



April 10, 2015

Representative Paul Holvey, Chair
House Committee on Business and Labor
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee,

The Professional and Technical Employees Local 17 represents approximately 9000 employees in Washington and Oregon, including about 750 who work for the City of Portland as engineers, planners, technicians, and other similar classifications.

We wish to express our support for legislation to substantially raise the Oregon minimum wage. While all of our members in Oregon currently earn more than \$15 per hour, we recognize the importance of raising the standard of living for working people whose income leaves them at or near poverty. When the market has failed to provide for the basic needs of large numbers of workers, it is time for government to act.

As public employees, we understand that the gaps left by extremely low income for working families must be made up by government assistance. Many of our members work in programs to provide such assistance, and have seen budgets strained under the weight of increasing populations in need. As local and federal funding for public health and assistance becomes scarcer, a solution becomes clear: Those who work should not also require public aid to make ends meet.

The labor movement has long held as a core principle that hard work should be rewarded. Today, we respectfully ask that you join us in renewing the promise that all working Oregonians can support their families and make a better life for themselves.

Sincerely,

Elliot Levin
Research Director and Legislative Advocate
Professional and Technical Employees Local 17

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