

LOCALITIES TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT WORKERS

LABOR DAY REPORT 2023

Economic Policy Institute



Introduction

In the past, protecting workers and advancing workers' rights was not generally seen as a role of cities, counties, or local governments. But in recent years, **local governments have begun to play a critical and growing role in relation to protecting workers** through:

- Creating dedicated local labor agencies or hiring dedicated labor personnel;
- Establishing worker boards or councils;
- Improving working conditions for their own local government employees;
- Passing and enforcing laws expanding workers' rights;
- Enforcing local labor protections;
- Incorporating labor compliance or high-road requirements in relation to contracting, licensing, and permitting;
- And more.

Since Labor Day 2022, we have tracked these local policy developments with regular Workers' Rights Roundups. (View the roundups here: [September 2022](#), [October 2022](#), [January 2023](#), [April 2023](#), and [July 2023](#).) This report represents a collaboration between the Local Progress Impact Lab, and the State and Local Enforcement Project, which is housed at the Center for Labor and a Just Economy (CLJE) at Harvard Law School and at the Economic Policy Institute.

To mark a year's worth of transformative local labor policies from Labor Day 2022 to Labor Day 2023, we are releasing **Localities Take Action to Protect Workers, a Labor Day 2023 Workers' Rights Report**. This Labor Day Report catalogs many key developments and categorizes them based on the policy lever the local government used. The report does not contain all relevant activities at the local level, but it provides a sense of the breadth and substance of pro-worker action by local government entities during the past year. We want to note that **abusive state preemption often limits what localities can do to advance workers' rights** (i.e. the [Texas "Death Star" Bill HB2127](#)), but we hope this report provides inspiration by

showcasing both what localities can do when they aren't preempted and also the creative things they can do even when they are preempted.

For a more comprehensive discussion of the role of local government in protecting and advancing workers' rights, please see the Economic Policy Institute, Harvard CLJE, and Local Progress Impact Lab Report: [The Role Of Local Government In Protecting Workers' Rights](#).

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Creating Local Labor Agencies and/or Adding Dedicated Labor Personnel	2
Creating Worker Boards or Councils	3
Serving as a Model Employer	5
Passing Laws to Raise Labor Standards for Workers	7
Anti-discrimination laws	7
Fair scheduling	8
Minimum wage and wage theft	9
Paid Leave	10
Protecting gig workers and other workers historically excluded from labor standards laws	11
Specific industry-focused legislation and programs	12
Other	13
Enforcement of Local Worker Protection Laws	14
Civil enforcement	14
Criminal enforcement	16
Contracting, Permitting, and Licensing	18
Public Leadership/Other	22
Prospective Ordinances	24
About	25

Creating Local Labor Agencies and/or Adding Dedicated Labor Personnel

Creation of a **local government personnel dedicated to workers' rights can be transformative**. It ensures that municipal public servants will be involved in worker protection in a continuous, proactive, ongoing, and in-depth manner. It allows **specialized staff to develop expertise** on the relevant municipal laws and policies, as well as deep knowledge of issues affecting local workers. Where there is a dedicated worker-focused office in local government, staffers can develop **ongoing relationships** with relevant stakeholders like worker advocacy groups, labor unions, immigrant rights advocates, service providers, employment lawyers, and employer associations, as well as other relevant government enforcement agencies at the local, state, and federal levels.

Boston, MA Mayor's Office Announced New Cabinet for Worker Empowerment: Mayor Michelle Wu announced the creation of the Cabinet for Worker Empowerment. The Cabinet will centralize the city's efforts to implement the Boston Green New Deal, regulating workplace conditions, and expanding economic opportunities for workers.

Chicago, IL Mayor Brandon Johnson's Executive Order Created a Deputy Mayor for Labor Relations Position: The executive order established a Deputy Mayor for Labor Relations position that will “allow coordination to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of Chicago, in addition to improving working conditions, advancing new job opportunities for employment, and protecting workers' rights.” [Click here to view the executive order.](#)

Lynn, MA Reinstated Their Wage Theft Advisory Committee: Four years ago, Lynn passed a law to fight wage theft and established a Wage Theft Advisory Committee which would provide support to workers who experience wage theft and seek to litigate their claim. While the committee underwent a hiatus during the pandemic, the committee reestablished themselves and elected a union organizer as the head of the committee.

Pittsburgh, PA Mayor Established Office of Equal Protection to Enforce Local Labor Laws: Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey announced the creation of a [three-person](#) Office of Equal Protection which will enforce labor laws, including a 2010 service worker prevailing-wage ordinance and a 2020 paid sick-leave act. Labor enforcement previously fell under the city controller's office. The new office will also include an American with Disabilities Act coordinator to ensure the city's internal practices comply with disability rights law. A [report](#) authored by the

city controller's office that demonstrated the need for a labor enforcement office helped spark this effort.

Creating Worker Boards or Councils

Worker boards are bodies established by governments that include worker representation and that typically aim to **provide workers with a voice and formal role** in setting policies and higher minimum standards for jobs in particular industries. These boards typically investigate challenges facing workers by conducting hearings and outreach activities, issuing reports on findings, and making recommendations regarding minimum wage rates, benefits, and workplace standards. By focusing on workers in specific industries, these boards are able to address industry-specific issues and **involve workers and their organizations directly in governance decisions**.

