

Sayers, Margery

From: Katja Fort Rhoden <katjafort@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 8:16 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: info@livingwagehoco.org
Subject: Please pass CB82-2021 to raise the minimum wage in Howard County!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council, I am writing to urge you to VOTE YES on CB82-2021 and raise the minimum wage in Howard County. Howard County is one of the wealthiest in the country, however, more than 1 in 4 households struggle to meet basic needs. Every person deserves the dignity of a paycheck that reflects the importance of their work and provides for their essential needs. Wages that fall well below the level needed to afford these basic living costs create additional barriers to employment and access to opportunities to achieve economic prosperity. Too many of our neighbors are struggling now, and cannot wait until the state-level mandate of a \$15/hour minimum wage fully takes effect as late as 2026. Other Maryland counties have already raised their minimum wage beyond the state-mandated minimum, and Howard County should follow suit. I urge you to pass CB82-2021 without delay, to provide essential support for Howard County residents and move Howard County closer to ensuring a living wage for all workers. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely,

Katja Fort Rhoden

INOVA Double Lung Transplant Recipient 

Be A Donor

<https://www.organdonor.gov>

"Just when the caterpillar thought her life was over, she became a butterfly"

Sayers, Margery

From: paige getty <p.getty@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 1:52 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: District 4 resident in support of CB82-2021, the minimum wage bill

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Member Jung and the entire Howard County Council,

I support CB82-2021 and ask that you vote **IN FAVOR** of this minimum wage bill.

Every county resident deserves to earn a *living* wage for their labor that serves all of us who live and work here. This minimum wage bill is one important step in advancing our county toward that living wage.

Please vote FOR CB82.

Thank you,
Rev. Paige Getty, resident of District 4
10318 Twinedew Place, Columbia 21044

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Paige Getty (she/her)
p.getty@gmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: team taemin <teamtaemin17@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 8:11 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: info@livingwagehoco.org
Subject: Please pass CB82-2021 to raise the minimum wage in Howard County!

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Dear Howard County Council, I am writing to urge you to VOTE YES on CB82-2021 and raise the minimum wage in Howard County. Howard County is one of the wealthiest in the country, however, more than 1 in 4 households struggle to meet basic needs. Every person deserves the dignity of a paycheck that reflects the importance of their work and provides for their essential needs. Wages that fall well below the level needed to afford these basic living costs create additional barriers to employment and access to opportunities to achieve economic prosperity. Too many of our neighbors are struggling now, and cannot wait until the state-level mandate of a \$15/hour minimum wage fully takes effect as late as 2026. Other Maryland counties have already raised their minimum wage beyond the state-mandated minimum, and Howard County should follow suit. I urge you to pass CB82-2021 without delay, to provide essential support for Howard County residents and move Howard County closer to ensuring a living wage for all workers. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jamie Saunders

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Liam Nesbitt <nesbittliam@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 8:04 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: info@livingwagehoco.org
Subject: Please pass CB82-2021 to raise the minimum wage in Howard County!

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Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Paige Getty <minister@uucolumbia.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 11:01 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Board
Subject: Please vote FOR CB82-2021, Minimum Wage Bill

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear members of the Howard County Council,

The Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia (UUCC) urges you to vote **IN FAVOR of CB82**, the minimum wage bill that would increase the county minimum wage to \$15 by 2023 and \$16 by 2025.

With a membership of about 300 families—who reside in all parts of Howard County—for more than 50 years UUCC has been an institution that provides not only a religious home for many in our community, but that also has a mission of service and justice-making, especially for the benefit of the most vulnerable residents in the county.

For too long, we have seen the income gap widen, and we have seen the costs of goods and services rise without comparable increases in wages. UUCC's food insecurity ministry is in high demand, as even individuals with jobs and housing struggle to feed their families. Similarly, the guests of the Cold Weather Shelter often are individuals with jobs who do not earn enough money to provide sustainable housing for themselves. It is simply unjust, and we must insist that our employers pay fairer wages.

Every county resident deserves to earn a *living wage* for their work that serves all of us who live and work here. This minimum wage bill—which, thankfully, requires annual increases based on the local Consumer Price Index starting in 2027—is one important step in advancing our county toward that living wage.

Please vote FOR CB82.

