

For Immediate Release

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Wisconsin AFL-CIO Welcomes Human Rights Lawyer, Worker Justice Advocate Maina Kiai to Milwaukee for UWM Fireside Forum on Foreign Policy

Kiai is the 2016 recipient of the AFL-CIO George Meany–Lane Kirkland Human Rights Award for his work advancing freedom of worker assembly as a basic human right

(MILWAUKEE, FEBRUARY 13, 2018) -- The Wisconsin AFL-CIO is proud to welcome Kenyan lawyer, human rights activist and former UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association **Maina Kiai** to Milwaukee. Kiai will be participating in UW Milwaukee Institute for World Affairs' Fireside Forum.

Kiai will discuss the important issue of voting rights at a unique time in Wisconsin history as voters face new hurdles to casting their ballot and the constitutionality of partisan gerrymandering is debated in the U.S. Supreme Court.

In December 2016, Kiai was awarded the AFL-CIO George Meany-Lane Kirkland Human Rights Award for his dedication to and effectiveness in highlighting the widespread denial of fundamental human rights at work and in society. The annual Meany-Kirkland award, created in 1980 and named for the first two presidents of the AFL-CIO, recognizes outstanding examples of the international struggle for human rights through trade unions.

"Maina Kiai's work to recognize the important role freedom of assembly and collective bargaining play in a life with dignity and respect is essential to the progress of working people worldwide," said **Stephanie Bloomingdale, Secretary-Treasurer of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO**. "Kiai continues to advocate for full participation in the democratic process and we thank him for coming to Milwaukee to share his insight and expertise of protecting voting rights when under attack with the local community right here in Wisconsin."

About this week's Fireside Forum:

February 15: *Protecting Your Franchise: Election Integrity and Voter Rights*

7:00 p.m., UWM Student Union, Fireside Lounge, 2200 E Kenwood Blvd. FREE AND OPEN TO PUBLIC

Voter access to the polls and a fair and credible electoral result are cornerstones of democracy. Kenyan lawyer, human rights activist and former UN Special Rapporteur [Maina Kiai](#) will discuss responses to situations of voters' rights under threat. **Sachin Chheda**, Director and co-founder of the Fair Elections Project, will provide a local perspective.

The Fireside Forum series pairs national and international guests with Wisconsin-based experts to explore and compare global and local aspects of issues facing our community. The live lecture series will tackle four issues facing our community and compare how people here and elsewhere are responding to similar challenges.

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