Cities in California Newly Empowered to Create Fast Food Councils to Improve Conditions

for Fast Food Workers: The California State Legislature passed the Fast Food Accountability and Standards Recovery Act which would create a state council to improve working conditions for fast food workers by issuing regulations on wages, working conditions, trainings, and more. The law—which was [signed by the governor on Labor Day](#)—empowers cities with populations over 200,000 to create local councils that could then offer recommendations to the state council. [Click here to view the bill.](#)

Detroit, MI City Council Creates the Country's First-Ever Industry Standards Board for Arena

Workers: In 2021, the Detroit City Council passed an ordinance that authorized the creation of industry standard boards. That ordinance “allows workers in a common industry to join together to petition and form a tripartite table of workers, employer associations and government representatives to recommend industry-wide workplace standards.” The nine Industry Standards Board appointments shall be individuals who either live or work in the city, appointed as follows: three members that are employees, or representatives who have been chosen by workers in the subject industry, three from the mayor; and three from the city council. [Click here to view the 2021 ordinance](#), and [click here to view the resolution establishing the arena workers industry standards board.](#)

Serving as a Model Employer

Localities can support working people by creating **good working conditions for their own municipal workforces**. Despite providing critical services to the community, local government workers often experience poor working conditions. For example, local government employees are often paid poorly: about one-third of state and local employees are paid less than \$20 per hour, and more than 15% are paid less than \$15 per hour. Because local government workforces can form a sizable portion of the local labor market, **raising labor standards for local government employees can cause an upward impact on the local workforce**. Additionally, improving working conditions for local government employees **advances important equity goals** because women and Black workers are more likely to be employed by local and state governments.

Allegheny County, PA County Council Raised Minimum Wage to \$18 in 2024 and to \$20 in 2026 for All Hourly County Employees: Overriding a veto of the County Executive, the Allegheny County Council passed an ordinance setting a pay floor for all hourly county employees, including full-time, part-time and seasonal workers, with a minimum wage for those workers set at \$18/hour in 2024. Additionally, the minimum wage will increase to \$19 in 2025 and to \$20/hour in 2026.

Austin, Travis County, and Austin Community College Raised Wages of Employees to \$20/hour: Led by **Local Progress Member Vanessa Fuentes**, the Austin City Council passed a budget that will increase the city employee wage to a living wage of \$20/hour in October. This remarkable 33% increase over the current minimum wage is crucial to ensure that city employees can live in the city they work for. Local Progress members raised wages elsewhere in Texas too: **Travis County Judge Andy Brown and Austin Community College Trustee Stephanie Gharakhanian** helped ensure a \$20 minimum wage for Travis County and Austin Community College employees respectively. Click [here to view the passed budget for Austin](#), [here for Travis County](#), and here for [Austin Community College](#).

Denver, CO Voted To Provide Paid Family Leave For City Employees: City and County of Denver employees will soon be entitled to a new, free family leave benefit called the 'Care Bank.' The Denver City Council voted to decline participation in the state's Family and Medical Leave Insurance plan, allowing the city to offer an enhanced benefit. The Care Bank will give employees up to eight weeks, or 320 hours, of leave paid by the city that can be used for qualifying self-care or care of family members. [Click here to view the resolution](#).

Richmond, VA Reached Agreement on Collective Bargaining Ordinance For City Employees:

The Richmond City Council and the Mayor reached an agreement and passed a collective bargaining ordinance that would permit city employees to collectively bargain, [joining five other localities](#) in Virginia. This agreement follows from the Virginia state legislature lifting a long-time ban on public sector unionizing in 2020. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

New Orleans, LA Workers Provided the Right to Organize: The New Orleans City Council passed a “Right to Organize” ordinance codifying city employees’ right to organize. The ordinance creates collective bargaining processes and timelines, and requires the council to hire a “labor relations advisor” to mediate potential disputes. Ordinance supporters hope it will help overcome challenges with hiring and retention in city government. [Click here to view the ordinance and the passed amendments.](#)

San Antonio, TX Increased City Workers’ Wages from 7% to 20%: San Antonio City Council, led by **Local Progress member Teri Castillo** and through advocacy by AFSCME Local 2021, passed a budget that increased city worker wages by at least 7%. This is made up of a 5 percent across-the-board raise and market adjustments of 2 percent or more, based on what other area employers are paying for similar work. These raises are a critical response to the challenges with hiring and retention facing local governments. [Click here for more information about the budget.](#)

San Juan County, WA Unanimously Votes to Shift 70% of Employees to a Four Day Workweek While Maintaining Pay: The San Juan County Council unanimously voted to bring a four day workweek to the majority of its employees. They did this by approving a change that city officials negotiated with a labor union that represents close to 70% of the county’s workers. The union, AFSCME Local 1849, consists of nurses, environmental stewards, road-crew workers, park workers, clerks, and other county employees. The change was motivated by a need to retain and attract workers. County officials were also encouraged by extensive research that shows that productivity stays the same or increases during a 32-hour workweek. When and where needed, the county will stagger schedules to ensure residents have uninterrupted services. [Click here to view more details about San Juan County’s implementation of the four day workweek.](#)

Waco, TX Added Six Weeks of Parental Leave for City Employees– Regardless of Gender or Parental Status: **Local Progress Alumna Kelly Connolly** has worked to secure funding during the recent budget process to provide paid parental leave for all Waco city employees, regardless of the parent’s gender and regardless of whether the parent is an adoptive, foster, or biological parent. [Click here for more details on the Waco budget.](#)

Passing Laws to Raise Labor Standards for Workers

Local governments typically have some degree of authority to initiate legislation, subject to their authority under the relevant state constitution, state statutes, and city charters. Local **governments have become increasingly active legislative actors in regards to raising labor standards** for private and public workers in their localities. In recent years, local governments have increasingly used this power to pass laws to advance workers' rights on a range of labor issues: fair scheduling, paid sick and safe leave, wage theft, protections for 'gig' or app workers, discrimination protections, and more. **We note that as local governments have become increasingly active at raising labor standards, there has been significant pushback from conservative state legislatures who seek to preempt these localities from advancing workers' rights.** The most notable example of this is the Texas State Legislature and governor passing HB2127, which is currently being litigated. This "Death Star" preemption bill invalidates a number of local government ordinances that advance labor standards, including even ordinances that mandate rest breaks for construction workers working in intense Texas heat.

