

## Living wage works

MARY MACKEIGAN

Re: Benefits Of A 'Living Wage' Outlined -- March 26

The living wage has been implemented in over 140 cities and counties in the United States. This suggests that the living wage policy is effective and desirable by the population.

Additionally, dollars that are received by people of low-income are very likely to be spent on local businesses.

There are many studies that show positive effects of such policies. Some of these positive effects include increased customer satisfaction; cost savings on staff hiring and training (from a decrease in staff turnover); and higher productivity as workers feel valued and value their work. In London, England, numerous multinational corporations have adopted the living wage, which saw a reduction in turnover of its cleaning staff by almost 50 per cent after a living wage was adopted.

There are also numerous benefits experienced by employees such as increased financial security; additional education; ability to afford basic goods such as food, clothing and shelter; and participation in community activities.

This is exemplified by a study conducted in Boston which highlighted the benefits people affected by the living wage experienced. Many people in this study were able to move away from severe poverty and closer to being able to acquire their basic needs.

To speak more to the economic costs of a living wage it was noted in a detailed study of 20 cities that implemented a living wage that the projected effects were consistently overestimated and that the actual increase was approximately 0.1 per cent of the overall budget.

We at Opportunities Waterloo Region believe in the potential of living wages to greatly benefit not only the lives of people in Waterloo Region, but also the whole community.

We believe that living wages offer a concrete intervention that demonstrates that we are a community that is committed to the prosperity of all citizens.

Mary MacKeigan

Executive Director

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Kitchener

The Record.com

<http://news.therecord.com/article/516523>



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