

Bernie Sanders Unveils His Own Gig Economy Plan

Insights

9.20.19

You can tell we're well into the midst of the campaign season when presidential hopefuls reveal their plans for handling various societal concerns. We saw it as several Democratic candidates lined up to offer their plans to combat pay equity issues. Now, it's the gig economy's turn. A few months ago, South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg put forth a plan that called for greater protections for gig economy workers. Next up: Senator Bernie Sanders.

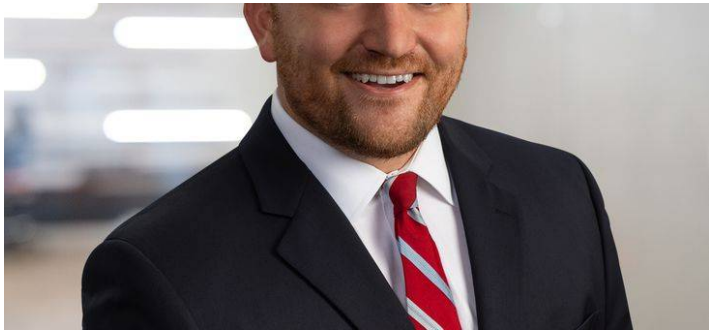
Senator Sanders (I-Vt.) recently released a comprehensive plan entitled "Workplace Democracy," replete with suggestions and regulatory proposals that he would seek to enact if he wins the White House in 2020. Among his many proposals, Sanders takes dead aim at the gig economy. "Companies will no longer be able to ruthlessly exploit workers by misclassifying them as independent contractors," his website reads. "When Bernie is president, his administration will end the ability of corporations to misclassify workers as 'independent contractors'." As The Hill put it, Sanders's plan "would make it harder for [gig economy businesses] to rely on gig workers. ... As part of the platform, Sanders promised to crack down on the gig economy, which critics say has allowed companies to exploit workers by treating them as contractors instead of offering them the full benefits that come with being an employee."

This is not Senator Sanders's first foray into attacking the gig economy as we know it. As I wrote last year, Senator Sanders introduced The Workplace Democracy Act in 2018, with the goal of increasing workers' rights to bargain for better wages, benefits, and working conditions. The bill was co-sponsored by fellow presidential hopefuls Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.). It aimed to extend collective bargaining rights to gig workers while narrowing the definition of independent contractor, striking a chord similar to the law enacted just a few days ago in California.

We will continue to monitor the various plans offered by the presidential candidates and report back as warranted.

Related People





Brett P. Owens

Partner

813.769.7512

Email