Anti-discrimination laws

Atlanta, GA Prohibited Employment Discrimination On The Basis Of Criminal History Or Gender Expression. The ordinance achieves this by amending existing anti-discrimination laws to include gender expression and criminal history as protected categories. The ordinance applies to any business with more than ten employees. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Chicago, IL Passed a Bodily Autonomy Anti-Discrimination Ordinance. This ordinance, introduced by **Local Progress members and Alderpersons Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez, Maria Hadden, Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, and Matt Martin** prevents housing and employment discrimination against an individual who receives reproductive healthcare or gender affirming care. It also prevents employers from accessing private healthcare information of the employees. The ordinance directs the Chicago Commission on Human Relations to investigate potential violations of the ordinance. This ordinance builds off the initial Bodily Autonomy ordinance passed by the Chicago City Council in September 2021, which prohibits any City department or agency from participating in any investigation or proceeding related to reproductive and gender-affirming care led by another jurisdiction, including anti-abortion states. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Columbus, OH City Council Banned Salary History Inquiries: The Columbus City Council passed an ordinance, signed by the Mayor, that would prohibit employers with 15 or more employees from inquiring about a job candidate's salary and/or screening candidates based on their salary history. The ordinance applies to public and private employers, but also includes some exemptions: "actions authorized by specific federal, state, or local laws, internal

promotions, voluntary and unprompted disclosure of salary history by a job candidate, verification of non-salary-related information, re-hires within three years of termination, positions subject to collective bargaining agreements, and federal, state, and local government employers except for the City of Columbus.” [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[New York City, NY Wage and Salary Transparency Law Went Into Effect:](#) Starting November 1, New York will require employers to disclose “a good faith salary range for every job, promotion, and transfer opportunity advertised,” according to the city’s Commission on Human Rights. Wage and salary transparency helps fight race and gender pay gaps. [Click here to view the ordinance passed earlier this year.](#)

[New York City, NY Banned Weight and Height Discrimination:](#) New York City passed a law that would add weight and height to the list of characteristics—which already included race, gender, age, religion, and sexual orientation—that are protected from discrimination in employment, housing, and access to public accommodations. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[Seattle, WA Banned Caste Discrimination in Workplaces, Housing, and Public Services:](#) In February, Seattle became the first U.S. city to ban caste-based discrimination in workplaces, housing, and public services. While caste discrimination was [outlawed in India](#) in 2013, caste discrimination still occurs in India and in the U.S. A [2016 survey of South Asian Americans conducted by civil rights organization Equality Labs](#) found that 25 percent of Dalit respondents (those belonging to what is considered the lowest caste) said they had faced verbal or physical assault based on their caste. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Fair scheduling

[Berkeley, CA Passed Fair Work Week Bill:](#) Following in the footsteps of its neighbors San Jose, Emeryville, and San Francisco, among others, Berkeley passed a fair work week ordinance of its own. The ordinance mandates advance notice to employees of their schedules, ensuring that employees have regular, consistent schedules. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[Evanston, IL Passed a Fair Workweek Ordinance:](#) Led by **Local Progress member Mayor Daniel Biss**, Evanston passed a fair workweek ordinance. The fair workweek ordinance will require employers to provide workers with advance good-faith estimates of the duration, frequency, and timing of possible shifts. The ordinance covers employers with more than one hundred employees and/or entities that are associated with a franchisor that has more than 30 locations globally. Industries covered include hospitality, food service and restaurants, retail, warehouse services, manufacturing, and building services. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[Los Angeles, CA Passed A Fair Work Week Ordinance](#). The ordinance requires that employers provide prospective and new employees with a good faith estimate of the expected work schedule. Once hired, employers must provide employees with written notice of their work schedules at least fourteen calendar days before the start of the work period. Employers making changes to that schedule must provide employees with written notice, and employees have the right to decline the scheduling changes and cannot experience retaliation for doing so. The ordinance will apply to Los Angeles retail employers at least 300 employees globally. [Click here to view the ordinance](#).

Minimum wage and wage theft

[Austin, TX Passed Wage Theft Protection Ordinance](#): In December, Austin City Council passed a comprehensive wage theft ordinance to protect workers. The process to create this ordinance was initiated by outgoing **councilmember and Local Progress alumna Ann Kitchen** and co-sponsored by **Local Progress member Vanessa Fuentes**. The bill has three main features: 1) creates a wage theft coordinator position to assist workers that report violations, 2) creates a publicly available database of certain employers that have a record of wage theft in the city and 3) bars any employer in the database from entering into any contract with the city of Austin. [Click here to view the ordinance](#).

[Denver, CO Minimum Wage Increased to ~\\$18](#): Denver's inflation-adjusted minimum wage will increase to \$17.83 in 2023, a significant increase over the current minimum wage of \$15.89—highlighting the importance of having minimum wages be inflation-adjusted. [Click here to see Denver's inflation-adjusted minimum wage ordinance](#).

