

# THE MOBILIZER

ISSUE NO. 9

A newsletter serving San Francisco

Winter, 2006

*“Jobs for All at a Living Wage”*

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## Help Raise Wages for 15,000 Workers

More than 15,000 homecare workers, non-profit workers, airport workers and CalWORKs parents would receive significant wage increases from proposed improvements to San Francisco's living wage law.

On November 22, Supervisors Tom Ammiano and Jake McGoldrick introduced the amendments to the Minimum Compensation Ordinance.

The Budget/Finance Committee will hold a public hearing on the Ammiano/McGoldrick amendments on Wednesday, March 1, at 1 p.m., in City Hall room 263.

A rally will take place beforehand at 12 noon on the Civic Center-side steps of City Hall.

The key amendments are –

1. Parity for home care and non-profit workers with workers at for-profit companies that contract with the City.

Under current law, home care workers and non-profit workers are only required to be paid \$9 per hour instead of the \$10.77 per hour required for workers at for-profit businesses.

2. Inclusion of CalWORKs mothers and other workfare workers in the Living Wage law.

CalWORKs grants are diverted to private employers that pay them out as wages at the San Francisco minimum wage of \$8.82 per hour.

Employers would be required to add on to the wage to bring parents in

the welfare-to-work transition to \$10.77 per hour.

For recipients of the county General Assistance grant and Personal Assisted Employment Services stipend, the number of hours required to maintain eligibility would be based on the amount in the living wage law.

3. Annual cost-of-living increases based on the Bay Area Consumer Price Index to keep up with inflation.

Previous cost-of-living increases in the living wage law stopped after three years.

With this year's Consumer Price Index increase of 2.31 percent, the rate in the living wage law would rise to \$11.02 per hour.

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***Living Wage Coalition  
522 Valencia St. #1  
San Francisco, CA 94110***

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# Homeless shelter workers fight for a living wage

Robert Bustamonte and Ricardo Moran work at the City's biggest homeless shelter.

Robert has worked for the Multi-Service Center South (MSC-South) for three years as a program aide. He is a Monitor, directing clients to the various services such as health care and counseling.

Ricardo has worked on the janitorial staff for over a year at MSC-South. There are more than 60 people on the staff. The kitchen and janitorial staff are members of the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 3.

The non-profit agency St. Vincent DePaul Society is funded by the City to run the shelter.

Ricardo makes \$10.30 per hour, although other janitors at MSC-South make as little as \$10.10 per hour. They have only had one wage increase in the past three years.

Robert and Ricardo are supporting actively the Ammiano/McGoldrick amendments to the living wage law.

"Under the Ammiano / McGoldrick amendments, the City would do away with the 'non-profit loophole' as I call it. The wage would



l - Robert Bustamonte, r- Ricardo Moran, photo credit: Alice Rogoff

go up to \$10.77 and, with a cost of living increase, to \$11.02," Robert said.

Ricardo added that "The work is not easy, and the wages should go up. Our own boss recognizes that it is a difficult job."

Robert and Ricardo have been active in the campaign to get the

Ammiano/McGoldrick amendments passed.

"Five or six of the Multi-Service Center's workers went to the recent December 1 rally at City Hall. These workers lobbied the Supervisors' offices, not just by themselves, but as part of a large Living Wage Coalition delegation. Our union representative was at the rally and she spoke, and the workers have been getting support from their union at the workplace," Robert said.

"Workers are being urged to call their Supervisors, and the union is working with us on that. There is an in-house flyer on the union bulletin board at the workstation. Almost everyone there has signed a petition. Management has to respect that. As a group, the employees are supportive of the amendments," Robert said.

How do they manage to live in San Francisco on their current wages? Robert lives in a rent-controlled apartment, otherwise, he said smiling, he'd have to live with his mother. Ricardo shares rent with three other roommates, as well as working part-time at another job.

