



Eleven LGBT Organizations Call on the Senate to Raise the Minimum Wage

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While applauding the recent passage of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 in the U.S. House of Representatives, eleven LGBT organizations urged the quick passage of the accompanying bill in the Senate, and a speedy signing by President Bush.

"It is imperative that the LGBT community concerns itself with matters like these, not just because raising the minimum wage is an issue of basic fairness, but also because we know low-wage jobs and stagnant pay are issues that so many in our community face on a daily basis," Nancy Wohlforth, co-president of Pride At Work, said in a release. "It makes me extremely proud to see so many LGBT organizations standing together in solidarity with the working-class members of our community, in calling, no demanding, an increase to the minimum wage."

In the sign-on letter to the U.S. Senate, the organizations state:

"Our community is diverse, with workers coming from many different economic backgrounds. The undersigned organizations recognize that an increase to the minimum wage would provide real relief to millions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender workers who currently work for \$5.15 an hour. The proposed bill would raise the minimum wage to \$7.25 an hour.

"In a 1998 report published jointly by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and The Institute For Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies, Dr. M.V. Lee Badgett shattered the long-held myth of economic affluence among gay, lesbian, and bisexual Americans. Dr. Badgett states, 'The reality is that lesbians and gay men earn no more than heterosexual people.'

"The current minimum wage makes it difficult for workers to support their families and themselves. As working peoples' wages have remained stagnant or declined over the last ten years, their health care, energy and housing costs have increased substantially. For instance, it would take someone making the current minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour 11.2 hours to earn enough money to pay for a tank of gas."

The organizations that have signed on to the statement are: Equality Federation; Family Pride Coalition; Freedom To Marry; Hudson Pride Connections; The Mautner Project; The National Association For Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Centers; The National Center For Transgender Equality; **The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**; Out And Equal Workplace Advocates; Pride At Work; AFL-CIO; and Queers For Economic Justice.

To read the whole letter please visit prideatwork.org/page.php?id=413.