[Denver, CO Passed A Wage Theft Ordinance](#) and [Began Implementing It](#): The Denver City Council also took aim at wage theft by unanimously passing an ordinance co-sponsored by **Local Progress members/alumni and Councilmembers Amanda Sawyer, Stacie Gilmore, Candi CdeBaca, and Council President Jamie Torres**. Denver's new ordinance has three main components. First, it provides a civil penalty for wage theft offenses. Second, it enables victims of wage theft to file a complaint with the city auditor rather than going through the court system. Third, once the complaint is filed, [Denver Labor](#) will investigate and can levy penalties against employers, including ensuring that employers pay back employees with 12% interest. [Click here to view the ordinance](#). Later, the Denver Labor office [adopted rules for enforcing and implementing the ordinance](#). The new rules indicate an "up-the-chain accountability" approach, which will mean "any employer who ultimately benefits from a worker's labor may be required to pay [the worker's] wages, including collecting funds from an entity that hired a subcontractor." Additionally, the office affirmed they will not inquire into any worker's immigration status as a part of any investigation.

[Tukwila, WA Increased Minimum Wage From \\$14.49 To \\$19:](#) In November, Tukwila voters approved a minimum wage increase from the Washington State minimum wage of \$14.49 to \$18.99, which sets Tukwila’s minimum wage as one of the highest in the nation. The proposal won decisively, receiving more than 82% of the votes. [Click here to view more details about the campaign and the ballot language.](#)

[West Hollywood, CA Minimum Wage Rose to the Highest in the Country at \\$19.08:](#) West Hollywood’s minimum wage increased to \$19.08 from \$18.35 due to an ordinance passed by their City Council in 2021. This sets the West Hollywood minimum wage [as likely the highest](#) in the country. The effort to pass that ordinance was led by then **West Hollywood Councilmember (and now current LA County Supervisor) and Local Progress member Lindsey Horvath**. The ordinance ensures the minimum wage increase is determined by local price increases since it uses the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA area. The 2021 ordinance mandates that the minimum wage increase shall be no less than 1% but also no more than 4%. [Click here to view the ordinance](#), and [click here to view more details](#) about West Hollywood’s implementation of the minimum wage increases. Numerous other localities across the country also experienced minimum wage increases on July 1 due to automatic-increase provisions in their state or local minimum wage laws, including [Chicago](#), [Cook County](#), [localities in California](#), and [localities in Oregon](#).

Paid Leave

[Bloomington, MN Required Sick Leave for Private Business Employees:](#) The City Council in Bloomington, where the Mall of America is located, unanimously passed an ordinance that would require private businesses to ensure their employees who work at least 80 hours/year in Bloomington accrue sick leave. If the business has over 5 employees, the leave must be paid. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[San Francisco, CA Employers Mandated to Provide Paid Leave During Public Health Emergencies:](#) In June 2022, San Francisco voters passed Proposition G, which went into effect October 1, 2022. This required employers with 100 or more employees worldwide to provide up to 80 hours of paid public health emergency leave to San Francisco-based employees. A “Public Health Emergency” is defined as a local or statewide health emergency related to any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Protecting gig workers and other workers historically excluded from labor standards laws

[Columbus, OH City Council Protected Freelance Workers' Wages](#): The Columbus City Council passed an ordinance that would provide basic wage protections to freelance workers. The ordinance applies to any individual freelance worker hired by a business located within city limits. The ordinance requires the hiring party to provide a written contract for work that exceeds \$250 over a period of 120 days. If no payment date is specified on the contract, payment must be provided within 30 days of service completion. Other jurisdictions that have similar laws include New York City, Seattle, and Minneapolis. [Click here to view the Columbus ordinance.](#)

[Los Angeles, CA Protected Freelancers by Requiring Written Contracts](#): Los Angeles City Council adopted an [ordinance](#) last month that would “require that any contract of \$600 or more between employers and freelance workers must be in writing, with a date by which the freelancer must be paid.” If the contract doesn’t include a date or if there is no written contract, “employers must pay freelancers within 30 days after the work is completed.” A hiring party may not force a freelancer to waive their rights under this law, nor may a freelancer voluntarily waive their rights. The requirement of a written contract will enable the Los Angeles Office of Wage Standards to more readily enforce freelancing agreements. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[New York City, NY Turned Vacant Newsstands Into E-Bike Charging Stations](#): Spurred by the organizing work of Los Deliveristas Unidos, an organization of bicycle delivery workers, Mayor Eric Adams and Senator Chuck Schumer announced a plan to create rest stops and charging hubs across New York City for food delivery workers.

[New York City, NY Established Minimum Wage Pay Standards For Gig Food Delivery Workers](#): In June, New York City’s Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DWCP) released a rule requiring platform, or “gig,” delivery companies to pay workers at least \$17.96 an hour, not including tips. This would affect more than 60,000 delivery workers, and it was the culmination of [years of organizing from Los Deliveristas Unidos](#). The DWCP had the authority to set the minimum wage for app-based delivery workers via [an ordinance passed in 2021 by New York City Council](#), led by **New York City Comptroller, Local Progress member, and then-City Council member Brad Lander**. Doordash, GrubHub, and Uber Eats [are currently litigating this ordinance](#); a temporary restraining order has been issued. [Click here for more details about the minimum-pay rate for platform food delivery workers.](#)

New York City, NY Announced Mediation Program For Domestic Workers: A report issued by New York City’s Department of Consumer and Worker Protection found that more than half of the city’s domestic workers — the majority of whom are immigrants and women of color — have experienced wage theft, safe and sick leave violations, harassment, discrimination, or other workplace problems. The City announced creation of a mediation program to provide a potentially quicker alternative for workers to resolve issues with their employers.

