

Portland City Council Agenda Written Testimony
Document Number 2025-178

	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
1	Kathleen Hannan	Support	Please reinstate this. It is the just thing to do.. what's fair.	No	04/23/25 3:31 PM
2	Anonymous	Oppose	The city already provides amazing wages and benefits our entitled city workers need to stop demanding more and our progressive councilors need to realize the costs aren't sustainable.	No	05/05/25 5:17 PM
3	SEIU Local 49	Support		Yes	05/06/25 5:59 PM
4	SEIU Local 49	Support		Yes	05/06/25 6:01 PM
5	SEIU Local 49	Support		Yes	05/06/25 6:03 PM
6	SEIU Local 49			Yes	05/06/25 6:03 PM
7	Yasmin Ibarra, SEIU Local 49	Support		Yes	05/06/25 6:15 PM



Testimonio ante el Concejo Municipal de Portland
Comité de Desarrollo Laboral y de la Fuerza Laboral
Presentado por Gloria Hernandez
Lead Janitor, Justice Center
Re: Restauración de la Política de Salario Justo de la Ciudad
27 de marzo de 2025

Buenas tardes, Presidenta Smith y miembros del comité,

Mi nombre es Gloria Hernández y soy lead janitor en el Justice Center. He trabajado allí y para compañía Relay durante 22 años. También soy miembro de mi unión SEIU local 49.

Cuando comencé como janitor, ganaba solo \$7.85 por hora y no tenía vacaciones pagadas ni seguro médico. Eso cambió cuando Relay me contrató. Finalmente, tuve acceso a un seguro médico asequible, un plan de pensión, días festivos pagados y mejores salarios.

Trabajar en el Justice Center no siempre ha sido fácil, especialmente durante la pandemia. Las protestas hicieron que fuera difícil llegar al trabajo, y en ocasiones, incluso me lanzaron basura solo por tratar de entrar al edificio. A pesar de todo, me presenté a trabajar todos los días porque mi trabajo es importante.

Cuando la Ciudad aumentó la Política de Salario Justo a \$15 por hora, marcó una gran diferencia para mí y mi familia.

Cuando mi esposo no pudo trabajar durante nueve meses, ese aumento salarial me ayudó a pagar el renta y los gastos—algo que de otra manera no habría podido hacer.

Ahora, gracias a esta política y a la negociación sindical, gano \$21.23 por hora y cuento con beneficios sólidos que apoyan el bienestar de mi familia.

La Política de Salario Justo demuestra que la Ciudad valora a trabajadores como yo. Los salarios justos nos ayudan a seguir adelante y a hacer este trabajo difícil pero esencial.

Les pido que restauren esta política y continúen apoyando a los trabajadores.

Gracias por su tiempo y consideración.

Gloria Hernández

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**Testimony to the Portland City Council
Labor and Workforce Development Committee
Provided by Gloria Hernandez
Lead Janitor, Justice Center
Re: Restoration of the City's Fair Wage Policy
March 27, 2025**

Good afternoon Chair Smith and committee members,

My name is Gloria Hernandez, and I am a lead janitor at the Justice Center. I have worked there and for the company Relay Resources for 22 years. Im also a member of my union SEIU local 49.

When I first started as a janitor, I earned just \$7.85 an hour, with no paid vacation or medical leave. That changed when Relay Resources hired me. I finally had access to affordable medical insurance, a pension plan, paid holidays, and better wages.

Working at the Justice Center hasn't always been easy, especially during the height of the pandemic. Protests made it difficult to get to work, and at times, I even had trash thrown at me just for trying to enter the building. Still, I showed up every day because my job mattered.

When the City raised the Fair Wage Policy to \$15 an hour, it made a huge difference for me and my family. When my husband couldn't work for nine months, that wage increase helped me cover rent and expenses—something I couldn't have done otherwise. Now, thanks to the City's policy and union bargaining, I make \$21.23 an hour, with strong benefits that support my family's well-being.

