

## Speaker Biographies



### **U.S. Department of Labor's Celebration of 30 Years of the Family and Medical Leave Act**

Frances Perkins Building, Cesar Chavez Auditorium

Monday, February 6, 2023

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

For three decades, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) has been the cornerstone of the U.S. Department of Labor's efforts to promote work-life balance. This landmark legislation has helped millions of working families balance the demands of the workplace, the needs of their families and their own health.

### EVENT SPEAKERS

- [Martin J. Walsh](#), Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor
- [Douglas Emhoff](#), Second Gentleman of the United States
- [Xavier Becerra](#), Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- [Julie Su](#), Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor
- [Jocelyn Frye](#), President, National Partnership for Women & Families
- [Liz Shuler](#), President, AFL-CIO
- [Jessica Looman](#), Principal Deputy Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor
- [Kris Garcia](#), Family Values at Work VOW; 9to5 National Association of Working Women
- [Ivonne Limongi](#), Member of MomsRising
- [Wendy Chun-Hoon](#), Director, Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor
- [Rosa DeLauro](#), Member of Congress
- [Lauren Underwood](#), Member of Congress

## BIOGRAPHIES



### **Secretary Martin J. Walsh**

*U.S. Department of Labor*

Martin J. Walsh was sworn in as the 29th Secretary of Labor on March 23, 2021. A lifelong champion of equity and fairness, and a proud product of the City of Boston, Secretary Walsh leads the U.S. Department of Labor with a strong connection to working people, and a commitment to creating an economy that works for all.

In 1997, he was elected to serve as a State Representative for one of the most diverse districts in Massachusetts. There, he focused on creating good jobs, protecting workers' rights, expanding mental health treatment, and investing in public transit.

Following his time as a State Representative, Secretary Walsh spent the last seven years as the Mayor of the City of Boston. While mayor, he led the creation of close to 140,000 jobs and helped secure a statewide \$15/hour minimum wage, paid sick leave, and paid parental leave. He established Universal, high-quality Pre-Kindergarten for all children, and free community college for low-income students.

Secretary Walsh was a national leader in the response to COVID-19, getting PPE to first responders and nursing homes; funding emergency child care for healthcare and frontline workers; halting evictions and providing rental relief; and setting up multiple funds to help small businesses survive. His work early in the pandemic to pause construction and establish safety requirements has been lauded as a model by both unions and employers alike.

As Mayor of Boston, Secretary Walsh also made his mark as a labor leader. After following his father into Laborers Local 223 in Boston, he rose to head the Building and Construction Trades Council from 2011 to 2013. He worked with business and community leaders to promote high-quality development, and he created a program

called Building Pathways that has become a model for increasing diversity in the workplace and providing good career opportunities for women and people of color.

Born and raised in the neighborhood of Dorchester by immigrant parents, Secretary Walsh is driven to ensure our nation's economy works for everyone. Secretary Walsh is a survivor of Burkitt lymphoma and is a proud member of the recovery community who has worked to expand addiction treatment throughout his career. While working full-time as a legislator, he returned to school to earn a degree in Political Science at Boston College.



## **Douglas Emhoff**

### *Second Gentleman of the United States*

As Second Gentleman, Mr. Emhoff is working to share the priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration with people across the country and around the world.

Mr. Emhoff has traveled to 32 states, two native nations, and five countries. During his travels, he has met with health care professionals, parents, teachers, caregivers, community leaders, legal aid providers, small-business owners in urban and rural areas, communities of color, and Tribal communities to hear their stories and to share how the Administration is working to help their families.

As the first Second Gentleman, married to the first woman` vice president, Mr. Emhoff knows the power and importance of having women in leadership positions. He has seen what it has meant to young girls and boys to look up to Vice President Kamala Harris and is a champion for gender equality. Mr. Emhoff has met with gender ministers in both Japan and France and has hosted roundtable discussions with women and young girls around the world to discuss the importance of [equity in the workplace](#), [equal pay](#), and [protecting reproductive rights and health care](#).