- Alice Rogoff

## Living Wage Coalition

phone/fax 415-863-5543, [sflivingwage@riseup.net](mailto:sflivingwage@riseup.net)

\_\_\_\_ Add my name endorsing the Living Wage campaign (indicate if organization for ID only)

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. (Make out check to San Francisco Living Wage Coalition.

For a tax deductible donation of \$50 or more, make out check to SF Living Wage Coalition/Agape Foundation. We also accept tax deductible vehicle donations.)

\_\_\_\_ I want to get involved. Please contact me.

\_\_\_\_ I would like to become a member - \$25 for individuals, \$100 per year for organizations (includes a mail subscription to *the Mobilizer*).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title & Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (eve) Email \_\_\_\_\_

## The San Francisco Living Wage Coalition

### Who We Are

*The Living Wage Coalition is a grassroots movement of low-wage workers and their allies fighting for economic justice. We believe that everyone who works full time should be able to survive on what they earn, without relying on public assistance or charity to support their families.*

### What We Do

*We educate, organize and mobilize to demand that our tax dollars and use of public property do not go to businesses that pay poverty wages.*

### History

*The Living Wage Coalition was initiated in 1998 by labor unions, community organizations and religious congregations to develop a movement led and democratically run by low-wage workers. As a result of a grass-roots campaign, San Francisco's living wage laws – called the Minimum Compensation Ordinance and the Health Care Accountability Ordinance – require that businesses with a service contract with the City or property lease at the Airport must pay workers at least \$10.77 per hour, provide 12 paid days off per year and provide health care coverage. In addition, businesses leasing other property from the City must provide health care coverage as a condition of their lease. By the City's estimates, more than 30,000 workers have benefited.*

### When We Meet

*We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at 2940 – 16<sup>th</sup> Street, room 204 (between Mission St. and South Van Ness Ave.). Everyone is welcome.*

### Coordinating Committee

*Larry Lattimore, Campaign Co-director; Karl Kramer, Campaign Co-director; Alice Rogoff, Recording Secretary; Bruce Allison, Treasurer; Robert Bustamonte, Yolanda Catzalco, Manuel Chaffo, Mark Gruberg, Guillermo Ponce de Leon, Phil Tryon, David Williams*

## Support Gulf Coast residents

Months after Hurricane Katrina struck, we are still hearing about the devastating results of an unresponsive government upon workers and dwellers of the Gulf Coast.

After relentless outcries from the affected area and the nation, the Davis-Bacon Act which requires federal contractors to pay the average prevailing wage in the region was restored.

However, the U.S. Labor Department suspended requirements that contractors submit affirmative action plans for the hiring of minorities, women and the disabled.

In addition, federal rules requiring competitive bidding on federal contracts have been suspended in the hurricane ravaged area. Contracts worth hundreds of millions have been granted by FEMA on a no bid basis to

large corporations such as Halliburton and Bechtel.

Of the more than 300,000 Latino immigrant workers in the area, few were able to apply for FEMA aid and many were threatened with deportation.

The majority of farmers, farmworkers and rural folks in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana are demanding aid to restore their communities.

They are asking people to email the government to support their demands. More information can be found on the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign website – [www.economichumanrights.org](http://www.economichumanrights.org), and [www.commongroundrelief.org](http://www.commongroundrelief.org)

- Yolanda Catzalco

## Immigrant workers are targeted

The working community, constitutional rights and living wage issues are under attack by the same people who work against organized labor in support of the union busters.

The labor movement needs to fight back on the real issues of health, education, housing and living wages.

Immigrants need free English language classes.

An immigrant renter pays more than \$1000 per month for a single room, and is forced to live with four or five others in the room to be able to pay the rent.

The housing lacks working toilets, showers and heating. The units are full of cockroaches, mice, mosquitos, urine and feces.

Where are the Department of Public Health inspectors?

There is at least one restaurant in the Mission that pays its workers only \$4 per hour. Even McDonald's pays \$8.82 per hour, the City's minimum wage.

Many of these immigrant workers do not have fringe benefits or health insurance.



art by Rini Templeton

Where do they go when they get sick?

