

Resolution in Support of City of Bellingham Initiative No. 2021-04.

WHEREAS, the Covid-19 pandemic has revealed the importance of hourly-wage and gig workers to the workings of our local economy and the health, safety, and well-being of our entire community.

WHEREAS, Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the essential nature of work done by many hourly-wage and gig workers, especially those working in groceries, food service, healthcare, education, childcare and public facing retail establishments.

WHEREAS, the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that, despite importance of these hourly-wage and gig workers to the health, safety, and well-being our communities, they often face uncertain and arbitrary schedules and have not been adequately compensated for the hazards that they face when under a declared state of emergency.

WHEREAS, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) are overrepresented among the retail frontline workforce.

WHEREAS, the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program has reported that the United States' top retail companies, including grocery businesses, have earned record-breaking profits during the pandemic.

WHEREAS, retail employees have not been compensated for the risks they face as essential workers, nor have they received a fair share of their companies record-breaking profits.

WHEREAS, the City of Bellingham should have a program ensuring adequate compensation for these employees during the rest of the Covid-19 pandemic and during future states of emergency.

WHEREAS, when an employee's hours are reduced, it changes the amount of income an employee will earn that pay period.

WHEREAS, when an employee is asked to work additional hours or an employee's hours are changed with minimal notice, such changes often create conflicts with an employee's other responsibilities such as child care, other jobs, or school schedules.

WHEREAS, when an employee is required to remain available to come in to work if needed, but is not compensated if not needed, the employee is therefore not compensated for foregoing the opportunity to tend to other responsibilities or pursue other interests.

WHEREAS, if employers maintain a large pool of part-time employees to draw on when extra staff are needed, employees in that pool might work fewer and more variable hours than employees who are not part-time.

WHEREAS, Dr. Susan Lambert's study, "Schedule Unpredictability among Early Career Workers in the US Labor Market: a National Snapshot," found that 40 percent of hourly workers knew their work schedule less than one week in advance, and 74 percent had fluctuating hours during a single month, with 50 percent having fluctuations of more than eight hours or one day's pay.

WHEREAS, Dr. Lonnie Golden found that, by income level, nationally the lowest income workers face the most irregular schedules and that 43 percent of part-time workers were working fewer hours per week than they preferred.

WHEREAS, part-time work has a correlation with national poverty levels; for example, the poverty rate for households with children is 11.2 percent with one full-time worker in the household and 27.5 percent with a part-time worker, the poverty rate for Hispanics is 9.4 percent with one full-time worker in the household and 44.1 percent with a part-time worker, and the poverty rate for African-Americans is 6.9 percent with one full-time worker in the household and 55.5 percent with a part-time worker.

WHEREAS, several jurisdictions across the country, including Oregon, California, New York, North Carolina, Connecticut, Washington D.C., and Illinois are considering or have passed scheduling legislation to address the issues faced by employees with unpredictable work schedules and consequently unpredictable income.

WHEREAS, hourly-wage workers deserve predictability in terms of their work schedules.

WHEREAS, City of Bellingham Initiative No. 2021-04 would:

- require certain employers to pay their employees a hazard pay supplement of \$4 per hour during a declared State of Emergency,
- require employers to provide good faith estimates of weekly hours to new employees upon hire,
- require employers to provide work schedules to hourly-wage employees two-weeks in advance,
- require advance notice of any schedule changes,
- require employers to compensate employees for changing their work schedules without sufficient notice, and
- prohibit adverse actions by employers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Whatcom County Democrats support placing City of Bellingham Initiative No. 2021-04 on the ballot;

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this resolution, Whatcom Democrats will publicize this proposed initiative;

THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT the Whatcom County Democrats will use its mailing list and online presence to mobilize voters and collect signatures.

Adopted at the April 24, 2021 General Membership (Central Committee) Meeting, 48-3-1.