October 2019

Open Letter to Governor Greg Abbott:

Homeless folks have lost everything: their jobs, their homes, their families, and hope. At the same time, other Texans have a right to feel safe. Both need a champion. According to House the Homeless, Inc., 47% of homeless folks are so disabled that they cannot work but the other half (52%), can and want to work!

Unfortunately, Congress and HUD have failed to do their jobs and robbed workers of opportunity to work themselves off the streets. Based on existing government guidelines, it takes $15.62 per hour to get an efficiency apartment in Houston, Texas. You need $16.08, in Dallas, in Odessa you need $15.00 and in Austin one needs $17.90. See the wage calculator at www.UniversalLivingWage.org. The federal government sets the federal minimum wage at $7.25/hour for those who can work. That won’t get housing for any 40 hour a week full-time worker.

For those who cannot work, the government set the SSI disability check at a little more than half the failed Federal Minimum Wage.

Governor Abbott, think about it, the entire financial burden for these displaced workers falls entirely upon the tax payers. Not participating as a community partner are those businesses who pay minimum wage workers less than the amount necessary to afford a roof over their heads other than a bridge. We need a champion who will sit down with our Texas mayors and bring these facts to the table.

House the Homeless Inc. is prepared to assist and meet with you and all Texas mayors and present a proposal that will dramatically reduce and prevent homelessness.

Respectfully,

Richard R. Troxell
National Education Director