

Vote Andrew Beck for Congress



Backing Labor for Decades

I am a candidate for the 5th Congressional District in Wisconsin. I was born and raised in Milwaukee and have lived in the area all of my life. My family has been labor focused for many years.

My grandfather Otto Jirikowic joined the IAM in 1908 after he dropped out of school at age 12 to go to work in a Kaukauna, Wisconsin, paper mill. He moved to Milwaukee in 1911 and worked as a railroad machinist and policeman. He was a leader in the drive that won the 40-hour work week.

Otto became a union representative for IAM Local 66 in the Milwaukee area in 1927. During the years following he served as a board member of the Milwaukee Area Technical College. In all he served 33 years as a board member, 12 as president. During that period, he became a representative for IAM District 10. Otto helped engineer the 1959 merger of the Milwaukee Federated Trades Council (AFL) and the Milwaukee County CIO Council into the Milwaukee Labor Council (AFL-CIO). He served the council as a staff representative until he retired in 1964.

My uncles Vern, Ralph and Glen Jirikowic were also very involved in union work in the Milwaukee area and nationally.

Vern started out as a union representative for AFSCME 48 and then was one of the nation's best known labor research experts for the IAM. Vern assisted in the IAM's negotiations with major aerospace, electronics, atomic energy and trucking companies during the 60's. He represented the IAM at various international conferences sponsored by the International Metalworkers Federation and the International Transport Workers Federation. He served a year as a union representative for District Council 48 of AFSCME in Milwaukee, then in 1951 joined the IAM headquarters staff in Washington, D.C. as a research economist. He was appointed research director in 1961.

Ralph A. Jirikowic was a 49-year member of the UAW Local 9 Brewery Workers Union. Jirikowic served as Vice President of the Milwaukee Area Labor Council and left the Wisconsin labor movement with a legacy of caring and helping. Established in 1984, the Ralph A. Jirikowic Award is the most prestigious award the Wisconsin AFL-CIO offers for service to the community. This award is given annually to a union member who has demonstrated a continuous record of dedicated service in the workplace, the local union, and the community.

Glen Jirikowic was a union representative for IAM District 10. My sister and mother were members of the MTEA and my father was a member of the Allied Industrial Workers Local 232 union while working for Briggs & Stratton for 25 years. I was a member of Hotel Motel Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Local 122 in the early 80's and then with SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin in the 90's.

I would be excited to have your support and would work with organized labor if I have the privilege to represent the 5th District in Washington.

Best regards – Andy



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