

Recently, Vice President Mike Pence visited Duluth, Minnesota for a Trump campaign rally. Pence claimed that President Trump stood for American jobs, workers and miners and has made America great again.

On August 28th a group of six mayors from the Iron Range wrote an endorsement of Trump's reelection. Our union believes those mayors are misguided and don't fully understand the nature of the economics of the industry or the iron range. Just drive down the main streets of Virginia and Eveleth and count the shutdown businesses. It hardly seems like the "roaring back to life" that these mayors describe.

Unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth.

Our nation is in the deepest crisis since the Great Depression and 74,257 people in Minnesota have tested positive for COVID-19; 1,814 have died. President Trump refused to acknowledge the threat posed by the coronavirus, mobilize resources or show leadership in the face of the global pandemic.

As a result of the pandemic, almost half of the workers at the Iron Range's mines were laid off. USS Keetac is still idle and its 260 employees on layoff. Yet somehow, the president and Republican-controlled Senate don't care enough about Keetac workers or the other 16.3 million Americans who are unemployed to extend enhanced unemployment benefits through the end of the year.

The Trump administration did impose tariffs on imported steel. But for many workers, it was too little and too late. Since January 2017, 7,900 workers in the steel industry have lost their jobs due to shutdowns or cutbacks, including the shutdown of blast furnaces at USS Great Lakes Works.

So far this year, steel mills in the United States have operated at an average of 66% of capacity during 2020, steel production is down by 20% and steel prices are at their lowest point since President Trump took office.

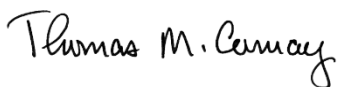
President Trump has allied himself and his administration with the wealthy and powerful and against workers and the most vulnerable in our society.

He's championed tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, increasing the federal deficit to record levels, but he's failed to deliver the infrastructure program to rebuild our nation's crumbling bridges and roads. He has worked to undermine collective bargaining, workplace safety, environmental safeguards, the Affordable Care Act, government ethics, congressional oversight and voting rights.

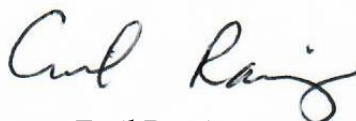
Contract negotiations in the steel and iron ore industry were difficult in 2018 and are likely to be difficult again in 2022. The companies will seek to divide us and demand cuts and concessions. Our nation and our union need a leader in the White House that supports working people and labor unions.

Vice President Joe Biden has long been a friend of workers and our union. He will fight to raise the minimum wage, expand access to affordable health care, stabilize multiemployer pension plans, defend Medicare and Social Security and preserve and expand civil and labor rights.

The USW is proud to endorse Joe Biden for president, as he seeks to put our country back on a path toward shared prosperity through responsible leadership.



Tom Conway
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