As the first Jewish spouse of an American president or vice president, Mr. Emhoff has been honored to share his Jewish heritage and culture—from [celebrating Passover](#) in the White House to [affixing Mezuzahs](#) on the doorposts of the Vice President's Residence. Mr. Emhoff has been a leading voice on combating antisemitism and hatred wherever it exists. He convened Jewish leaders at the White House for the first of its kind roundtable to bring attention to the rise in antisemitism. He has also worked with Jewish student leaders on campus and with the House Bipartisan Task Force for Combatting Antisemitism to promote a whole-of-society approach to countering antisemitism. He regularly engages with individuals from the Jewish community as well as other faith-based groups to discuss the Administration's priorities to strengthen religious tolerance and protect religious freedom. Mr. Emhoff has been a leading voice on combating antisemitism and hatred wherever it exists.

As a lawyer for over 30 years, Mr. Emhoff cares deeply about justice and equality in our legal system. He is an [advocate for access to legal aid and removing barriers](#) – legal, social, and financial – to ensure that every person can get the help they need to arrive at justice. In January 2020, Mr. Emhoff began teaching law courses at the Georgetown University Law Center and is enjoying the opportunity to mentor the next generation of lawyers.

Mr. Emhoff made it a top priority to encourage people to protect themselves and their communities by getting vaccinated against COVID-19. He has visited vaccine clinics in [churches](#), [community health centers](#), [schools](#), [stadiums](#), and even [barbershops](#) to raise awareness around the importance of getting vaccinated.

Mr. Emhoff was born in Brooklyn, New York, and raised in Matawan, New Jersey, by his parents, Mike and Barbara, with his siblings, Jamie and Andy. His family moved to the Los Angeles area during his teen years. Mr. Emhoff earned a B.A. from California State University, Northridge and a J.D. from University of Southern California Gould School of Law. He and the Vice President have been married for eight years and are the proud parents of Cole and Ella Emhoff.



## **Secretary Xavier Becerra**

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Xavier Becerra is the 25th Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and the first Latino to hold the office in the history of the United States. As Secretary, he will carry out President Biden's vision to build a healthy America, and his work will focus on ensuring that all

Americans have health security and access to healthcare.

Throughout his career, the Secretary has made it his priority to ensure that Americans have access to the affordable healthcare they need to survive and thrive - from his early days as a legal advocate representing individuals with mental illness, to his role as the Attorney General of the state of California.

Secretary Becerra served 12 terms in Congress as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. During his tenure, he was the first Latino to serve as a member of the powerful Committee on Ways and Means, he served as Chairman of his party's caucus, and as the Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Health.

For over two decades in Congress, Secretary Becerra worked so that every family had the assurance of care that his own family had when he was growing up. As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, Secretary Becerra introduced legislation -- the Medicare Savings Programs Improvement Act of 2007 -- that expanded cost-sharing subsidies for low-income seniors who receive both Medicare and Medicaid benefits by increasing the amount of resources they could receive. He championed provisions of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 that required physicians who perform imaging to be accredited and trained to ensure patient safety. And he was one of the original cosponsors of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) which strengthened Medicare and lowered costs for seniors.

As Attorney General of the state of California, Secretary Becerra helped to promote competition by taking on a number of pharmaceutical companies that restricted competition through "pay-for-delay" schemes, held several companies accountable for legal violations for not protecting patients' health information, and took action early in the pandemic to keep Californians safe by using his authority to protect workers from exposure to COVID-19, secure key safeguards for frontline health care workers' rights, and take on fraudsters trying to take advantage of people during the pandemic. In addition, he cracked down on Medicare and Medicaid fraud, acted to combat the opioid crisis, including holding drug makers accountable, won an unprecedented \$575 million antitrust settlement against one of the largest health systems in California, and he led the three-year federal court fight to save the ACA and with it, the protections of the 133 million Americans with preexisting conditions.

Born in Sacramento Secretary Becerra is the son of working-class parents. He was the first in his family to receive a four-year degree, earning his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Stanford University. He earned his Juris Doctorate from Stanford Law School. His mother was born in Jalisco, Mexico and immigrated to the United States after marrying his father, a day laborer turned construction worker. He is married to Dr. Carolina Reyes, and he is proud of his three daughters: Clarisa, Olivia and Natalia, and son-in-law Ivan.



## **Deputy Secretary Julie A. Su**

*U.S. Department of Labor*

Julie Su was appointed by President Biden to serve as the deputy secretary of labor and confirmed by the Senate on July 13, 2021. The deputy secretary serves as the de-facto chief operating officer for the department, overseeing its workforce, managing its budget and executing the priorities of the secretary of labor.