Labor produces the wealth of this nation.

As labor, immigrants deserve full protection of the Constitution without discrimination based on immigration status.

The abusive power of

immigration authorities is

denying immigrants their rights and is dividing families.

- Manuel Chaffo and Alice Rogoff

# Improvements to living wage law to benefit 15,000

Continued from page 1

The inclusion of single adults in the county workfare program would treat with respect the work that they do – cleaning MUNI buses, sweeping streets and doing janitorial work at General Hospital. GA recipients receive \$340 per month for 32 to 40 hours of work.

Improving wages for the least-paid workers performing services for residents improves the standard-of-living of all San Francisco workers.

Work that was previously done by workers receiving a family-supporting wage has been shifted onto the backs of workers receiving poverty wages.

The wage raises would help revitalize the City's economic base.

Many of the non-profit and homecare workers live in low-income neighborhoods in San Francisco.

When these workers have more dollars in their pockets, they spend it in local businesses, which creates more local jobs.

The City contracts out to non-profit agencies to provide valuable services to the community. These non-profit workers care for the elderly and disabled, provide food and shelter to the homeless, mentor youth and provide counseling, legal services and health care to San Francisco residents.

The amendments include new language that the City would make a commitment to budget adequate funding for non-profit organizations

so that they can raise wages without laying off staff and cutting services.

If non-profits do not receive adequate funding, they have the protection of getting a waiver under current provisions in the law, unless they are large enough to be able to absorb the increased labor costs.

The criteria for the waiver is that the highest paid managerial position is not paid more on an hourly basis than six times the wage of the lowest paid employee.

The cost of increasing funding to non-profits and a county agency for homecare workers is estimated around

\$20 million annually.

Supporters point out that it is always a matter of political priorities for the City to come up with the money.

The City found \$16 million to renovate the Harding Park area for the World Golf Championship with Tiger Woods.

Mayor Gavin Newsom has budgeted \$24 million for his pet project of a 311 number to dial for information on city services.

The Mayor also recently asked for a \$16.5 million supplemental budget appropriation to cover police overtime costs, to install 20 surveillance cameras on streets and other anti-crime measures.

- Karl Kramer and Nhien Truong

## Contact Your Supervisor

District 1 – Jake McGoldrick, 554-7410, 554-7415 (fax), Jake.McGoldrick@sfgov.org

District 2 – Michela Alioto-Pier, 554-7752, 554-7843 (fax), Michela.Alioto-Pier@sfgov.org

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District 6 – Chris Daly, 554-7970, 554-7974 (fax), Chris.Daly@sfgov.org

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District 9 – Tom Ammiano, 554-5144, 554-6255 (fax), Tom.Ammiano@sfgov.org

District 10 – Sophie Maxwell, 554-7670, 554-7674 (fax), Sophie.Maxwell@sfgov.org

District 11 – Gerardo Sandoval, 554-6975, 554-6979 (fax), Gerardo.Sandoval@sfgov.org

*The Mobilizer* is a publication of the San Francisco Living Wage Coalition.

Send articles and announcements for the next issue to the attention of *the Mobilizer*:

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San Francisco, CA 94110

phone and fax (415) 863-5543  
or email [sflivingwage@riseup.net](mailto:sflivingwage@riseup.net)

**Living Wage Coalition TV Show**  
“It’s Time for a Living Wage”

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month  
7:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
Cable Channel 29

## Help Low-wage Workers by Donating Goods to the...

**Community Thrift Store**  
**623 Valencia**  
**(between 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Sts.)**

**donation door – south side**  
**of building on Sycamore**  
**Alley (one way from**  
**Mission to Valencia)**

**Donate in the name of the**  
**San Francisco Living Wage**  
**Coalition**  
**number 56**

**(on master list on door)**  
**Open Every Day**  
**10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**  
**receipts for tax deductions**

“No Repair/Ready to Wear”  
call 861-7483 with any  
questions on acceptable  
donations or to schedule  
donation pick up

