



Legislation Text

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**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**RESOLUTION \_\_\_\_\_**

A RESOLUTION supporting the establishment of a dignified and robust wage for employees performing work in cities across America, as part of a national mobilization on April 15th to promote higher wages for all working families.

WHEREAS, United States President Barack Obama has called addressing income inequality the "the defining issue of our time;" and

WHEREAS, the noted economist Thomas Piketty wrote in his landmark book *Capital in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* the need to act on income inequality is profound: "real wages for most US workers have increased little if at all since the early 1970s, but wages for the top one percent of earners have risen 165 percent, and wages for the top 0.1 percent have risen 362 percent;" and

WHEREAS, millions of low wage workers struggle to meet their families' most basic needs, urban living is increasingly unaffordable for so many citizens, and the hollowing-out of the middle class strikes at the core of who we are as a community - dedicated to democratic principles and economic advancement and opportunity; and

WHEREAS, women and people of color are over-represented in low wage jobs, and a higher minimum wage is a powerful tool to reduce race and gender income disparities;

WHEREAS, many workers cannot fully participate in their community's civic life or pursue the myriad educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities that constitute a flourishing life because they struggle to meet their households' most basic needs; and

WHEREAS, minimum wage laws promote the general welfare, health, and prosperity of citizens by ensuring that workers can better support and care for their families and fully participate in civic, cultural, and

economic life; and

WHEREAS, corporations have a responsibility to treat their employees with respect and workers have a moral right to live in dignity, but approximately 52 percent of the families of front-line fast food workers are enrolled in public assistance programs, which costs taxpayers approximately \$7 billion a year; and

WHEREAS, the fast food industry had revenues of approximately \$232 billion in 2014 and the top 7 fast food companies earned annual profits in 2012 of approximately \$7 billion and distributed \$7.7 billion in dividends and stock buybacks; and

WHEREAS, the growth of low-wage jobs extends beyond fast food and retail into sectors like healthcare and child care, where home care workers and child care teachers that care for our most vulnerable can't make ends meet; and academia, where adjunct professors too often earn poverty wages with no benefits despite having advanced degrees; NOW, THEREFORE;

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:**

The Seattle City Council supports workers across the country who are calling for a wage of \$15 per hour and the right to organize. We urge employers, from fast food chains to universities, to respond to the challenge of rising income inequality by raising wages significantly so as to ensure broadly shared prosperity that permits employees to obtain basic necessities like affordable housing, health care, and education and to give their families a dignified life.

Adopted by the City Council the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

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President \_\_\_\_\_ of the City Council

Filed by me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

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Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)