Seattle, WA Made Paid Sick and Safe Time (PSST) for App-Based Delivery Workers Permanent: Seattle became the first city in the nation to implement permanent paid sick and safe time benefits for app-based delivery workers. Workers will accrue one day of paid sick and safe time for every 30 days on which they have at least one work-related stop in Seattle. Led by **Local Progress member Teresa Mosqueda**, the City Council and Mayor unanimously extended a Covid-era ordinance that was set to expire in April. The ordinance does not cover workers for transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft because state law governs their working conditions. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Seattle City Council Passed a Law To Protect App Workers from Unreasonable Deactivation: Led by **Local Progress Members Lisa Herbold and Andrew Lewis**, the Seattle City Council passed an ordinance that protects app-based workers from being unreasonably deactivated from their platforms. The ordinance would require companies employing app-based workers to base deactivations on reasonable policies and provide app-based workers with notice, records, and human review of all deactivations. The organizing work of Local Progress partner Working Washington helped ensure the passage of the ordinance. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Washington D.C. Passed Domestic Workers Protections: Introduced by **D.C. Council and Local Progress alumna Elissa Silverman and Local Progress member Janeese Lewis George**, the bill has three main components. First, employers must provide a written contract prior to the first day of employment that “[includes a start date, location of work, a schedule, information on paid and unpaid leave, whether a car is needed, salary, and pay schedule.](#)” Second, the bill directs the District’s administration to enforce the law. Third, it provides resources to organizations that help domestic workers understand and leverage their legal rights. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Specific industry-focused legislation and programs

Cleveland, OH City Council Used ARPA Money to Support Childhood Education Workers: Cleveland City Council approved \$2.7 of ARPA funding to go towards signing and retention bonuses for early childhood education workers.

Denver, CO Created And Expanded Workforce Training Programs For Clean Energy Jobs:

Denver's Office of Climate Action, Sustainability and Resiliency, awarded \$2.6 million to six programs that provide training for various skill levels in renewable energy and green construction.

Irvine, CA Protected Hotel Workers From Harassment And Limited Their Workloads to

Address Ergonomic and Workplace Injury Concerns: Irvine City Council Members passed a new ordinance that aims to protect hotel workers from harassment and improving their working conditions. The ordinance requires that hotels provide workers with panic buttons and 24-hour security. The ordinance also limits the number of rooms that can be cleaned daily through a calculation considering room square footage, and prohibits workers from being assigned more than ten hours per day unless they give written consent. Hotel worker unions like UNITE HERE have [advocated for hotel panic buttons](#) to address sexual harassment; they've become more common in the [aftermath of #MeToo](#), and several other jurisdictions have passed laws requiring panic buttons, including [Chicago, New Jersey; Seattle and Washington State](#). (For more information on panic-button related policies, [view pg. 24 of this report](#).) [Click here to view Irvine's ordinance](#).

Seattle, WA Passed a Cannabis Employee Retention Ordinance and Began Enforcing It:

In September 2022, the Seattle City Council passed an ordinance that protects employees when the cannabis business they work for changes ownership. This ordinance requires covered outgoing cannabis business employers to post written notice of a change in control and provide a preferential hiring list to the incoming cannabis employer. It also requires the incoming employer to retain covered employees for a certain period of time following the change, among other hiring and retention requirements. The Seattle Office of Labor Standards began enforcing the ordinance in July 2023. [Click here to view the ordinance](#), and [click here to view the OLS's rules for enforcement](#).

St. Louis, MO Council Used ARPA Money to Support Early Childhood Education Workforce

Development: Led by **Local Progress member Lisa Clancy**, the St. Louis City Council approved \$5.6 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to be directed towards Child Care Aware, a nonprofit that administers public programs to boost pay for child care workers.

Other

New York City, NY Released Final Rules to Begin Regulating the Role of Artificial

Intelligence in Work Force Decisions: New York City passed an ordinance in 2021 that regulated the role of artificial intelligence in work force decisions. That ordinance, the first of in the nation of its kind, [prohibits](#) employers or employment agencies from using an automated employment decision tool (AEDT) to make an employment decision unless the tool is audited

for bias annually; the employer publishes a public summary of the audit; and the employer provides certain notices to applicants and employees who are subject to screening by the tool. The Department of Worker and Consumer Protection [released its final rules](#), which will enable it to now begin enforcing the ordinance. [Click here to view the 2021 ordinance](#).

Enforcement of Local Worker Protection Laws

Civil enforcement

This section provides examples of the **enforcement cases brought by local labor agencies** in the past year. Labor enforcement offices can bring powerful cases against exploitative employers, often combining multiple claims into one action. These cases bring **monetary relief to workers**; they also help **drive compliance** because they powerfully signal to other employers in the community that labor violations will not be tolerated. It is important to note that the developments below are just a sampling of enforcement work performed at the city level, based on publicly available media coverage and press announcements; not all city agencies routinely issue news releases about their investigations.

[Denver, CO Labor Announces They Have Recovered Over \\$1.4 million for Workers in 2023:](#)

Denver Labor announced that as of August 4th, 2023, the office had already recovered \$1.4 million for workers in restitution, surpassing previous year's total despite not having yet completed the year. The restitution went to over 2,800 employees. About two-thirds of the amount recovered were attributable to minimum wage and wage theft violations; the remainder were based on prevailing wage violations.