The Fair Wage Policy shows that the City values workers like me. Fair wages help us keep going and do this difficult but essential work. Please restore this policy and continue supporting workers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Gloria Hernandez



Testimony to the Portland City Council
Labor and Workforce Development Committee
Provided by Mark Jefferies
Member, SEIU Local 49

Re: Restoration of the City's Fair Wage Policy

March 27, 2025

Good afternoon Chair Smith and committee members,

My name is Mark Jefferies, and I am a day porter here at Portland City Hall and a member of the Service Employees International Union, Local 49.

I have worked for Relay Resources since 2002 and I first started working at the City in the Portland Building, then began helping out at City Hall back when Mayor Adams was partway through his term, before being assigned here permanently. I've continued working here through the terms of Mayor Hales, Mayor Wheeler, and now Mayor Wilson. I take pride in the work that I do here for the people of Portland along with my fellow union janitors and security officers.

I had the opportunity to testify and express my appreciation ten years ago when the Council voted to increase the City's Fair Wage Policy to \$15/hour. Thanks to the City's decision to raise the wage my wife and I have been able to save money for our retirement.

The way things are going right now with the economy, we're concerned about groceries and paying for other necessities. We also drive a 2005 car and know we will need to replace it soon, but now even used cars are so expensive. Earning a good wage for the work that I do is really important.

The City's janitors and security officers work hard to make sure City buildings and spaces are comfortable and welcoming for everyone, and the City's Fair Wage Policy is a really important way for the City to make sure all of its workers can live and thrive in Portland. I want to thank this committee for restoring such an important policy.

Thank you.

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Testimony to the Portland City Council
Labor and Workforce Development Committee
Provided by Ross Leonard
Member, SEIU Local 49

Re: Restoration of the City's Fair Wage Policy

March 27, 2025

Good afternoon Chair Smith and committee members,

My name is Ross Leonard, and I am a janitor at the Justice Center on the City side with the Portland Police Bureau. I have worked at the Justice Center for 16 years and I am a proud member of the Service Employees International Union, Local 49.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify today about the City's Fair Wage Policy. My co-workers and I rely on the good wages we make cleaning and maintaining City facilities.

With grocery prices going up due to inflation and the tariffs, it's really hard to make ends meet. It is hard to earn enough to cover rent, but the wage I earn under the Fair Wage Policy makes it possible to do so without having to apply for other forms of assistance.

I am trying to save for my future, but medical costs are also a challenge. The union is really helpful in making sure I have good health insurance, but I need frequent MRIs, am on eight different medications, and see doctors twice a week. At 45 years old I want to be able to earn a good wage to pay for my living expenses without having to ask for help. I just can't imagine making it without the protection of the Fair Wage Policy.

I work hard at my job. I've worked hard to help take care of City facilities through the challenges of recent years, with the pandemic, and the protests downtown. I was proud to help out during the protests to clean up the additional messes when there were extra officers in the Justice Center. I cleaned holding cells, not knowing what sort of substances people were bringing into the building with them. Then afterwards I had to make my way home through flash bangs and tear gas.

The Fair Wage Policy is an important way for the City to show your workers that we are wanted and appreciated. Fair compensation makes it easier to keep going and doing this difficult work. It also makes it possible for City janitors, security officers, and parking attendants to participate and invest in the things that make Portland such a great place to live, like being able to go to the Portland Art Museum, Saturday Market, and restaurants. These things also allow us to feel comfortable having out-of-town friends and family come and visit us in Portland where they can also spend their money and invest in our City.

Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to restore this important City policy.

Thank you.

Ross Leonard
Relay janitor at the Justice Center

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**Testimonio ante el Concejo Municipal de Portland
Comité de Desarrollo Laboral y de la Fuerza Laboral
Presentado por Maria Flores
Re: Restauración de la Política de Salario Justo de la Ciudad**

27 de Marzo de 2025

Buenas tardes, Presidenta Smith y miembros del comité,

Hola, mi nombre es María Flores y soy trabajadora de limpieza en el edificio Portland. He trabajado para la compañía Relay durante más de un año y también soy delegada sindical de mi unión. Tal vez me hayan visto a mí o a mis colegas limpiando algunos pisos.

Hoy les hablo para pedir su apoyo en la restauración de la Política de Salario Justo de la Ciudad. Sé que esta política ha marcado una gran diferencia para muchos de mis compañeros que llevan años trabajando como janitors y personal de seguridad en los edificios de la ciudad.

