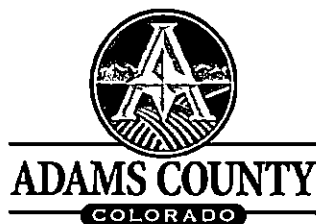


Commissioners' Office  
www.adcogov.org



4430 South Adams County Parkway  
5th Floor, Suite C5000A  
Brighton, CO 80601-8204  
PHONE 720.523.6100  
FAX 720.523.6045

May 3, 2018

Representatives Danielson and Melton & Senators Merrifield and Moreno,

The Adams County Board of Commissioners is submitting this letter to urge the support of HB18-1368.

The cost of living is sharply increasing across our state. Rents and other living costs are rising at a startling rate and many Coloradans are struggling to make ends meet. No one should have to work 60 to 80 hours a week and not be able to afford basic necessities.

As highlighted by the Work Here, Thrive Here Coalition, between 2012 and 2016, average rents in Colorado increased six times faster than wages. As Commissioners and residents of Adams County, we have seen the repercussions of this in our own backyard.

Across Adams County, 28.7% of all homeowners, and nearly 40% of all renters meet the HUD threshold for cost burdened households. With households spending much of their income on rent, they are spending less money on other goods and services that benefit both our local and state economy. Higher wages in areas with higher costs of living would allow residents to both afford to put a roof over their head and spend money on the goods and services that allow our communities to thrive.

At its heart, this truly is a local control issue. Towns, cities, and counties should have the authority to dictate a minimum wage within their jurisdiction that more accurately reflects the cost of living within the area. While Amendment 70 was a step in the right direction, we must accept the reality that for some communities, raising the minimum wage to \$12 an hour just isn't enough.

In recent years the cost of living has increased at such an alarming rate that some residents cannot even afford a home or place to sleep. 2015 - 2016 McKinney Vento Data showed roughly 3,900 persons experiencing homelessness in Adams County. If wages do not rise to cover the cost of living, we will likely see this number continue to grow in coming years.

This was an easy decision for our Board, with all four of the Board members present voting in support of this legislation. The local wage option allows local policy makers, community members, and business owners to come together and determine a minimum wage that actually reflects the cost of living within that area. By allowing localities in Colorado to raise the minimum wage for their area, more people will be able to live and shop in the

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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DISTRICT 5

communities where they work; something that is good for both our residents and our economy.

We urge you to vote YES on HB18-1368.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Hodge". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Mary Hodge, Chair