In community,
Rev. Paige Getty and the UUCC Board of Trustees

The Rev. Paige Getty, Minister
she / her / hers
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia
7246 Cradlerock Way
Columbia, Maryland 21045
(410) 381-0097, ext. 101
minister@uucolumbia.net

Sayers, Margery

From: sophia el marji <selmarji@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 9:24 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: info@livingwagehoco.org
Subject: Please pass CB82-2021 to raise the minimum wage in Howard County!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council, I am writing to urge you to VOTE YES on CB82-2021 and raise the minimum wage in Howard County. Howard County is one of the wealthiest in the country, however, more than 1 in 4 households struggle to meet basic needs. Every person deserves the dignity of a paycheck that reflects the importance of their work and provides for their essential needs. Wages that fall well below the level needed to afford these basic living costs create additional barriers to employment and access to opportunities to achieve economic prosperity. Too many of our neighbors are struggling now, and cannot wait until the state-level mandate of a \$15/hour minimum wage fully takes effect as late as 2026. Other Maryland counties have already raised their minimum wage beyond the state-mandated minimum, and Howard County should follow suit. I urge you to pass CB82-2021 without delay, to provide essential support for Howard County residents and move Howard County closer to ensuring a living wage for all workers. As a person who works a minimum wage job that is below \$15, workers provide exceptional work that needs to be paid in equal, which is at least \$15, I have friends mothers that have to work 2-3 jobs at least just to make it by, living a very stressful life to provide for her family and pay student education which is not cheap at all. This could all be avoided if the county were to raise the minimum wage, and continue to raise it based on what the country needs are to live comfortably. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Sophia El Marji

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Clark's Elioak Farm <clarkselioakfarm@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 12, 2021 6:12 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Minimum Wage Bill

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

As a Howard County resident and business owner, I have some concerns about CB82-2021. Howard County is a very small county in the center of the State. It doesn't make any sense to have a separate minimum wage for our county—we should continue to have the same minimum wage schedule as the State.

I hire a number of teenagers at my farm. CB82-2021 does not include a lower rate for young people the way the State law does. That will be a major blow to young people looking for work. For many young people working at our farm is their first job. That means we do a lot of training—about the specific job and about what it means to work outside the home and develop good work habits. There should be recognition that these first time employees have a lot to learn and an introductory wage would be appropriate.

Other minimum wage laws include exceptions for seasonal work and part-time work. I think that is something you need to consider also.

We are currently looking at a high inflation rate and prices for everything going up. One of the major expenses for many small businesses (restaurants, farms, retail etc) is labor. IF we have to raise wages more in Howard County than in the surrounding counties, don't you understand that the price of your meal, your food, your fun in our County will have to rise higher than in other counties.

I hope you will give serious consideration to staying in line with the State's Minimum Wage law.

Thank you,
Martha Clark
10380 Clarksville Pike
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

THE MALL IN COLUMBIA

November 12, 2021

Ms. Liz Walsh
Howard County Council Chair
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

RE: CB 82-2021 Minimum Wage Increase

Dear Council Chair Walsh,

Over the past month, I have discussed CB 82-2021 with many of the retailers and restaurateurs at The Mall in Columbia. The intent of this letter as well as my in-person testimony at the County Council hearing on this legislation, is for me to convey the stories of our tenants in order for the Council to understand the variety of situations and how this legislation, if approved, will impact them.

Before I tell these stories, it is important to provide the context of the tenants who are currently at The Mall in Columbia. Out of a total of 210 tenants currently open for business at the Mall, 93 or 44% are locally owned and operated businesses. These are mostly small business owners that have been severely challenged by the pandemic and continue to work hard with long hours to be able to provide for their families. As a Landlord, we have completed customized "work-outs" for every one of our tenants in order that they may be able to remain open and keep their staff employed. And while this has impacted our business significantly, it was important for us to support our tenants and their employees.

The minimum wage increase will impact nearly every one of our local owners, some more than others. And not in the ways you might expect. To a person, the Mall's retailers and restaurateurs reported that they generally do not pay minimum wage. The rare exception is the student who works part-time, is looking for a flexible work schedule and is new on the job and being trained. After a short time, even these part-time students' wages are increased.

Without naming the specific entities, let me share two of the stories of these local, hardworking business owners.