[New York City, NY's Department of Consumer and Worker Protection \(DCWP\) Led](#)

[Enforcement Actions Against Major Chains:](#) The city's DCWP [sued](#) Starbucks under the city's Just Cause ordinance over the wrongful termination of a barista. Additionally, the DCWP recently settled with Chipotle for \$20 million for violations of employees' right to predictable schedules and paid sick leave under NYC law. The DCWP also used New York City's fair workweek laws to [recover \\$4.5M](#) in restitution for workers from violations by Panda Express, Au Bon Pain, and 7-Eleven.

[New York City, NY Department of Consumer and Worker Protection Reached Settlement with Starbucks to Reinstate Fired NYC Worker:](#)

Starbucks employee Austin Locke has been reinstated to his position at a Long Island City location after being fired in July 2022 following a

vote to unionize. The [Department of Consumer and Worker Protection](#) (DCWP) sued Starbucks after Locke filed a Fair Workweek Law complaint, claiming retaliation and violations of the law’s “just cause” protections. In addition to reinstating Locke, the company must \$21,000 in back pay and penalties for violating NYC’s Fair Workweek Law. Since Locke’s initial complaint, at least twenty-four other Starbucks workers have filed their own Fair Workweek Law complaints with DCWP against the company.

[Philadelphia Office of Worker Protections Partnered with Community Organizations on Labor Law Enforcement](#): In a helpful example of how city agencies can advance workers’ rights by partnering with and supporting community organizations, Philadelphia’s Office of Worker Protections launched a Community Outreach and Education Fund. This will grant over \$16,000 for up to 14 organizations to collaborate with the office on worker protection outreach.

[San Diego, CA Reached \\$46.5 Million Settlement With Instacart For Improperly Classifying Their Employees](#): The San Diego City Attorney sued Instacart in 2019 to seek restitution for California workers improperly classified as independent contractors instead of employees. (Most workplace laws, including wage and hour statutes, protect employees but not independent contractors.) Over 300,000 workers will be eligible to receive restitution pay once the settlement is finalized. Because of ongoing litigation involving the legality of California’s Proposition 22, which sought to cement such workers’ status as independent contractors, the question of workers’ current ongoing status is unresolved.

[San Diego County, CA Board of Supervisors Created Innovative Workplace Justice Fund for Victims of Wage Theft](#): The San Diego County Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance that established the County’s Workplace Justice Fund and allotted \$100,000 to the fund. The fund will be administered by the County’s Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement and will provide payments to victims of wage theft with outstanding wage orders from the state labor commissioner’s office; meanwhile, the County will use its resources and staff to pursue the outstanding payments from the offending employer. [Click here to view the ordinance](#).

[San Francisco, CA City Attorney Authorized to Sue Companies that Abruptly Cut Janitorial and Security Jobs](#): The San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance to better protect workers from unlawful layoffs, an ordinance in part inspired by Twitter’s sudden termination of 48 custodians in December 2022. City law already required retention of employees working with a building’s prior contractor for the first 90 days of a new contract (the “transition employment period”). Under the new ordinance, the San Francisco Office of Labor Standards Enforcement can investigate and enforce the requirements; the city attorney and affected employees may also file a lawsuit. [Click here to view the ordinance](#).

San Francisco, CA Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) and City Attorney Hold Local Businesses Accountable:

The San Francisco OLSE secured an agreement for nearly \$1M from a restaurant chain based on its failure to comply with the city's 2006 Health Care Security Ordinance, which requires employers with 20 or more workers (or nonprofits with 50 or more workers) to spend a minimum amount on health care for each worker who works over eight hours per week. The San Francisco OLSE also settled a case involving the Beacon Grand Hotel for not paying construction workers for months. Separately, in August 2023, the San Francisco City Attorney sued Qwick, an on-demand hospitality staffing company, for illegally misclassifying its workers and denying them guaranteed protections, wages, and benefits.

Santa Clara, CA Fought Wage Theft by Expanding Food Permit Wage Theft Enforcement Program:

The County of Santa Clara is expanding its Food Permit Wage Theft Enforcement Program, which is aimed at collecting owed wages for food workers. In this program, the County imposes permitting consequences, including potentially suspension, on restaurants with outstanding unpaid wages based on state labor commissioner orders.

Seattle Office of Labor Standards (OLS) Actively Enforced Workers' Rights:

Seattle's OLS is empowering workers by holding employers accountable for violations under Seattle law. Among the agency's many actions: a \$1.6 million settlement with DoorDash for violating the Gig Worker Paid Sick and Safe Time Ordinance, a \$380K settlement with a pawnbroker over wage theft and minimum wage; a \$410K settlement with a pizza restaurant over failure to disclose whether "service fees" went to workers; a \$370K settlement with a Residence Inn and a staffing agency based on violations of hotel-specific city ordinances addressing workload, healthcare obligations, and more; a \$57K settlement with two 7-11 stores based on wage theft and paid sick leave violations; an informal settlement with clothing outfitter Patagonia over fair scheduling violations; \$55K settlement with Trader Joe's regarding overtime payments since Trader Joe's failed to include required hazard pay in calculating their payment rate; a \$400K settlement with Red Robin related to fair workweek and wage theft law; a \$186K settlement with Hungry Panda for violations of gig worker paid sick time and premium pay, a \$750K settlement with food delivery company GoPuff for violations of gig worker paid sick and safe time, a \$24K settlement with a childcare education center for violations of paid sick leave ordinances, and a \$180K settlement with delivery company Fantaun for violations of gig worker paid sick time and premium pay.