Prior to joining the U.S. Department of Labor, Deputy Secretary Su served as the secretary for the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. The LWDA enforces workplace laws, combats wage theft, ensures health and safety on the job, connects Californians to quality jobs and career pathways, and administers unemployment insurance, workers compensation and paid family leave.

Su is a nationally recognized expert on workers' rights and civil rights who has dedicated her distinguished legal career to advancing justice on behalf of poor and disenfranchised communities and is a past recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant.

As California labor commissioner from 2011 through 2018, Su enforced the state's labor laws to ensure a fair and just workplace for both employees and employers. A report on her tenure released in May 2013 found that her leadership resulted in a renaissance in enforcement activity and record-setting results. In 2014, she launched the first "Wage Theft Is a Crime" multimedia, multilingual statewide campaign to reach out to low-wage workers and their employers to help them understand their rights and feel safe speaking up about labor law abuses.

Prior to her appointment as California labor commissioner, Deputy Secretary Su was the litigation director at Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles, the nation's largest non-profit civil rights organization devoted to issues affecting the Asian American community. Su is known for pioneering a multi-strategy approach that combines



successful impact litigation with multiracial organizing, community education, policy reform, coalition building and media work.

Frequently named to top-lawyer lists such as the Daily Journal's "Top 75 Women Litigators" in California and California Lawyer's "Super Lawyers," she was the first labor commissioner to be included among the Daily Journal's "Top 75 Labor and Employment Lawyers." She has also been named one of the 50 most noteworthy women alumni of Harvard Law School and one of the 100 most influential people in Los Angeles in Los Angeles Magazine.

Su has taught at UCLA Law School and Northeastern Law School. She is a graduate of Stanford University and Harvard Law School and began her career with a Skadden Fellowship. Su speaks Mandarin and Spanish.



**Jocelyn Frye**

*President*

*National Partnership for Women & Families*

Jocelyn Frye is President of the National Partnership for Women & Families—a policymaking and legal advocacy organization which works to advance health care, civil rights, economic justice, and racial equity in America. She is the first Black

woman to head the National Partnership, which was founded 1971.

Prior to her current role, Jocelyn helped spearhead the Women’s Initiative at the Center for American Progress, one of the country’s leading progressive think tanks. Her work there spanned a wide range of issues, including narrowing the gender pay gap, improving women’s employment opportunities and economic stability, combating gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence, and addressing the Black maternal health crisis.

Before CAP, Jocelyn served in the White House during the administration of Barack Obama. She oversaw the broad issue portfolio of Michelle Obama, including the First Lady’s two signature initiatives—tackling childhood obesity and supporting military families. She also helped establish the first White House mentoring program for local high school students.

A lawyer by training, Jocelyn received her J.D. from Harvard Law School and her undergrad degree from the University of Michigan. Jocelyn is a proud native of Washington, DC, and was raised by two loving parents who worked as federal civil servants. She still resides in the district with her husband, Brian Summers, and is a member of the Deacons Ministry of Shiloh Baptist Church of Washington, DC.



## **Liz Shuler**

*President*

*AFL-CIO*

Elizabeth H. Shuler is president of the 58 unions and 12.5 million members of the AFL-CIO, and the first woman leader of America's labor movement. A visionary leader and longtime trade unionist, Shuler believes the labor movement is the single most powerful vehicle for progress and that unions are a central force in leading lasting societal transformations. She is committed to busting myths about labor, leveraging the labor movement's diversity for innovative approaches to social justice and making the benefits of a union voice on the job available to working people everywhere.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler was elected by acclamation to serve as the first woman leader of the federation on June 13, 2022. She first held the office after being elected by the AFL-CIO Executive Council on Aug. 20, 2021, following the unexpected and untimely passing of her predecessor, Richard Trumka.

In 2009, Shuler became the first woman elected to the position of secretary-treasurer at an AFL-CIO convention and the youngest woman ever on the federation's Executive Council. As secretary-treasurer, she served as the chief financial officer, turning deficits into surpluses and steering the federation through multiple fiscal crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to her stewardship of the federation's finances, she led the AFL-CIO's initiatives on the future of work, retirement security, the clean energy economy, public safety reform, workforce development, and empowering women and young workers.