One of our local owners has two businesses in the Mall and is a long-time tenant. She shared that she does not start any of her employees at minimum wage and that they also earn commission that averages another \$1.50/hour. Her reasoning for this is both for the cache of working in her stores and to be competitive. She employees 2/3's as part-time workers who are generally not supporting families. They are primarily students who need the flexible hours. Their full-time employees are already at or above \$17/hour with managers even higher. If Howard County increases its minimum wage, she feels she would need to raise her hourly wages even higher to continue to stay competitive. This in turn will further impact her margins which have significantly decreased during the past 20 months of the pandemic.

And a second local owner has one food business in the Mall and is in the process of opening a second. He is already paying non-tipped employees more than the minimum wage in order to be competitive. Since the start of the pandemic, food costs have risen from 31% to 41% of their total costs. Additional challenges include delivery costs and the recent elimination of the expanded outdoor patio program. This owner is one of the most optimistic tenants in the Mall. And while he is excited about the opening of the new restaurant, he is concerned about the impact the pandemic continues to have on their business. He sees increasing the minimum wage further at this time will only increase his long list of current challenges and further reduce his already much diminished margins.

In addition to these stories, we have over 40 businesses in carts and kiosks in our common area. The majority of these businesses have local owners with families who work long hours themselves, hiring primarily students for the part-time shifts they are not able to work themselves. Their margins are very slim and in order to not impact their family's income, many believe they will need to work longer hours, thereby cutting hours of their employees, if the minimum wage is further increased.

In summary, the retailers and restaurateurs at The Mall in Columbia are still struggling from the impact of the pandemic. As a whole they employ over 4000 employees and are very committed to doing right by their employees. The vast majority currently pay more than minimum wage and have been challenged by the rising costs and diminished business margins over the past 20 months.

The County has spent a good amount of time and resources shoring up our local businesses during this most challenging of times. All of our retailers who received these grants were local businesses and very appreciative of the County's efforts on their behalf. We believe this is not the time to further add to the burden of these local owners by increasing the minimum wage greater than the increase that is already taking place the first of 2022.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony relative to CB 82-2021.

Respectfully,



Barbara A. Nicklas
Senior General Manager, The Mall in Columbia

CC: Howard County Council Members
Howard County Executive Calvin Ball



WMDA/CAR Service Station and Automotive Repair Association

November 12, 2021

To: Members of Howard County Council

Re: CB82-2021 - In Opposition

I represent WMDA/CAR - service station, convenience stores and repair facilities. As well meant as CB82-2021 is, it will have a negative impact on locations and especially 24/7 locations and their employees.

The impact will also be felt by potential employees who will not be hired. Maryland already has a minimum wage bill that will reach full effect in January of 2025 and 2026 for small employer. Howard County would be the outlier in Maryland with the highest mandated Minimum wage in the state.

The positions at our locations were never meant to be a living wage with the exceptions of managers who are well above minimum wage. These positions are transition jobs where young and new to work force can learn communication and language skills and how to interact with customers. Flexible hours attract students. Unfortunately, these jobs could be eliminated or severely cut back with a wage that is too costly to fit in the budget.

This also discourages business development in Howard County. with wage compression, rising tide floats all boats. This becomes a very costly bill for small business at a time when they are struggling to come out of the unprecedented times of COVID 19.

Kirk McCauley
WMDA/CAR
301-775-0221
kmccauley@wmda.net

Sayers, Margery

From: Anne Brown <annembrown2@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 7:48 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: info@livingwagehoco.org
Subject: Please pass CB82-2021 to raise the minimum wage in Howard County!

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Howard County is one of the wealthiest in the country, however, more than 1 in 4 households struggle to meet basic needs. Every person deserves the dignity of a paycheck that reflects the importance of their work and provides for their essential needs. Wages that fall well below the level needed to afford these basic living costs create additional barriers to employment and access to opportunities to achieve economic prosperity.

I work in healthcare and have seen too many residents and community members to work for "poverty wages" which do not allow them either food or housing security for them, let alone their family. This is shameful...we do not take care of those people who take care of us! Please, please help our neighbors and community to be able to live a more secure life, so that they can help us to do good.

Too many of our neighbors are struggling now, and cannot wait until the state-level mandate of a \$15/hour minimum wage fully takes effect as late as 2026. Other Maryland counties have already raised their minimum wage beyond the state-mandated minimum, and Howard County should follow suit. I urge you to pass CB82-2021 without delay, to provide essential support for Howard County residents and move Howard County closer to ensuring a living wage for all workers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anne M Brown
10936 Rock Coast Road
Columbia, MD 21044