

Make U.S. Minimum Wage Laws cover People with Disabilities



"From each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs"

SHAME: Goodwill Industries pays some workers with disabilities only 22 cents an hour \$15/hour minimum wage for EVERYONE!

Goodwill workers have right to a job at a decent wage

Protest Goodwill Industries

Sign National Federation of the Blind petition at <https://nfb.org/fair-wages>



In so-called "sheltered workshops," Goodwill Industries pays workers with disabilities as little as 22 cents an hour. That is 1/33 of the federal minimum wage of \$7.25. Yet Goodwill Industries' top executives get over \$53.7 million. (Watchdog.org, May 2013). Most of the 400,000 Goodwill workers with disabilities do repetitive and mundane work, without added training to move into skilled jobs. They do not receive equal pay for equal work or the same protections that other U.S. workers have—except for prisoners and immigrants who are also unfairly and immorally discriminated against and denied equal minimum wage rights.

This is not fair and not right. How does Goodwill get away with it? BECAUSE IT'S LEGAL! Section 14c of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which established the federal minimum wage, allows certain entities holding special wage certificates to pay workers with physical or developmental disabilities, often organized in segregated sheltered workshops, less than minimum wage.

Anil Lewis, National Federation of the Blind Policy and Advocacy Director, calls this an entrenched system founded on the belief that people with disabilities are defective, a belief supported by a billion-dollar industry exploiting subminimum wage labor and perpetuating negative stereotypes about Americans with disabilities. Lewis calls the sheltered workshops "prisons without bars" because 95 percent of the people currently toiling in subminimum-wage work will spend their entire lives in these facilities. They will never receive the needed services, training, or support to become real workers, doing real jobs, and earning real wages. Lewis said it is time to eliminate this legalized wage discrimination. With the proper training, opportunity, and supports, even people with the most significant disabilities can be competitively employed, and this should be their right.

Solidarity, Not Charity! We live in a system that legalizes the exploitation of people with physical, mental, developmental, or emotional challenges. It is the CEOs and bosses who perpetuate and benefit from stereotypes of the disabled as well as from racism, sexism, LGBTQ discrimination, and ageism. We are pitted against each other for fewer and fewer jobs and blamed for low wages. The history of the disabled movement has proven that when we unite in solidarity, we improve the conditions for all working and poor people.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

1. Sign the National Federation of the Blind petition calling for repeal of Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act at <https://nfb.org/fair-wages> to abolish the practice of paying workers with disabilities less than the minimum wage.
 2. Demand that Goodwill industries and other corporations stop paying workers with disabilities less than the minimum wage and adopt a business model that provides real training and opportunities.
 3. Support the passage of the Fair Wages for Workers with Disabilities Act of 2013 (H.R. 831) introduced in Congress this year, which if passed would repeal Section 14(c) of the FLSA and phase out the payment of less than minimum wage to the disabled.
 4. Join the "**\$15 AND A UNION**" movement to get the federal and state minimum wage rate raised to \$15 an hour but also cover completely **people with disabilities, prisoners, and immigrants**. How can anyone survive on the current \$7.25-an-hour rate?
 5. Support **the right to a job at a decent wage** for all Goodwill workers!
 6. Oppose U.S imperialist wars which disable as well as kill huge numbers of U.S. veterans and GIs, as well as indigenous peoples, especially peoples of color, all over the world, and which gut funding for vital services to workers at home including millions of people with disabilities.
-

Issued by the People with Disabilities Caucus of the People Power Assembly (PPA)

Contact us: disabilitycaucusww@gmail.com 147 W. 24th St. 2nd floor N.Y., NY 10013
212-633-6646