Shuler grew up in a union household—her father, Lance, was a power lineman and longtime member of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 125 at Portland General Electric and her late mother, Joyce, worked as an estimator in the company's service and design department. In 1993, Shuler was hired at Local 125, where she was thrust into a full-fledged campaign to help the clerical workers organize, an experience that underscored the importance of building mobilizing capacity within the local union, particularly for women workers.

When energy giant Enron Corp. tried to muscle electricity deregulation through the Oregon Legislature, Shuler worked with a broad-based coalition of labor, community and environmental activists to challenge and ultimately overcome Enron's powerhouse lobbying campaign, a victory that sparked her passion for mobilizing workers to make change even when faced with overwhelming odds.

In 1998, Ed Hill, then-secretary-treasurer of the IBEW, took notice of Shuler's outstanding work and temporarily assigned her to California where she mobilized IBEW members to help defeat Prop. 226, the so-called paycheck protection initiative that threatened to silence union members in the political process. That victory prompted John J. Barry, president of the IBEW at the time, to hire her as an international representative in the union's Political/Legislative Affairs Department in Washington, D.C. In that role, Shuler mobilized local unions across the country and frequently lobbied Congress on a range of issues important to working families. In 2004, she was promoted to assistant to the international president, where she advised President Hill, who had succeeded to that position, in driving the agenda of the nearly 1-million member union.

Shuler is not afraid to think big, take risks and do things differently. She looks at technological change as an opportunity to strengthen worker voice and to carve new pathways for workers to learn skills and stay relevant in a changing economy. She knows digital tools can help workers organize in new and powerful ways, forge community alliances and advance issues that matter to working people.

Shuler believes unions are the single greatest force for economic fairness and equality, and a collective bargaining agreement is the best tool for achieving justice for all working people, especially for women, immigrants and people of color.

Shuler serves on the boards of the National Women's Law Center; the Institute for Women's Policy Research; the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust; the Alliance for Retired Americans; the Solidarity Center; the Committee on Workers' Capital and the Women's Committee of the International Trade Union Confederation; and chairs the board of directors of the Economic Policy Institute. She is a graduate of the University of Oregon with a degree in journalism. Shuler lives with her husband, David Herbst, and their black Labrador retriever, Trader, in Washington, D.C.



**Principal Deputy Administrator Jessica Looman**

*Wage and Hour Division  
U.S. Department of Labor*

Jessica Looman was appointed as the Principal Deputy Administrator of WHD on January 20, 2021. WHD enforces worker protections and provides outreach and education about federal labor laws including minimum wage, overtime, child labor, and family and medical leave for 148 million workers and nearly 10 million employers nationwide.

Before joining WHD, Jessica served as the Executive Director of the Minnesota State Building and Construction Trades Council, where she advocated to expand construction career pathways, protected the physical and financial health of union construction workers, and increased private and public investment in construction infrastructure.

Before joining the Building Trades, Governor Mark Dayton appointed Jessica to serve as Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Commerce. She also served as the Deputy Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry where she oversaw the strategic coordination of DLI's five divisions. She has previously served as the General Counsel of the Laborers District Council of Minnesota and North Dakota.

Jessica is a graduate of George Washington University and the University of Minnesota Law School. She lives in St. Paul, Minnesota with her husband and two sons.



## **Kristopher Garcia**

*Family Values at Work Voices of Workers (VOW) and  
9to5 National Association of Working Women*

Kristopher Garcia is a worker justice and LGBTQ rights advocate. He sits on the national board of directors for 9to5 National Association of Working Women and is an activist leader with the Voices of Workers (VOW) worker advocacy group, co-convened by Family Values @ Work and Paid Leave For All. As a member of VOW, he's working to pass a national paid family and medical leave policy. Kristopher has spent the last decade of his life advocating for equitable paid leave policies and worker justice policies with inclusive definitions that recognize the diversity in our families. His advocacy has been instrumental in making Colorado the 10th state to pass a comprehensive paid family and medical leave policy in the nation.



**Ivonne Limongi**

*MomsRising*

Ivonne Limongi is a MomsRising member in Chesapeake, Virginia. She is a business control specialist for a bank and is mom to a four-year-old son, Max. The issue of family leave is very close to her heart. She took FMLA-protected leave when she gave birth, and she has also taken intermittent FMLA leave over the past two and half years to manage her son's cancer treatment.