Entiendo que ustedes tienen el poder de garantizar trabajos con salarios justos. Cuando empecé hace un año, mi salario era de \$18.25 por hora, pero gracias a esta política, aumentó a \$18.90. Para mí y mi familia, esa diferencia ha sido muy importante.

Mi sueño es ser dueña de una casa. Ahora, con un salario más justo y un trabajo estable gracias a la unión, estoy ahorrando para solicitar un préstamo de casa. Saber que tengo un empleo seguro y un salario digno me da la confianza para planificar un mejor futuro para mi familia.

La Política de Salario Justo es una manera en que la Ciudad puede demostrar que valora y respeta a sus trabajadores. Una compensación justa no solo reconoce nuestro esfuerzo, sino que también nos permite seguir adelante con este trabajo tan importante.

Gracias por su tiempo y por sus esfuerzos para restablecer esta política. Aprecio su atención y apoyo.

Maria Flores

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Testimony to the Portland City Council
Committee on Labor and Workforce Development
Presented by Maria Flores
Re: Restoration of the City's Fair Wage Policy

March 27, 2025

Good afternoon, Chair Smith and committee members,

Hello, my name is Maria Flores, and I am a janitorial worker at the Portland building. I have worked for Relay for over a year and am also a union delegate. You may have seen me or my colleagues cleaning some of the floors.

I am here today to ask for your support in restoring the City's Fair Wage Policy. I know that this policy has made a significant difference for many of my coworkers who have worked for years as janitors and security staff in city buildings.

I understand that you have the power to ensure jobs with fair wages. When I started a year ago, my wage was \$18.25 per hour, but thanks to this policy, it increased to \$18.90. That difference has been very important for me and my family.

My dream is to own a home. Now, with a fairer wage and a stable job thanks to my union, I am saving to apply for a home loan. Knowing that I have secure employment and a fair wage gives me the confidence to plan for a better future for my family.

The Fair Wage Policy is a way for the City to show that it values and respects its workers. Fair compensation not only recognizes our hard work but also allows us to continue doing this important job.

Thank you for your time and for your efforts to reinstate this policy. I appreciate your attention and support.

Maria Flores



Testimony to the Portland City Council
Provided by Yasmin Ibarra
Political Director, SEIU Local 49

Re: Reinstating the City's Fair Wage Policy

May 7th, 2025

Chair Pirtle Guiney, Vice Chair Koyama Lane and Council Members,

My name is Yasmin Ibarra and I am the Political Director of the Service Employees International Union, Local 49. SEIU Local 49 is a union of nearly 14,000 essential healthcare and property service workers, including the City's subcontracted janitors, security officers, and laundry workers.

We are here today to express our support and appreciation for the council's action to restore the City of Portland Fair Wage Policy.

Local 49 has a long history of engaging with the City to raise standards for your lowest-paid subcontracted workers. We are consistent in our advocacy for the City to invest in good jobs for *all* of your employees – including subcontracted workers – by providing wages that keep up with the cost of living through adequate budget allocations, sustainable procurement, and through groundbreaking City initiatives such as the Fair Wage Policy.

For nearly 30 years, the Portland Fair Wage Policy has improved the lives of thousands of Portland's residents by ensuring the City's janitors, security officers, and parking attendants earned wages that kept up with the rising cost of living. In return, City taxpayers have benefited from your investment in good jobs in the form of high-quality services ensuring the maintenance and protection of public buildings and spaces.

The City's leadership with this policy has also influenced other government employers to prioritize good jobs for their workforces. The Port of Portland, following the City's lead, has adopted a similar policy for subcontracted workers, and Multnomah County commissioners have indicated interest in exploring the adoption of their own fair wage policy in the near future. Expedient re-instatement of the City's Fair Wage Policy can ensure the City's actions again align with its values as you continue to lead our region in improving the quality of life for Portland's residents.

Thank you for your leadership and for prioritizing the reinstatement of this policy.

Yasmin Ibarra
Political Director
Service Employees International Union, Local 49

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Portland City Council
Wednesday, May 7, 2025 - 9:30 a.m.
Testimony List

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