



Text File

Introduced: 7/24/2012

Bill No: 2012-0641, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, the minimum wage under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act is currently \$7.25 per hour, or only \$15,000 per year for a full-time, year-round worker; and

WHEREAS, the federal minimum wage therefore falls below the rate that an individual must earn to support their family, thereby trapping families in poverty and devastating our communities; and

WHEREAS, the federal minimum wage would be more than \$10.40 per hour today had it kept pace with the rising cost of living over the last forty years; and

WHEREAS, the federal minimum wage for workers who receive tips, the overwhelming majority of whom are women, has been unchanged at \$2.13 per hour since 1991; and

WHEREAS, an individual currently earning the federal minimum would have to work 749 hours to afford one year of health insurance premiums and 2,106 hours to afford a year's tuition at the University of Pittsburgh; and

WHEREAS, minimum wage earners are disproportionately women and people of color; and

WHEREAS, the Pittsburgh region has the highest rate of poverty among working-age African-Americans in the nation, and in the Pittsburgh region, 20 percent of African-Americans working in full-time positions make less than \$20,000 per year, compared with 11 percent of whites; and

WHEREAS, the poverty rate in the Pittsburgh area has risen from 10.8 percent to 12.2 percent in the last decade, which means that over 279,000 people in the Pittsburgh area now live in poverty; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has a higher proportion of minimum wage earners than the national average, and has the 13th highest rate of food insecurity and the 12th highest rate of individuals without health insurance; and

WHEREAS, 21.6 percent of the Pittsburgh workforce is employed in service occupations, an industry with a higher concentration of minimum wage jobs; and

WHEREAS, in no state can an individual working a full-time minimum wage job afford to pay for an average two-bedroom apartment; and

WHEREAS, the National Employment Law Project has found that 73 percent of the jobs added since the recent recession ended have been in lower-wage occupations, only serving to extend our nation's income inequality; and

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WHEREAS, according to the Economic Policy Institute, current proposals in Congress to raise the minimum wage would increase wages for twenty-eight million Americans and stimulate increased economic demand that could lead to the creation of 100,000 new full-time jobs; and

WHEREAS, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, every \$1.00 in hourly wage increase for a minimum wage worker results in \$2,800 in new consumer spending by his or her household over the following year.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby express support for legislation that would raise the federal minimum wage and provide hope for the one in eight Pittsburgh area residents who currently live in poverty.