**Director Wendy Chun-Hoon**

*Women's Bureau*

*U.S. Department of Labor*

Wendy Chun-Hoon serves as the 20th director of the Women's Bureau, appointed by President Biden on February 1, 2021. Wendy is skilled at coalition building, bridging strategy across grassroots community organizing, and public sector policy making at state and national levels. She has held senior positions in Maryland state government and private philanthropy, overseeing large-scale, results-driven initiatives for worker

and family economic justice.

For the past 10 years, Wendy's led Family Values @ Work, a national network of grassroots coalitions that have won more than 60 new paid leave policies bringing new rights to 55 million workers and their loved ones and are organizing to win greater access to child care, and fair wages and employment conditions for workers.

Recognizing the ways in which her own family would be excluded from new policies for paid time to care, Wendy spearheaded the development of the Family Justice Network, building cross-movement organizing among paid leave advocates, communities of color, groups working for reproductive and disability justice, equality for LGBTQ individuals, and organized labor that has made inclusive family recognition a hallmark of the paid leave movement. Under Wendy's leadership, FV@W's staff and board grew and are now majority women of color. She was also instrumental in bringing together dozens of organizations to form a coordinated national campaign known as Paid Leave for All.

Born and raised in Hawaii, Wendy graduated from Vassar College before earning master's degrees in Philanthropic Studies and Nonprofit Management from Indiana University. An avid soccer player, Wendy lives with her wife and their two kids in Silver Spring, MD.





## **Representative Rosa DeLauro (CT-3)**

*Member of Congress*

Rosa DeLauro is the Congresswoman from Connecticut's Third Congressional District, which stretches from the Long Island Sound and New Haven, to the Naugatuck Valley and Waterbury. Rosa serves as the Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Committee and sits on the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, and she is the Ranking Member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, where she fights for critical investments in the nation's education, health, and employment.

At the core of Rosa's work is her fight for America's working families. Rosa believes that we must raise the nation's minimum wage, give all employees access to paid sick days, allow employees to take paid family and medical leave, and ensure equal pay for equal work. Rosa believes that our first priority must be to strengthen the economy and create good middle class jobs.

That's why since 2013, DeLauro has introduced the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act to create a permanent, national paid family and medical leave program. The legislation would ensure that every worker, no matter the side of their employer or if they are self-employed or part-time, has access to paid leave for every serious medical event, every time it's needed. DeLauro's FAMILY Act is modeled on successful state programs and would create a permanent paid family and medical leave program for all workers for 12 weeks.

DeLauro has been a leader in the fight to extend paid leave to Federal employees, enact a federal paid leave program during the COVID-19 crisis, and establish a national paid family and medical leave program. DeLauro was also instrumental in getting a paid family and medical leave program included in the House-passed Build Back Better Act, which would have been the first step toward that goal.



**Representative Lauren Underwood (IL-14)**  
*Member of Congress*

Congresswoman Lauren Underwood serves Illinois' 14th Congressional District and was sworn into the 116th U.S. Congress on January 3, 2019. Congresswoman Underwood is the first woman, the first person of color, and the first millennial to represent her community in Congress. She is also the youngest African American woman to serve in the United States House of Representatives.

Congresswoman Underwood serves on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and the House Committee on Appropriations. Congresswoman Underwood co-founded and co-chairs the Black Maternal Health Caucus, which elevates the Black maternal health crisis within Congress and advances policy solutions to improve maternal health outcomes and end disparities. She also serves on the House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee. Rep. Underwood is a member of the Future Forum, a group of young Democratic Members of Congress committed to listening to and standing up for the next generation of Americans, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and the LGBT Equality Caucus. As a strong supporter of addressing the gun violence epidemic, Congresswoman Underwood is a member of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force.

Prior to her election to Congress, Congresswoman Underwood worked with a Medicaid plan in Chicago to ensure that it provided high-quality, cost-efficient care. She served as a Senior Advisor at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), helping communities across the country prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters, bioterror threats, and public health emergencies. As a career public servant at HHS, she helped implement the Affordable Care Act — broadening access for those on Medicare, improving health care quality, and reforming private insurance. Congresswoman Underwood also taught future nurse practitioners through Georgetown University's online master's program. Congresswoman Underwood is a graduate of the University of Michigan and Johns Hopkins University. She graduated from Neuqua Valley High School and is a lifelong Girl Scout. She resides in Naperville, Illinois.