

PROCLAMATION



City and County of Denver

Proclamation No. 19-

DENVER CITY COUNCIL URGES THE COLORADO STATE LEGISLATURE TO PASS LOCAL WAGE OPTION

WHEREAS, communities across our state are struggling to keep up with the rapidly rising costs of living, but state law prohibits local governments from enacting jurisdiction-wide laws with respect to minimum wages; and

WHEREAS, Colorado's minimum wage workers are struggling to afford housing, health care, child care, and other basic necessities; and

WHEREAS, average rents in Colorado have increased six times faster than people's earnings between 2012 and 2016, and hardworking Coloradans should not be forced out of their communities because wages are not keeping up with rents and other living costs; and

WHEREAS, research and economic data show that poverty is concentrated among people of color, children, people with lower educational attainment, and female-headed households; higher wages for these families would mean they would have more disposable income and more time to spend with their children; and

WHEREAS, Income has consistently been shown to be one of the strongest predictors of health status and poverty and low income have been linked with premature mortality and low life expectancy; a rise in household income through an increased minimum wage would result in significant public health benefits for workers in Denver; and

WHEREAS, increasing the minimum wage boosts job retention, raises earnings and consumer spending across Colorado, and leads to Coloradans spending more money in the local economy; and

WHEREAS, there is no evidence that raising the minimum wage leads to notable price increases and little to no job loss; in fact, rural Colorado added 6,000 jobs following the 33 percent increase in the minimum wage in 2006; and

WHEREAS, small businesses have grown faster in states with a higher minimum wage and owners support raising it; and

WHEREAS, the public welfare, health, and prosperity of Denver requires wages sufficient to ensure a decent and healthy life for all workers in Denver and their families; and

WHEREAS, the Denver City Council is committed to protecting the power of local governments to act on the values and needs of their residents and promote a fair and accessible economy.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER:

Section 1. That the Local Wage Option be passed into law by the Colorado State Legislature to allow local jurisdictions to enact minimum wage laws, supporting Coloradans, their families, local businesses, and the state economy, while spurring consumer spending and a healthier economy.

Section 2. That passage of the Local Wage Option would uphold that local decision-making in Colorado should be protected and left to each municipality to tailor based on their specific needs.

Section 3. That the Clerk of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that copies be transmitted to: Colorado People's Alliance (COPA).

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL February 25, 2019

PRESIDENT

CO-SPONSOR