoption of electric vehicles, buses, trains and trucks.



"We commend President Biden's leadership in addressing climate change as an urgent crisis for our country and encourage the Biden administration to continue supporting carbon-free nuclear energy," he said. "The majority of infrastructure investments passed by the Senate do include labor standards; I also hope and expect that the Biden administration and congressional leaders will continue to push for labor standards in all infrastructure investments, particularly in the critical area of broadband expansion, so that the new jobs created will be good union jobs."

IBEW members also contributed to the bill's gathering momentum in favor of the bill. Over the summer, IBEW members sent 12,700 emails to congressional offices and 440 letters to the editor through the IBEW Action website at www.ibewaction.org.

On July 22, President Stephenson was among a handful of labor and business leaders invited to the White House to discuss infrastructure jobs.

ON THIS LABOR DAY, THE IBEW...

*Thanks President Biden
for his commitment to rebuilding America:*

- Power infrastructure
- Existing and advanced nuclear power
- Passenger and freight rail
- Electric vehicle charging network
- Made-in-America manufacturing
- New transmission line construction
- Labor standards, PLAs and prevailing wages

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TOUTING 'BUILD BACK BETTER,' BIDEN TOURS CINCINNATI TRAINING CENTER

President Joe Biden took his pitch for a massive investment in infrastructure and American labor directly to the workers July 21, touring the IBEW-NECA Electrical Training Center in Cincinnati to learn about what IBEW electricians do every day on the job.



President Joe Biden toured the Cincinnati IBEW-NECA Electrical Training Center. He is pictured with Local 212 Business Manager Rick Fischer, left, apprentice Courtney Groeschel and instructor Dan McCarthy.

It was the first visit by a [sitting president to an IBEW training center](#) since President Barack Obama toured Washington, D.C., Local 26's facility in 2010.

"The Build Back Better plan that President Biden is proposing will be a game-changer for union tradesmen and tradeswomen," said International President Lonnie Stephenson. "But we can't overstate how important it is that a sitting president showed up at our training center, asked genuine questions about the work that we do and used the word 'union' again and again."

For more on this story, read the [September issue](#) of the *Electrical Worker*.

'RUNNING TOWARD THE STORM:' BIDEN RECOGNIZES IBEW IN IDA POWER RESTORATION WORK




President Biden called out the necessity of IBEW linemen following the Category 4 hurricane that smashed into New Orleans and continued to menace the country's interior before inundating New York and New Jersey with massive flooding.



In a meeting that included Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm and utility officials, “the president thanked the IBEW for the vital work their members perform, especially during emergencies such as Ida where they run toward the storm while others are being urged to evacuate,” said a [White House statement](#).

Miles of electrical transmission and distribution lines were damaged in the storm, increasing the importance of the infrastructure legislation awaiting action in the House of Representatives. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed by the Senate on Aug. 9 includes \$110 billion for grid upgrades and \$29 billion for reliability and resilience.

 **Liz Shuler**  @lizshuler
I couldn't be prouder today as @IBEW workers head to the front-lines of #HurricaneIda rescue efforts.

 or  & , union members are stepping up in ways that are only possible when we stand together. #1u



MOURNING ALONGSIDE LABOR FOLLOWING AFL-CIO PRESIDENT TRUMKA'S DEATH

A powerful voice for workers went silent Aug. 5 with the death of Richard Trumka, who rose from [humble roots in the Pennsylvania](#) coal mines to lead the AFL-CIO.



“For Rich, it was always about doing right by working people – fighting for and protecting their wages, their safety, their pensions, and their ability to build a good, decent, honorable middle-class life,” [President Biden said](#). “It was about workers improving their own lives and building worker power together. And it was about America itself. It was about the American worker being the heart of our economic might and dynamism.”

Trumka was replaced by his No. 2, [Liz Shuler, an IBEW member](#) who had served as secretary-treasurer of the labor federation since 2009. “Congratulations to Liz Shuler on being elected President of the AFL-CIO,” [Biden said on Twitter](#).

TOURING IBEW TRAINING CENTER, UNION HALL IN VIRGINIA, NEW MEXICO

Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm toured the Richmond, Va., Local 666 training center and attended a roundtable at Albuquerque, N.M., Local 611 hall in August.

On Aug. 12, she witnessed the IBEW’s next-generation training to support the growing electric vehicle market.

“This work will be done by IBEW members,” Granholm said outside the classrooms dedicated to the Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP), vital to the Biden administration’s call for a nationwide network of charging stations, the [UCOMM blog reported](#).

She was joined by U.S. Rep. Abigail Spanberger, who holds a seat in the Richmond area.

“They were very impressed with our whole program,” said William Merriman, a Local 666 executive board member. “It was very motivating for everyone in there to see that we’re appreciated for what we do.”

Granholm, Sen. Martin Heinrich and Rep. Melanie Stansbury attended a meeting at Local 611 to discuss energy infrastructure on Aug. 18.



LISTENING TO IBEW VOICES ABOUT CAREERS IN THE TRADES

Labor Secretary Marty Walsh visited Las Vegas on Aug. 9 for a roundtable on employment opportunities for young people. First-year wireman apprentice Quintin Gonzalez said he values the opportunity to learn the skills for a well-paying career without the cost of a four-year college degree.

At the event also attended by U.S. Reps. Steven Horsford and Susie Lee, Las Vegas Local 357 Business Manager James Halsey encouraged Walsh to consider mandating the use of registered apprentices on all Davis-Bacon projects to increase apprenticeship opportunities.



Las Vegas Local 357 Business Manager James Halsey, right, spoke to Labor Secretary Marty Walsh about apprenticeships.