Criminal enforcement

A growing number of **District Attorneys and County Attorneys have been taking on workers' rights issues and bringing charges** in egregious cases of workplace law violations, including wage theft, workplace fatalities, labor trafficking, misclassification of employees as independent contractors, workers' compensation insurance fraud, and more. Some district attorneys, such as in [Manhattan](#), [King County](#) (WA), and [San Diego County](#) have created **dedicated worker protection units**; others, such as [Shelby County](#) (TN) are in the process of creating these dedicated worker protection units. For a more comprehensive discussion of the role of prosecutors in protecting workers' rights, please see the Economic Policy Institute and Harvard Labor and Worklife Program Report: [How district attorneys and state attorneys general are fighting workplace abuses](#). The following section describes some of the enforcement actions by criminal prosecutors that have occurred since Labor Day 2022.

Wage Theft Cases: Local prosecutors have brought a number of wage theft cases, including prosecutions of [restaurant in Westchester County, NY](#); [a commercial painting company in Lakeville, MN](#); [a house cleaning company in Queens, NY](#); [electrical contractors](#) and [general contractors](#) in Manhattan; a [private security company in Alameda, CA](#); a [flooring company in Santa Clara County \(CA\)](#); and [multiple businesses in Suffolk County, NY](#) among others. The San Francisco District Attorney brought [labor trafficking charges](#) in a case involving a domestic worker.

Workplace Safety: Some District Attorneys have taken action when workers have been injured or killed on the job. For example, Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez [announced](#) the conviction of a construction company owner [for criminally negligent homicide](#) in relation to a 2018 workplace fatality: a 47-year-old worker was crushed to death when an excavation wall collapsed. The employer refused to stop construction, even after workers and adjacent property owners warned that the site was unsafe. The Summit County (CO) District Attorney's Office [charged an employer with manslaughter](#) after a worker died in a trench collapse, and the Bronx District Attorney [brought homicide charges](#) in a case where a construction worker was crushed at work.

Also related to workplace safety, the Manhattan District Attorney's office held an event in collaboration with the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health; the office would [buy back fake OSHA training cards](#) (cards showing safety and health training) in exchange for a voucher offering genuine training.

Workers Compensation Fraud: A number of local prosecutors have also pursued workers' compensation fraud in the construction industry: employers under-report workers or inaccurately report the type of work being performed, in order to illegally lower their workers' compensation insurance premiums. Such fraud places a burden on the public fisc, and sometimes makes it more difficult for workers seeking benefits. Workers' compensation fraud also makes it hard for

law-abiding businesses, such as unionized contractors, to compete for projects against low-road competitors who have unlawfully reduced their costs through fraud. For example, the [complaint](#) in a workers' compensation insurance fraud case brought by the Hennepin County (MN) Attorney describes the harm that can ensue: an employer misrepresented "the payroll of his company to his workers' compensation insurer to reduce the policy premium. When one of his workers was injured on a jobsite, Defendant did not report the injury to the insurer as required. When the worker hired an attorney and reported his own injury, Defendant denied to his insurer that the worker was his employee, jeopardizing the worker's access to workers' compensation benefits." A [similar case](#) in Hennepin County involved a framing contractor. The Manhattan District Attorney's office has brought charges in several [such cases](#); one involving a [masonry subcontractor](#) (concerning ~\$7 million of fraud), another involving a [drywaller](#) (concerning ~\$3 million), and a third involving a [labor broker](#). In [another case](#), the Manhattan DA's office brought charges against a certified public accountant for his role in over \$10 million of workers' compensation fraud.

Collaborating with Other Government Partners: Some prosecutors are collaborating closely with partners from other government agencies. For example, the [Washtenaw County \(MN\) Prosecutor's Office](#) and the Travis County (TX) District Attorney's office have signed memoranda of understanding to collaborate with the U.S. Department of Labor. In the twin cities, the Hennepin and Ramsey County Attorneys are playing a leading role in developing a regional [Labor Advisory Council](#) composed of multiple government agencies.

Finally, in California, the passed 2023 budget bill contains a provision creating an \$18 million "**Workers Rights Enforcement Grant Program**" administered by the state labor department to "provide reimbursements to local city attorneys and district attorneys for funds expended on workers' rights enforcement." According to budget materials, the program "serves the public purpose of enhancing labor law enforcement to assist workers in combating wage theft, prevent unfair competition, and protect state revenue." Offices that can participate include a "district attorney, a city attorney, a county counsel, or any other city or county prosecutor who has established an office or division of workers' rights enforcement." Similar programs in other states could facilitate even more civil and criminal enforcement of worker protection laws. [Click here to view the bill](#) – see §7350-101-3078.

Contracting, Permitting, and Licensing

A considerable number of businesses interact with localities not just as regulated entities, but also as **government contractors or vendors**, or as holders of local government-issued permits or licenses. These relationships present opportunities for localities to improve working conditions or drive compliance with worker protection laws. Local governments may have **more ability or leverage to positively affect employer conduct** in these situations, when businesses are contractors with the government, or are actively seeking a government-issued license or permit.

