

# **Pritzker Administration Honors The Contributions Of Illinois Working People**

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**SPRINGFIELD**— Labor Day is an opportunity to acknowledge those whose hard work over the last eighteen months of the COVID-19 pandemic has kept our communities safe and put the state on the road to recovery.

“Labor Day has long been a date to recognize the efforts of America’s workforce. COVID-19 is another test that workers in Illinois - and across the country - continue to overcome. From first responders to grocery store workers and our brave healthcare professionals, all workers deserve our gratitude and thanks every day, but especially today,” said Illinois Department of Labor Director Michael Kleinik.

Labor Day asks us to pause and reflect on how far we have come in protecting workers in Illinois and the United States.

In September 1882, 10,000 workers gathered in New York City to march in support of fair labor practices, protesting the 12-hour shifts seven-days-a-week workers were forced to endure. Child labor laws were non-existent with young children working dangerous jobs for low wages in factories and mines. Working conditions for many workers, especially the poor and new immigrants, were often unsafe and unsanitary.

President Grover Cleveland signed legislation creating Labor Day in June 1894. Now, 127 years later, Illinois again will honor all workers on Labor Day.

The mission of the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) is to promote and protect the rights, wages, welfare, working conditions, safety, and health of Illinois workers, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, color, or sexual orientation. By enforcing federal and state labor laws, IDOL is safeguarding the public and encouraging workplaces where Illinoisans can thrive.