ADVANCING POLICIES TO ENSURE CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

President Joe Biden's environmental goals will not come at the expense of economically distressed regions. His [Justice40 Initiative](#) ensures that at least 40 percent of the overall benefits from federal investments in climate and clean energy flow to disadvantaged communities.

In August, IBEW members joined a conversation with members of Congress and White House staff, emphasizing the need for good jobs in the [transition from fossil fuel to renewables](#).

"We want to be at the table to make sure we can organize jobs and require appropriate licensing in the green sector," said Detroit Local 17 Business Manager James Shaw. "We need to be creating careers, not jobs."

EXTENDING A LIFELINE TO NUCLEAR PLANTS

The Biden administration announced a proposal to extend up to \$1 billion in tax credits to existing nuclear plants, advancing a priority the IBEW has long championed as a win both for good jobs and a cleaner environment.

The Production Tax Credit expansion is part of the administration's multitrillion-dollar plan to rebuild American manufacturing, infrastructure and energy sectors.

PTCs have supported the construction of carbon-free wind, solar, storage and nuclear generation for years, but they have never been extended to existing nuclear plants.

Over the last decade, about 10 nuclear reactors have shut down, often because competitive energy markets favor intermittent producers like wind and solar and carbon-emitting gas peaker plants.

"We are not going to be able to achieve our climate goals if nuclear power plants shut down," Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said. "We have to find ways to keep them operating."

The proposal also includes a requirement that the credits would be paired with "strong labor standards, benefiting employers that provide good-paying and good-quality jobs."

*Read more in the [August issue](#) of *The Electrical Worker**



PROMOTING A HISTORIC OVERHAUL TO MAKE LABOR LAWS FAIRER

New research from the Economic Policy Institute demonstrates the broken system of labor laws in the United States and the necessity of passing the PRO Act.



Santa Ana, Calif., Local 441 members, including political director Doug Mangione, spoke at a rally at Rep. Michelle Steel's Orange County district office, urging her support for the PRO Act.

It's the rare employer who voluntarily recognizes its employees' efforts to join together, meaning that workers must fight for their rights in an arena that offers few penalties for anti-union employers and considerable risk for the employees. This imbalance, says EPI, is due to weaknesses in the National Labor Relations Act.

The solution: the PRO Act. It's been called the most significant piece of labor legislation in decades, with more than 30 proposed changes to existing law. Among those are increased protections against employer retaliation. Workers would have access to full back pay for time out of work, front pay if reinstatement is not feasible and damages to compensate for harm.

The PRO Act passed the House of Representatives in March and has the support of President Joe Biden, as well as a majority of likely voters according to a new poll, but has stalled in the Senate.

Read more in the [August issue](#) of *The Electrical Worker*

ADVANCING DOMESTIC MANUFACTURING WITH BUY-AMERICAN RULES

President Biden is harnessing the purchasing power of the federal government to promote and encourage domestic manufacturing.

First with an executive order in the first days of his presidency, then through the creation of a Made In America in America office, now the government is issuing [guidance to maximize the use of taxpayer dollars](#) to create good-paying union jobs.

The federal government spends \$60 billion annually to purchase products and services, making it the largest buyer of consumer goods in the world.

To strengthen supply chains and shape markets to increase innovation, the new rules will:

- Raise domestic content requirements from 55 to 75 percent
- Support developing supply chains for critical goods made in the U.S.
- Increase transparency with more accurate data content requirements

APPOINTING ENOUGH WORKER-FRIENDLY LAWYERS TO THE NLRB TO ACHIEVE THE MAJORITY

For the first time in four years, the [National Labor Relations Board](#) will have a Democratic majority.

On July 27, the Senate confirmed two labor-side attorneys: Gwynne Wilcox and David Prouty. Wilcox is the first black woman to serve on the NLRB. An NLRB field attorney, she has decades of experience, including a recent case accusing McDonald's of retaliating against franchise owners who participated in an organizing campaign.



Prouty was general counsel for UNITE HERE and also worked for the Service Employees International Union.

The NLRB hears cases between unions and employers and determines whether workers are eligible to unionize.

On his first day in office, President Biden fired NLRB General Counsel Peter Robb, who instigated many of the NLRB's attacks on workers' rights, safety and economic security.

INVITING IBEW MEMBERS TO THE WHITE HOUSE TO TALK GOOD JOBS

Maryland state Sen. Cory McCray participated in a youth roundtable on July 27. "It was an honor to represent the IBEW at the White House," said McCray, who is a Baltimore Local 24 member. "I know the impact an apprenticeship had on me to take up a career as an electrician."



Maryland state Sen. Cory McCray, right, with Cedric Richmond, a senior advisor to President Biden.

ELEVATING IBEW FRIENDS TO HIGH PLACES

Nominating an Ally for the Consumer Products Safety Commission

Rich Trumka Jr., son of former AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka, has been nominated by President Biden to a seat on the Consumer Products Safety Commission. The CPSC is an independent federal agency that regulates more than 15,000 everyday items. Rich is an attorney who specializes in consumer policy.

Jennifer Homendy is New NTSB Chair

Jennifer Homendy has been confirmed by the Senate as chair of the National Transportation Safety Board. With decades of transportation policy experience, she has worked tirelessly as an advocate for safety improvements across all modes of the transportation network.

Amit Bose for Federal Railroad Administration

President Biden has nominated Amit Bose to be administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration. Bose, now deputy administrator, is steeped in rail policy, from various roles at the FRA, to the Department of Transportation. He also worked on high-speed rail and the Northeast Corridor for the Obama administration.

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