

Michael Bolton

Represents: The interests of persons who are members of labor unions that are affiliated with the forestry industry

United Steel Workers

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Michael Bolton has served as Director of United Steel Workers (USW) District 2 since 2008 and was re-elected in 2009, 2013 and 2017. A seasoned negotiator with extensive experience in the paper sector, Bolton has helped USW locals successfully navigate contract talks during what has proven to be an especially challenging time for the industry.

In 2013, he worked with private-equity firm KPS Capital Partners to preserve 1,400 jobs at three paper mills in Wisconsin, and also fought to preserve family-supporting jobs for USW members when Veritas Steel acquired PDM Bridge.

Bolton has taken on a national leadership role in Wisconsin's and Michigan's workers' rights issues. Throughout his career, Bolton has served on committees across District 2, which encompasses Michigan and Wisconsin, with the goal of improving and assisting in the lives of members. He has served on the North Central Wisconsin Labor Management Council, the Wisconsin Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council, and the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council. In 2008, he became a member of the AFL-CIO Midwest Region Affiliate Board, and he serves on both the Wisconsin AFL-CIO Executive Board and the Michigan AFL-CIO Executive Board. He also serves on the board of directors for the Economic Alliance of Michigan. In 2009, Bolton became chairman of the Northeast Wisconsin Area Labor Federation.

Bolton also helped foster involvement in the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Youth Apprenticeship Program. The program helps connect area youth with employers seeking qualified new hires, allowing students to split their days between classes and on-the-job training. Appleton Coated and Kimberly Clark Corporation are current employer participants.

Bolton has taken an increasingly prominent role on environmental issues, serving on a number of global warming task forces and as a member of the Wisconsin Council on Forestry.

Bolton began his career in 1976 in Marshalltown, Iowa, as a machine operator for Packaging Corporation of America. He quickly became active in the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU), rising to the position of union staff member in 1987.

When UPIU's successor, the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy International Union, merged with the USW in 2005, Bolton became Sub-District Director of North Central Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Bolton retired from the USW in May of 2022, but is pleased to continue to represent Labor on the Forestry Council.