

CITY OF NORTHAMPTON

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council,

November 19, 2009

Upon the recommendation of Mayor Mary Clare Higgins, Councilor James M. Dostal, Councilor Michael R. Bardsley, Councilor Maureen T. Carney, Councilor Paul D. Spector, Councilor Robert C. Reckman, Councilor David J. Narkewicz, Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge, and the Northampton Human Rights Commission

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, a Massachusetts minimum wage of \$8.00 an hour for a 40 hour per week employee provides an annual income 9% below the federal poverty level for a family of three in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northampton recognizes the need for individuals to earn a Living Wage in order to continue residing in Northampton and to achieve self-sufficiency in meeting the requirements of daily living including decent housing, food, clothing, medical care, child care, transportation, and education for themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northampton recognizes that a Living Wage is a Human Right pursuant to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948 which provides: "Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity" [Article 23, para. (3)] and . . . "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care. . ." [Article 25, par. (1)]; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northampton is home to hundreds of businesses and conducts much of its day-to-day business within this local and regional economy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northampton has identified as an objective in the Sustainable Northampton Comprehensive Plan to encourage Living Wages that support the cost of living in the City; and

WHEREAS health care is a significant expense to residents and to employers, the cost of health care is a primary factor in both the cost of living and the cost of doing business, and the City of Northampton has formally resolved by resolutions passed in 1998 and on May 21, 2009 to support a universal single-payer health care system to ease the financial burden on employees and employers, and

WHEREAS, the City of Northampton has formally resolved in resolutions passed by the Northampton City Council on March 20, 1997 and on December 3, 1998 to support an employee's right to form, join, and/or assist a union of their choice in order to secure fair wages; and

WHEREAS, The City Council wishes to update and reaffirm its resolution passed on December 3, 1998, by the City Council and approved by Mayor Mary L. Ford, which established Living Wages subject to annual adjustments; and to recognize businesses that pay Living Wages which more accurately reflect the cost of living in Northampton; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT

Based on the Crittenton Women's Union Self Sufficiency Calculator, the Northampton Housing Authority's Section 8 one bedroom payment standard and its average utility allowances as of December 2009 a Living Wage for a single person without children in the City of Northampton would be \$11.90 an hour. Employer provided benefits that cover basic needs, for example, child care, food discounts, and transportation subsidies may be credited as part of the Living Wage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT

In order to ensure that Living Wages keep pace with the cost of living, annual adjustments to the Living Wage should be based on the percentage increase in the above Annual Average Consumer Price Index as of December 31. Each year the Northampton Living Wage Coalition shall provide the Human Rights Commission with the current Living Wage data; the Human Rights Commission shall convey the new Living Wage figure and the supporting data to the City Council. This annual adjustment shall be publicly announced by the Northampton City Council within one month of receiving the information from the Human Rights Commission; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT

The City of Northampton adopts as a policy and shall make all efforts subject to state and federal procurement laws to conduct business with employers that pay or aspire to pay their employees a Living Wage. This resolution does not apply to apprenticeships, government funded youth programs, internships, employees in probationary status (limited to six months), temporary employees (limited to six months) or employees working fewer than 35 hours a week who are under 18 years of age; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT

The City of Northampton urges all employers to pay or aspire to pay their employees a Living Wage, and encourages Northampton residents to patronize Northampton employers who are paying or aspiring to pay a Living Wage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT

The City of Northampton shall publicly acknowledge, on at least an annual basis, those businesses that are certified by the Northampton Living Wage Coalition or its designee to be paying a Living Wage or aspiring to pay a Living Wage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT

The calendar week that includes April 10, the birthday of Frances Perkins, the U.S. Secretary of Labor from 1933 to 1945, is hereby declared to be Living Wage Week in the City of Northampton. Among numerous groundbreaking accomplishments, Frances Perkins successfully fought for the first national minimum wage and overtime laws, unemployment insurance, and the 40-hour work week.