

**P
R
I
O
R
I
T
Y**

Date: January 19, 2016

To: Mayor & City Council

From: Patrick H. West
City Manager

Subject: Minimum Wage Policy

Comments:

Supplemental information
related to Agenda Item #R-16
on the January 19, 2016 City
Council Agenda – letter from
the Human Relations

Commission re: Ordinance
for the implementation of a
Minimum Wage Policy



Date: January 19, 2016
To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *P.H. West*
From: Amy J. Bodek, Director of Development Services *A. Bodek*
For: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
Subject: Letter to the Mayor and City Council Regarding Ordinance for the Implementation of a Minimum Wage Policy

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) would like to submit the attached letter to the Mayor and City Council regarding the Ordinance for the implementation of a Minimum Wage Policy.

As the Long Beach City Council's principle advisory commission promoting peace, tolerance, and mutual respect, the Human Relations Commission submits to the Long Beach City Council a recommendation regarding an Ordinance for the implementation of a minimum wage policy for the entire City of Long Beach.

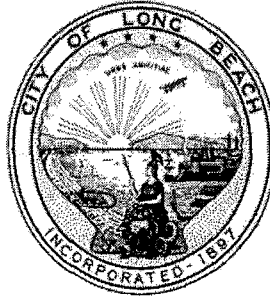
Thank you.

AJB:TC:tg
Attachment

cc: Tom Modica, Assistant City Manager
Arturo Sanchez, Deputy City Manager

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Jeannine Pearce, Chair
Miles McNeeley, Vice Chair
Elisa Buchanan, Member
Sandy Horwitz, Member
Byron Bolton, Member
Rohida Khan, Member



Dezmond Fletcher, Member
Otis Hogan, Member
Nikole Cababa, Member
Veronica Quincy, Member
Elaine Bernal, Member
Steve Gallagher, Member

January 19, 2016

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
City of Long Beach
333 W. Ocean Boulevard, 14th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: Ordinance for the Implementation of a Minimum Wage Policy

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

The Human Relations Commission's purpose and function is to "promote good will...in order to maintain civic pride and tranquility and enhance and improve mutual understanding and respect for all citizens of the community." It is in this context that the Human Relations Commission placed the question of raising the minimum wage on our agenda, as this issue is of critical importance to the quality of life of many Long Beach residents and families. As the Long Beach City Council's principle advisory commission promoting peace, tolerance, and mutual respect, the Human Relations Commission submits to the Long Beach City Council the following recommendation: To direct the City Attorney to prepare an Ordinance for the implementation of a minimum wage policy for the entire City of Long Beach that includes:

- A pathway to \$15 an hour.
- Cost of living (CPI) annual increases, to be reviewed after the first five years.
- Comprehensive wage enforcement.

The Human Relations Commission over the last several months has discussed the impending City Council vote to raise the minimum wage. Members have attended many of the public forums over the last several months, heard public comments, and reviewed the findings from the Economic Roundtable and Long Beach's own Economic Development Commission's recommendations to the City Council.

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

January 19, 2016

Page 2

There is no denying that poverty is inextricably linked to the health and well-being of residents and the City overall. Poverty does discriminate. While poverty affects people of all race, class, and genders; its largest impacts are on people of color. According to the US Census, 24.3% of Latinos and over 20% of African Americans in Long Beach struggle to make ends meet. Communities that have high poverty rates also experience higher violent crime rates.

Across America, cities are taking bold steps to ensure people can live a life of dignity with the ability to provide food and shelter for their families and pave a pathway to prosperity for their children. In 2012, over 64% of Long Beach voters gave hotel workers a raise to \$13 per hour (with annual increases tied to the cost of living), paid sick days, and tip protection. That same year, San Jose voted in a raise for their entire city. It became clear that there was strong support throughout California and nationwide to close the income gap. As Mayor Garcia asserted at this year's State of the City, "No one should have to work two jobs to put food on the table."

Long Beach was a leader in 2012 in this movement to close the income gap. It is the Long Beach way. Today cities across America are increasing their minimum wage. Regionally, the City and County of Los Angeles and Santa Monica have all passed a pathway to \$15 minimum wage. This wage level was not random. Several studies, including those conducted by the Economic Roundtable, have shown that \$15 per hour is the least amount a single family needs to afford the basic necessities to live in Los Angeles County. Cities such as Seattle have demonstrated that higher wages are better for the entire community including small businesses. As a model city, we must continue to embrace progress, justice, and human dignity, not shy away from it.

Following careful consideration of community concerns, our City's state of poverty, and the purpose and functions of the Commission, we urge the City Council to adopt a minimum wage policy that truly affirms human dignity and equity. After hearing from all stakeholders on this issue, the Commission recommends that the City Council pass an ordinance raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour to be phased in over time and once fully phased in, tied to CPI. The commission also believes there should be comprehensive wage enforcement of minimum wage and that the City Council is best equipped to determine the mechanism of such enforcement.

Respectfully,

Jeannine Pearce, Chair
Human Relations Commission