

Caroline Town Board - Support of the Living Wage as the Minimum Wage across Tompkins County - Resolution

WHEREAS, it is one of our most cherished values that there is dignity in work; and

WHEREAS, raising incomes is critical to providing economic mobility and opportunity for working families; and

WHEREAS, the growth in income inequality in recent years has created serious divisions within our society and community; and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County is becoming increasingly two counties with a portion of the population thriving while many more face low wages, growing inequality, erosion of middle-class jobs, staggering housing costs, and the institutionalization of a low-wage service economy; and

WHEREAS, failure to pay workers a living wage is a major problem within the Town of Caroline resulting in 38% of students at Caroline Elementary poor enough to qualify for free or reduced lunch; and

WHEREAS, a full-time minimum wage worker in New York State earns \$18,720 at the current minimum wage of \$9.00/hour, an income significantly below the current living wage in Tompkins County of \$29,827; and

WHEREAS, a higher minimum wage across Tompkins County would increase spending on locally produced goods and services by workers benefiting from such increased wages, which, in turn would produce greater demand and help stimulate the local economy; and

WHEREAS, a higher minimum wage would reduce the cost of providing social services in the Town of Caroline and Tompkins County; and

WHEREAS, our community has a proud tradition of advocating for worker rights and promoting economic justice; and

WHEREAS, we as a community and we as a country can no longer accept wages that leave some without hope of rising up and unable to support themselves nor their families; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Town of Caroline requests that the Tompkins County Legislature pass a local minimum-wage law establishing the Tompkins County Living Wage (currently \$14.34/hour) as the minimum wage; phasing the new minimum wage in over a four year period; and indexing it to the New York State median wage thereafter; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Town of Caroline supports Tompkins County further passing a home-rule request to New York State seeking the authority to implement such a local minimum wage; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Town of Caroline calls on the New York State Legislature to pass promptly said home-rule request; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Tompkins County Legislature, the Tompkins County Council of Governments, New York State Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, New York State Senator James Seward, and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo.