



PRESS RELEASE

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A 10-point plan to put working people first

Policy Matters Ohio celebrates May Day with pro-labor platform

Policy Matters Ohio today released a policy plan that would build on the recovery of Ohio's jobs to nearly pre-COVID levels, strengthen workplace protections and improve conditions for working people throughout the state.

A New Way Forward identifies 10 pro-worker principles that would improve job quality in Ohio and recommends policies that dovetail with the growing movements to organize workplaces, raise the minimum wage, fight wage theft, secure paid sick leave and more.

"Today's strong job market is a long time coming," said Michael Shields, senior researcher and author of the report. "For decades, employers have held down Ohioans' wages, while corporations and the wealthiest claimed a growing share of the new wealth workers made possible. There is a long way to go to rebuild an Ohio economy with broadly shared prosperity, and to ensure for the first time that all Ohioans are included, no matter their race, gender or other identities."

The release coincides with International Labor Day, honoring the victories and sacrifices of the labor movement, the benefits of which extend well beyond union members. As Shields said, "When working people organize to win better pay and conditions in their industry, even nonunion employers must meet similar standards to attract and retain the workers they need." He added, "Workers often use their unions to help people they serve, as we saw when Columbus teachers went on strike at the start of this school year and won benefits for their students, from art classes to air conditioning."

The report also draws a straight line between a strong labor movement and a healthy democracy. "Workplace and civil rights go hand in hand," Shields said. "With unions, workers build collective power on the job, which translates to political power. That's one reason politicians who are hostile to democracy also attack working people's right to form a union."

Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.