

# Reclaiming **Worker Power** Energizing **Our Movement**

WASHINGTON STATE LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

## **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RAISING WASHINGTON'S MINIMUM WAGE, ESTABLISHING PAID VACATION, AND ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS** RESOLUTION #2024.12

WHEREAS, there is something inherently broken about an economy where workers must work multiple jobs to survive; and

WHEREAS, a renter in Washington would need to earn \$30-\$40 an hour to afford a typical one-bedroom apartment without spending more than 30% of their income on housing, and Washington's minimum wage currently is \$16.28; and

WHEREAS, women represent 7 in 10 of lowest wage positions nationally, with more than 30% supporting children at home; and

WHEREAS, low wage work is disproportionately done by people of color, immigrants and refugees, and undocumented workers, who due to their precarious financial status, limited English skills, or unfamiliarity with wage and hour laws are more likely to be abused by unscrupulous employers; and

WHEREAS, poverty is a social determinant of health, with low wage workers disproportionately experiencing poor nutrition, elevated levels of stress hormones, and other indicators of poor health, leading to shortened lifetimes; and

WHEREAS, low wage workers must access social programs to support themselves and their families, thus making taxpayers subsidize the inadequate compensation choices of employers; and

WHEREAS, a minimum wage that produces these outcomes is, like many others, a policy choice that can be changed and improved; and

WHEREAS, time off for rest, rejuvenation, and activities outside work should not be a privilege of a few but a right for all workers to liberate individual workers to engage more fully in family, community and political life; and

WHEREAS, the United States is a global outlier in not guaranteeing paid time off, and while some certain jobs in the US economy do earn paid vacation time, minimum wage workers do not; and

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## **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RAISING WASHINGTON'S MINIMUM WAGE, ESTABLISHING PAID VACATION, AND ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS (cont.)**

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WHEREAS, wage increases, especially at the bottom of the income spectrum, result in increased community-level economic activity and support for local businesses; and

WHEREAS, minimum wage campaigns starting in SeaTac over a decade ago and most recently in King County have passed overwhelmingly and have measurably improved the lives of low wage workers; and

WHEREAS, laws without enforcement provisions can't adequately support and protect workers, and while our labor movement believes that all workers deserve a union, increasing our ability to enforce minimum wage standards is critical to all Washington workers; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will lead a fight for justice and balance between our working selves and our whole selves, and will convene a workgroup to meet to discuss raising the minimum wage and establishing paid vacation statewide; and be it further

RESOLVED, that WSLC will advocate for comprehensive enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with any new minimum wage and paid vacation laws, protecting workers from exploitation and abuse; and be it further

RESOLVED, that WSLC will collaborate with community organizations and advocacy groups to raise awareness and support for these initiatives, ensuring a broad coalition of support for worker rights; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO forward this resolution to the AFL-CIO.