

For Immediate Release  
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**In case you missed it: New Study Confirms Right to Work Hurts Wisconsin’s Middle Class**

MILWAUKEE – The Wisconsin AFL-CIO responded to the release of an Economic Policy Institute study showing the negative economic impacts of so-called “Right-to-Work” laws last Friday.

“This study confirms what we already know; right-to-work laws slash workers’ wages and do not help create jobs,” said Wisconsin AFL-CIO President Phil Neuenfeldt. “The goal of this attack on the middle class is to lower wages, reduce benefits, and take away rights from all workers – whether union or non-union. This study confirms these consequences. Right-to-work means all workers and middle-class families are at risk, and that is wrong for Wisconsin.”

The Economic Policy Institute study, conducted by Dr. Gordon Lafer of the University of Oregon, finds numerous negative impacts of right-to-work laws. These laws lower wages, for both union and non-union workers, by an average of 3.2 percent, reduce the odds of getting health insurance through one’s job by 2.6 percent, and reduce the odds of getting a pension through an employer by 4.8 percent. The study also notes in this chart that on a large number of economic factors, citizens fare worse in right-to-work states, on average, than they do in Wisconsin:

**TABLE 1**

**Quality of life is lower in RTW states**  
*Income and other quality-of-life measures, Wisconsin versus RTW states*

	Wisconsin	RTW states
Household income	\$55,285	\$49,220
Median hourly wage	\$18.31	\$16.95
Jobs with health insurance	64%	54%
Jobs with pensions	53%	44%
Poverty rate	11%	15%
Child poverty rate	16%	20%
High school graduation rate	91%	77%
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	5.99	6.9
Births to teenage girls (per 1,000 aged 15–19)	26.2	39.5
Physicians (per 10,000 people)	26.5	22.6
Child abuse (per 1,000 children)	3.6	8.4
Violent crime (per 100,000 people)	237	370.5

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Kaiser Family Foundation, National Assessment of Educational Progress, National Vital Statistics Reports, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Federal Bureau of Investigation

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“Too many middle-class households are still struggling to pay for their children’s daycare, save for retirement, or make their mortgage payments, and the last thing Wisconsin’s working families need is a new law designed to lower family income,” said Wisconsin AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Stephanie Bloomingdale. “America and Wisconsin is strongest when the middle class thrives, and unnecessary right-to-work legislation will only make it harder for our neighbors to make ends meet.”

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