

**Please Sign the Faith Leaders
Letter to Congress for
\$10 in 2010 Minimum Wage**



Dear Members of Congress:

As leaders of our faith communities, we call on the 111th Congress to raise the minimum wage and join us in bringing needed economic security to our families, our communities and our country.

An adequate minimum wage is a bedrock moral value for our nation. Where the Congress sets the minimum wage reflects whether our society truly believes that workers are human beings with inherent dignity, inalienable rights and basic needs such as food, shelter and healthcare.

For too long, the minimum wage has not provided even a minimally adequate standard of living. We experience the results in our communities. Across the United States, a growing number of hardworking men and women are turning to our food banks, soup kitchens and homeless shelters to feed and house themselves and their children because their wages are too low.

It is immoral that people work full time but have to choose between paying the rent and paying for food, paying for childcare or paying for healthcare. It is immoral that some are paid so little their children go without necessities while others are paid so much their grandchildren will live in luxury without having to work at all. A job should keep you out of poverty, not keep you in it.

Between September 1997 and July 2007, we experienced the longest period in history without a raise in the minimum wage. Adjusting for inflation, the scheduled raise to \$7.25 in July 2009 will leave workers about where they were in 1997 and far behind 1968, when the minimum wage reached its peak value of about \$10 in 2008 dollars.

It is immoral that the minimum wage is worth less now than it was the year Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was killed in Memphis while fighting for living wages for sanitation workers. The eroded value of the minimum wage has reinforced growing inequality, which has given the richest 1 percent of Americans a greater share of our nation's income than any year since 1928. This has undermined our communities, our economy and our democracy. Prophetic voices like Dr. King and others throughout the ages have called for justice for the underprivileged and poorest in society.

We, faith leaders all across America, call on Congress to raise the minimum wage to \$10 in 2010.

- \$10 in 2010 is necessary if we are to make up the ground lost in real wages since 1968.
- \$10 in 2010 will bring us closer to the goal of the "minimum standard of living necessary for health, efficiency and general well-being of workers" articulated by the Fair Labor Standards Act, which established the minimum wage 70 years ago.
- \$10 in 2010 will bring us closer to the day when all workers are paid a living wage.

As Adam Smith wrote in *The Wealth of Nations* in 1776, "It is but equity . . . that those who feed, clothe and lodge the whole body of the people, should have such a share of the produce of their own labor as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed and lodged."

The Golden Rule teaches us, "*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*" We call on the 111th Congress to raise the minimum wage and join with us in ending poverty wages.

Sincerely,

PLEASE USE THE FORM ON REVERSE TO ENDORSE THIS LETTER. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

\$10 IN 2010 LETTER TO CONGRESS FAITH LEADERS ENDORSEMENT FORM*

Please provide ALL information requested below:

Title: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Webpage (*optional*): _____

Job Title: _____

Name of Congregation, house of worship, faith organization or program: _____

** Please interpret faith leader broadly to include Reverend, Rabbi, Imam, Director of faith-based program, Religious Social Action Committee Chair, and so on.*

Please mail form to:

Karen Spradlin, LJR National Faith Organizer, 12604 Bannockburn Pl, Oklahoma City, OK 73142.

Or email kspradlin@letjusticeroll.org or call 405-213-3282 to sign the letter or help with the campaign.

You may also sign the form online at

<http://letjusticeroll.org/news/00625-faith-leaders-letter-congress>