



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: Res 2040-2013 **Version:** * **Name:** Fast food restaurants to pay their workers a family-sustaining wage.
Type: Resolution **Status:** Filed
In control: Committee on Civil Service and Labor

On agenda: 11/26/2013

Enactment date: **Enactment #:**

Title: Resolution calling upon fast food restaurants to pay their workers a family-sustaining wage.

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
11/26/2013	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
11/26/2013	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
12/31/2013	*	City Council	Filed (End of Session)	

Res. No. 2040

Resolution calling upon fast food restaurants to pay their workers a family-sustaining wage.

By Council Members Lander, Brewer, Chin, James, Koppell, Mendez, Richards and Rose

Whereas, According to the 2012 Quick Service Restaurants ranking of fast food restaurants, McDonald’s, Subway, Starbucks, Wendy’s, Burger King, Taco Bell, Dunkin’ Donuts, Pizza Hut, KFC and Chick-Fil-A are the nation’s top earners; and

Whereas, In 2008, an article in the American Journal of Public Health noted that in New York City there were over 1,625 fast food restaurants; and

Whereas, According to New York Communities for Change, there are over 50,000 fast food workers in New York City; and

Whereas, According to Fast Food Forward, a group that seeks to highlight the wage related issues of the fast food restaurant workers, the average annual salary for a fast food worker in New York City is \$11,000; and

Whereas, Many of these fast food workers are adults in full time positions seeking to support their

families with the wages earned from their fast food jobs; and

Whereas, According to a collaborative report released in 2005 by the Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center, the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School and the Community Service Society, there are social costs to low wage jobs; and

Whereas, According to the report, low wage workers in the food industry lack job security which leads to an increased reliance on unemployment insurance and social assistance programs such as welfare, housing subsidies and child care subsidies; and

Whereas, These programs are administered by local, state and federal governments but funded by tax payer dollars; and

Whereas, In 2004, the University of California, Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education released a study estimating that California taxpayers pay \$10 billion annually in hidden costs associated with wages that perpetuate poverty earned by 2 million families; and

Whereas, The study found that in California, the majority of the public assistance (over 25 percent or \$5.7 billion) that went to working families was received by families whose workers were earning less than \$8 per hour; and

Whereas, The study further asserted that by creating conditions that essentially force workers to rely on and participate in social programs rather than providing essential benefits, fast food restaurants are, in effect, receiving an indirect public subsidy while placing profits over the livelihood of their workforce; and

Whereas, The corporations that own many of these fast food restaurants which employ these workers continue to see revenue growth and in some cases are opening more locations in New York City; and

Whereas, If operators of fast food restaurants paid their workers a family sustaining wage that would allow them to support their families without relying on public benefit programs, the monies used to fund those programs could be reallocated to programs that combat issues such as obesity; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon fast food restaurants to pay their workers

a family-sustaining wage.

LS# 4485
5/09/13
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