

## Testimony on HB 2009 and SB 610

Representatives and Senators:

My name is Everice Brolliar Moro. I am a retired classified professional in private and public education settings for over 40 years. When I retired after 30 years in my last district, my hourly wage was \$14.61 an hour. As a leader in my union, OSEA, and a Vice President of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, I have spent many years working on causes that will help better the lives of the students, staff, and working people that I represent.

The Federal 2015 Poverty Level website says that if you earn \$24,250 a year for a family of four, you are at the poverty level. I never earned that much money in one year. But if you earned \$15.00 an hour, worked 8 hours a day, and worked a 40 hour week all year long, you would earn \$31,200 (the poverty level for a family of 6, like mine). Here's the problem; who gets to work an 8 hour day, or 40 hours a week, or 52 weeks of work? Who is getting more than minimum wage? Public school employees have had their days and hours cut because of budget problems. Lots of folks in the restaurant, retail, parks and recreation seasonal, temporary, and other low-wage jobs rarely have regular full-time work. Employers, both public and private, have used the "poor economy" as an excuse to cut jobs, wages and benefits, in union jobs as well as unorganized workers.

Things are better now for lots of corporations and public entities. In the spirit of the "shared sacrifice" that our employers said was imperative; it is time for employers to reinstate a healthier wage scale for lower-wage employees. No one wants a business to go out of business, but it is time to share the wealth. It is time to honor the work people do and for employers to put more money in the pockets of their employees. For too many years, too many hardworking Oregonians have been showing up for jobs that don't pay enough for housing, food, medical care, transportation, college or school loans, child care, retirement and all the other expenses that life requires. Jobs have been subdivided, contracted out, and subsequently pay has been reduced. We have put too many children into poverty and too many families at risk.

The time is now to reset the stage for workers. Everyone should be able to afford the necessities of life without having to depend on public assistance or go without. You have it within your power to act for the benefit of all the citizens of Oregon and to be a leader in the country. You are the elected leadership and your commitment to making Oregon a better place starts with making sure Oregon jobs pay a fair wage for all workers from the statehouse to the shop on the corner.

Thank you for the work you do and for your consideration of this matter.

Everice Brolliar Moro