

July 28, 2008

The Honorable Barack Obama
United States Senate
Hart Building # 713
2nd and C Streets, NE
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Obama,

Congratulations on your continued success in your bid for the White House. You are carrying the hopes and dreams of millions of Americans.

We are writing again to encourage your support for America's working poor by fixing (once and for all) the Federal Minimum Wage. When first enacted, the Congressional goal was to ensure that if a person worked 40 hours in a week then they would be able to afford basic food, clothing, shelter (including utilities). Our goal remains the same today, and if we just tweak the existing FMW by indexing it to the local cost of housing throughout the U.S., this can be accomplished. In fact, our formula which uses existing government guidelines, (HUD Section 8 Fair Market Rents), does just that.

The common sense of this approach has helped us garner organizational support from 1770 entities equaling over 1,000,000 registered voters. Unions such as the Service Employees International Union, SEIU, the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, and the Communication Workers of America, CWA, have rallied behind the concept because they see it as the organizing bridge to the millions of minimum wage workers who have become homeless.

Businesses such as American Apparel (10,000 employees) have endorsed the concept because they know this approach is good for business and will save billions of dollars in retraining costs. Furthermore, HSR Construction, a national housing construction company, has endorsed because they recognize that following the 10 year transition period, we will have placed the funds for the creation of truly affordable housing in the pockets of minimum wage workers across America. This will create a minor national housing construction boom.

Nonprofit environmentalists such as the Green Party have endorsed the ULW because they realize that as long as millions of minimum wage workers remain homeless, they do so along our creek beds, estuaries, lakes, and in our woods where there is no trash removal and no bathroom facilities.

page 2
Senator Obama
7/28/2008

Faith-based organizations such as the National Council of Churches, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and Church Women United, (claiming several million members), have endorsed the ULW because the call for “fair wages” are found in religious writings from the Bible to Catholic Encyclicals.

Finally, there was a study that came from Attorney General John Ashcroft’s office showing a definitive link between poverty and violence. The study showed that the closer a family is to poverty, the greater the propensity for domestic violence and the further a family moves away from poverty, the less violence. See www.UniversalLivingWage.org: “When Violence Hits Home” found on the “What’s New” button - November 22, 2007.

Again, our organization urges you to embrace the concept of the Universal Living Wage. We also ask that you introduce a bill that carries the legislation. Please see suggested language found at www.UniversalLivingWage.org on the legislative button. We eagerly await your response. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard R. Troxell
Universal Living Wage Campaign
National Chairman
National Coalition for the Homeless
Livable Incomes Coordinator

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