# WISCONSIN SENATE CANDIDATES ON MENDING THE GAPS





Mending the Wealth and Income Gap

## **TAX JUSTICE**



No tax policy change should exacerbate the income gap, especially the racial/ethnic and gender wealth gaps.

About 246,000 workers in Wisconsin would benefit from expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit to include childless workers.<sup>1</sup>

**Russ Feingold** knows "some of the worst inefficiencies in Washington happen when Congress 'spends through the tax code,' often as givewaways to the very powerful and wealthy." He supports closing special interest corporate loopholes, ending tax inversions, and stopping preferential policies for oil and gas companies.<sup>2</sup>

**Ron Johnson** voted against legislation that would close tax loopholes that for corporations that move jobs overseas.<sup>3</sup> He supports simplifying the tax code and wants all candidates to prioritize "cutting red tape and reducing our regulatory burden; and promoting pro-growth tax reform."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>http://apps.cbpp.org/3-5-14tax/?state=WI <sup>2</sup>http://russfeingold.com/issue/closing-special-interest-loopholes/ <sup>3</sup>http://www.consto.gov/looislative/US/roll, call, lists/roll, call, vote

<sup>3</sup>http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll\_call\_lists/roll\_call\_vote\_cfm.c fm?congress=114&session=1&vote=00078

4http://info.ronjohnsonforsenate.com/press/icymi-ron-johnson-op-edon-republican-debate-today-in-wisconsin Mending the Wealth and Income Gap

### LIVING WAGES



National legislation should move from adjusting a minimum wage to creating a living wage.

The minimum wage in Wisconsin is \$7.25 and has not been increased since the national increase in 2009.<sup>1</sup>

**Russ Feingold** supports raising the minimum wage to \$15. He believes "Americans who work full-time deserve a living wage" and "even raising the minimum wage to \$12 would mean a raise for nearly 400,000 women in Wisconsin and help to close the gender wage gap."<sup>2</sup>

Ron Johnson does not want to raise the minimum wage, saying: "In addition to lost jobs, as business costs rise, prices would increase for everyone—including those left jobless by the increase in minimum wage. The most effective way to boost incomes for hard-working Americans is to pursue policies that result in a robust economy where businesses compete for workers by offering higher wages."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>http://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2014/5/johnsoncomments-on-minimum-wage-vote Mending the Wealth and Income Gap

# FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES



The needs of women and families should be integrated into federal workplace policies.

50% of working parents in Wisconsin are ineligible to take unpaid, job protected leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act.<sup>1</sup>

**Russ Feingold** supports paid family leave, as it "is good for the child, this is good for the parents, and it's good for the employer, who will retain a happy, loyal employee as they build their family."<sup>2</sup>

**Ron Johnson** originally voted against a paid sick day proposal in 2015 which would have guaranteed up to seven days paid leave per year for workers to recover from an illness or care for a sick family member. Shortly thereafter, he switched his vote, following other Republicans facing difficult reelections, claiming "it was an innocent mistake."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>http://www.diversitydatakids.org/data/map/ <sup>2</sup>http://russfeingold.com/issue/economic-opportunity-wisconsinfamilies/

<sup>3</sup>http://www.rollcall.com/news/home/paid-sick-leave-toomey-johnsonyulnerable-votearama

#### **Mending the Access Gap** DEMOCRACY



No individual or community of color should be disenfranchised by federal policy.

**Voting restrictions in Wisconsin** enacted since 2011 require photo identification, reduce the early voting period, and restrict voter registration.1

Russ Feingold supported voting rights in 2006 during discussion of the Voting Rights Act, which he called "the most important piece of federal legislation ever passed." He also said, "without a meaningful chance to vote, there can be no equality before the law, no equal access to justice, no equal opportunity in the workplace or to share in the benefits and burdens of citizenship."2

Ron Johnson does not have a clear position on voting rights. As a senator, he has not co-sponsored the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015, which would restore the Voting Rights Act and require states with a history of discrimination to get federal approval before changing their voting laws.<sup>3</sup>

https://www.brennancenter.org/voting-restrictions-first-time-2016 2http://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/feingold\_statement\_0 7\_19\_06.pdf

3https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/885/relatedbills?g=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22-

+Voting+Rights+amendment+Act+of+2015%22%5D%7D&resultIndex=

**Mending the Access Gap** 

## **HEALTHCARE**



Racial and economic disparities in healthcare should be eliminated.

Wisconsin has not enacted Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act, leaving 167,000 low-income families uninsured.1

Russ Feingold voted for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010 and is "focused on increasing access to healthcare through the framework of the Affordable Care Act."<sup>2</sup> In 2009, he said the ultimate goal of healthcare reform "is to create whatever legislation we have in a way that could be developed into something like a single payer system."3

**Ron Johnson** believes the Affordable Care Act should be repealed and replaced with market-based solutions. He recently introduced a bill, "Preserving Freedom and Choice in Health Care," that would repeal the ACA's mandate for employers to provide insurance to their employees, and believes the mandate is a burden. The bill "begins to replace Obamacare's expensive mess with patient-focused, market-based reforms."4

http://familiesusa.org/product/50-state-look-medicaid-expansion <sup>2</sup>http://freebeacon.com/politics/russ-feingold-abruptly-stops-himselffrom-saving-he-supports-single-payer-health-care/ https://www.voutube.com/watch?v=vxa4dgwnzS0 4http://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-

releases?ID=b9c77912-9790-4b01-9586-dc4b225e547d

**Mending the Access Gap** CITIZENSHIP



Immigrants should be welcomed into the country.

**Undocumented immigrants in** Wisconsin pay \$80 million in state and local taxes and, if comprehensive immigration reform is passed, they would pay \$17 million more.1

Russ Feingold joined his Senate colleagues in 2010 in support of comprehensive immigration reform because it "means reuniting families, modernizina existina immigration programs, and giving immigrant collegeaged students a chance at the American dream."2

Ron Johnson voted against the 2013 Senate comprehensive immigration reform bill. He believes that "we have to secure the border as opposed to comprehensive reform." He is chair of the Senate Homeland Security Committee and believes that in order to "keep this nation safe, we need to defeat ISIS [and] secure our border."3

1http://www.itep.org/immigration/#map <sup>2</sup>https://www.boxer.senate.gov/?p=release&id=810 3http://www.newsmax.com/Newsmax-Tv/Ron-Johnson-borders-John-Cornyn-Jeff-Flake/2015/01/21/id/619858/

**Mending the Access Gap** 





Everyone should have access to safe, affordable housing.

Wisconsin has a shortage of 134,840 housing units that are affordable and available for extremely low-income renters.1

Russ Feingold said that "a real investment in affordable housing and foreclosure assistance can serve as the foundation for improving Americans' lives and communities."<sup>2</sup> During his previous term in the Senate, he supported increased funding for housing programs.3

**Ron Johnson** does not support government involvement and funding for housing programs. In 2012, he voted against appropriations bills which would increase federal funding for Section 8 housing assistance, including vouchers for veterans experiencing homelessness.4

1http://nlihc.org/library/SHP

<sup>2</sup>http://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/funding-for-housinghealth-and-social-services-block-grants-has-fallen

<sup>3</sup>https://votesmart.org/public-statement/454569/feingold-hails-increasein-funding-for-affordable-housing#.V3KzJvkrKUk

<sup>4</sup>http://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/in-thenews?page=26