**Headline:** How Trump Betrayed Workers by Gutting the Inflation Reduction Act

By David McCall

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**[Article Body:]**

Federal officials, then-Governor of Indiana Eric Holcomb, union leaders, company representatives, and dozens of guests assembled at Heidelberg Materials in Mitchell, Indiana, last year to celebrate a [milestone](https://finance.yahoo.com/news/u-doe-selects-heidelberg-materials-173700430.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAB-UNqq3vYyIY9UiVl4inoBKVutst6Zovh6oSriNtJtbzmKSZyLdTaBnesbqJJWFSs7FCi0KlMbxk2I0q3LPHtKq4oC6n1a-aiSZMiBQV4a-bweltJf88_lOLOXxgAjbkurx7OgsykNDGY0DdP6e6pbMLfnj1ueShnBkz6Q9X8nY) for North America’s second-largest cement plant.

The U.S. Department of Energy awarded the company up to $500 million through the [Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)](https://rockproducts.com/2024/03/26/doe-nod-advances-heidelberg-materials-1b-carbon-capture-project/) for a groundbreaking modernization project aimed at building industrial might, strengthening supply chains, and revolutionizing a critical industry.

With that support in hand, company representatives [drilled a 7,300-foot-deep](https://www.heidelbergmaterials.us/home/news/news/2025/02/24/heidelberg-materials-north-america-announces-new-milestone-for-mitchell-ccs-project) test well and [took other steps](https://www.wbiw.com/2024/09/03/heidelberg-materials-finalizes-contract-to-begin-carbon-capture-project-at-mitchell-cement-plant/#google_vignette) to launch the carbon-capture initiative at the heart of the effort. Production workers, represented by United Steelworkers (USW) Local 7-00030, looked forward to widening their impact on the local economy and leading the nation into a new manufacturing era. Community leaders united behind the initiative.

And then Donald Trump [stabbed them all](https://www.wbiw.com/2025/06/10/federal-funding-pulled-for-heidelberg-materials-carbon-capture-project/#google_vignette) in the back.

On May 30, he [summarily canceled](https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/clean-industry/trump-cut-funding-oced) billions in IRA funding at Heidelberg Materials and dozens of other companies, stopping some cutting-edge manufacturing projects in their tracks and leaving others with uncertain futures.

Trump claims to want to build manufacturing power and make more products domestically. But that’s just more of his empty bluster.

He showed his disregard for the economy and contempt for working people by gutting the IRA, a law indisputably [moving America](https://cleanpower.org/news/economy-wide-benefits-of-energy-tax-credits/) in the right direction.

“It was a big deal,” said Local 7-00030 president Doug Duncan, who leads about 115 workers at Heidelberg Materials, noting the project would have supported [1,000 temporary construction jobs and generated dozens of permanent](https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2024-03/FINAL%20IDP%20Selection%20National%20Briefing_0.pdf) positions.

“It would have been good for the local economy. It would have been a whole new facility that would have been built,” he explained, adding that the company already performed “a lot of engineering and other site preparation work.”

“I’m not so sure what’s going to happen now,” he said.

The USW and other unions [helped to push the IRA](https://usw.org/press-release/usw-applauds-house-passage-of-inflation-reduction-act/) through Congress [without a single Republican vote](https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/16/politics/biden-inflation-reduction-act-signing) in August 2022.

The legislation unlocked billions for the new training, technology, equipment, and other infrastructure needed to keep huge swaths of America’s economy globally competitive. The [legislation](https://usw.org/a-matter-of-life-or-death/) also [capped insulin costs, empowered Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices](https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/16/politics/biden-inflation-reduction-act-signing), and addressed other priorities of ordinary Americans, none of which mattered to congressional Republicans.

The IRA’s passage occurred at just the right time for Heidelberg Materials, which [opened a new plant](https://www.heidelbergmaterials.com/en/pr-2023-06-14) in Mitchell in June 2023 to triple production capacity, meet “U.S. cement supply chain constraints,” and accommodate growing demand for materials needed to build everything from bridges to water treatment plants.

Duncan recalled that the USW and the company collaborated on the pursuit of the IRA funding because it offered a path forward on a shared goal: ensuring the new plant operated with the most advanced technology and with optimum viability while setting the gold standard for sustainability in an energy-intensive industry.

“We would have captured over 2 million tons of carbon a year,” observed Duncan, pointing out that the decarbonization infrastructure would have rivaled the footprint of the cement plant itself.

Amid a flurry of headlines praising the project, officials and workers held an event at the plant to mark the historic occasion.

“This is what Hoosiers are all about,” declared Holcomb, who was one of the dignitaries in attendance that day and, unlike other Republicans, grasped the IRA’s transformative potential.

“We’ve long been pioneers, and [now we’re pioneering](https://www.heidelbergmaterials.us/home/news/news/2024/03/25/u.s.-doe-selects-heidelberg-materials-new-cement-plant-in-mitchell-indiana-for-industrial-demonstrations-program-funding) the future of cement,” added Holcomb, whose term ended in January 2025.

Other workplaces also celebrated IRA funding awards. Now, like Heidelberg Materials, they’re stuck, sometimes in the middle of construction.

“This isn’t ‘cute’ to me,” said USW Local 2140 president Ron Woods, who likened Trump’s blithe abandonment of the IRA to the sick amusement that Trump and his crackpot sidekick, Elon Musk, derived from wielding their chainsaw against the federal work force and agencies serving ordinary Americans.

“This administration is screwing over the United States,” Woods said.

Woods works at U.S. Pipe in Bessemer, Alabama, which last year was awarded up to [$75.5 million in IRA funds](https://usw.org/a-new-manufacturing-frontier/) to install new electric-induction melting furnaces.

As planned, the project had the potential to [boost manufacturing capacity and sustainability](https://www.energy.gov/oced/industrial-demonstrations-program-selections-award-negotiations-iron-and-steel), securing the future of a plant that’s decades old and an anchor of the local economy. In addition, it would have created dozens of high-paying jobs as well as opportunities for current workers to advance.

In all, the law would have created millions of jobs nationwide and left a “lasting impact” on the economy, according to a [study](https://cleanpower.org/news/economy-wide-benefits-of-energy-tax-credits/) commissioned by the American Clean Power Association, a trade group.

And it would have led entire sectors into a new era.

Among other examples, Libbey Glass in Toledo, Ohio, O-I Glass in Zanesville, Ohio, and Gallo Glass in Modesto, California, were awarded [tens of millions each](https://www.packagingdive.com/news/oi-glass-doe-award-decarbonization-furnace-zanesville/737106/) for new furnaces.

These furnaces, the heart of the glassmaking operation, must be rebuilt periodically. IRA investments provided an opportunity to modernize these facilities, take sustainability to a new level, and better position the industry to compete against foreign producers.

“I think, as a whole, the glass industry is kind of struggling,” observed Anthony Vergara, president of USW Local 17M, which represents about 700 workers at Gallo.

While Vergara anticipates Gallo rebuilding its furnace without the IRA, he said the promised support would have helped to deliver the “big turn” the whole industry needs for long-term survival.

“It definitely would have been a good thing,” he said.