

September 20, 2005

The Honorable Senator Barack Obama
Hart Bldg. #713
2nd & C Streets, NE
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Obama,

During President Bush's "We will re-build It" (New Orleans) speech, he declared, "We have a duty to *confront* poverty." We believe that is true. Never before has our nation been exposed to naked poverty in such a fashion. The people want a pragmatic/long term solution. Fixing the federal minimum wage by linking it to the barest of local housing costs would do that.

There are those who would argue that if we can't get a minimum wage bill of \$1.50 over a three year period, how then could we ever possibly pass a minimum wage bill that raises it many times that in some cities. And yet, we can and we do argue that. The simple reason is because our concept is based on the *MORAL* premise: if a person works forty hours in a week, then they should be able to afford a roof over their head other than that of a bridge. With 3.5 million people experiencing homelessness this year, passage will end homelessness for over one million minimum wage workers.

Recognizing business interests, we've suggested a workable 10 year phase-in plan. Furthermore, passage will dramatically reduce retraining costs.

Today, we have at least six non-profits, businesses, unions, and religious organizations in every state representing over 1,000,000 registered voters. We've just held Bridge the Economic Gap Day, where one such organization got on a bridge in every state in the nation calling for a Universal Living Wage.

We the advocates for our nations working poor are prepared to visibly and actively support you should you choose to carry this legislation. Please see www.UniversalLivingWage.org. I am prepared to come to Washington and meet with you at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

In Unity There is Strength,

Richard R. Troxell
National Chairman