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) Committed To Adopting Living Wages, Safety And Apprenticeship Standards, And Monitoring For Workers Ahead Of Its Bond Election:

On November 8th, 2022 Austin voters approved a \$2.4 billion bond to provide the AISD with the money to build new schools, install security vestibules, revamp sports fields and make other critical infrastructure improvements. Ahead of the vote, the AISD had committed via resolution to utilizing the funds to improve the working conditions of construction workers by ensuring they're paid a living wage, to strengthen safety and apprenticeship standards, and hire local workers. [View the resolution here.](#)

Barre City, VT City Council Used Contracting Power to Raise Labor Standards and Incentivize Hiring of Disadvantaged Groups:

The Barre City Council adopted a "Community Investment Ordinance" with two components. First, it included a Responsible Contractor Ordinance requiring contractors to pay prevailing wages and benefits, including healthcare. Second, it included a provision that creatively "incentivizes hiring local residents, women, minorities, people with disabilities, and veterans" by subtracting two percent from bids with a requisite plan to hire people from those groups, thereby making their bids for government contracts lower and more competitive in the bidding process. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Bellevue, WA City Council Used Contracting Powers to Advance Apprenticeships:

The Bellevue City Council passed an ordinance applicable to public work contracts with an estimated cost exceeding \$2 million to include a requirement that no less than 15% of all labor hours be performed by apprentices. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Berkeley, CA Passed Ordinance Required Major Construction Contractors to Provide Benefits for Their Workers:

Berkeley City Council approved an ordinance that would require larger construction contractors to provide apprenticeship programs and health care coverage for their workers. The ordinance will apply to construction projects of "50,000 square feet or more, which roughly translates to a 25-unit apartment building." The ordinance, pushed by **Local Progress member Mayor Jesse Arreguín**, is the first of its kind in California. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Boston, MA Improved Safety for Workers at Major Construction and Demolition Sites:

Boston passed a new construction safety ordinance that applies to construction projects larger than 50,000 square feet and all demolition projects for buildings 4 stories or larger. It has three main components. First, an OSHA-trained safety coordinator must be present at the construction site. Second, all construction and demolition projects must submit a safety affidavit as part of their permitting process. Third, builders must provide safety orientations to new

workers and hold pre-shift meetings to explain potential risks during the work. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[Centre County, PA Board of Commissioners Raised Labor Standards for City Contractors:](#)

The Centre County Board of Commissioners approved a Responsible Contractor Ordinance that applies to public construction contracts over \$250,000. The ordinance requires the county to only “use contractors that have at least 70% of their craft labor workforce employed on such projects as either trained journey person workers or registered apprentices enrolled in federal or state-approved apprenticeship training programs.” Additionally, the ordinance imposes prevailing wage requirements on contractors. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[Chicago, IL Mandated Contracting Nonprofits Put in Place Labor Peace Agreements:](#)

The Chicago City Council voted 41-2 to require human service organizations that contract with the city and have more than 20 employees to put in place labor peace agreements. While media reports frame the provision as helping employees unionize, which may occur, the goal of the mandate is to ensure uninterrupted provision of services. The labor peace agreement must include a provision prohibiting work stoppages, as well as “commensurate provisions on the part of the Contractor to ensure labor peace as may be agreed upon by the parties” and “means of amicably and finally resolving disputes with any such Labor Organization.” The ordinance includes an exemption for hospitals. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[Cleveland, OH Passed Wage Theft And Payroll Fraud Prevention Ordinance:](#) The Cleveland City Council attacked wage theft by passing an ordinance that bars the city from granting financial assistance or entering into contracts with companies that have been found to have committed wage theft and/or payroll fraud. It grants Cleveland’s Fair Employment Wage Board the authority to maintain a list of businesses found to have committed wage theft. The ordinance doesn’t create an absolute bar on doing business and can, in certain circumstances, the city can grant a waiver. Additionally, businesses can become re-eligible if ownership changes hands or if they have demonstrated sufficient action to prevent future violations. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

[Columbus, OH Passes a \\$20 Living Wage for Contractors:](#) Columbus City Council passed an ordinance requiring contractors to agree to a \$20 minimum wage in order to be considered for city contracts. Ohio cities are preempted from raising the pay of public employees so government contracting represents a critical remaining tool for raising wages in localities there. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Cuyahoga County, OH Council Passed Anti-Wage Theft Legislation: Led in part by the grassroots coalition Guardians for Fair Work, the Cuyahoga County Council voted to pass an ordinance preventing the County from contracting with companies that have committed wage theft violations. The ordinance “[debars](#) any company with a history of wage theft for at least three years, at which point, the penalty would be lifted.” [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Harris County, TX Approved A Worker Safety Policy For Contractors At Construction Sites: Harris County Commissioners unanimously approved a policy that would require contractors to submit their safety record as part of any potential bids for city contracts about a \$500K threshold, with limited exceptions. [Click here to view the policy.](#)

Phoenix, AZ Passed—and Then Repealed—a Prevailing Wage Ordinance: In March, Phoenix City Council passed a prevailing wage ordinance on a tight 5-4 vote. The ordinance required construction companies hired by or on behalf of the city to pay wages comparable to those of skilled laborers in the area for projects over \$250,000. However, a new set of city council members later [repealed the ordinance](#) with the Mayor’s support, in part based on questions about the city’s authority to pass such a measure. State Attorney General Kris Mayes’s office issued a memo confirming Arizona localities’ authority to enact prevailing wage requirements, but the ordinance has not yet been revisited. [Click here to view the original ordinance](#), and [click here to view the Attorney General’s legal opinion in support of prevailing wage ordinances in Arizona.](#)

San Diego, CA Passed Stricter Contractor Transparency Rules To Fight Wage Theft: The San Diego City Council passed a law that requires their larger city contractors to disclose information regarding their workers’ compensation policy numbers, state contractor licenses, city business licenses and any labor enforcement actions against the contractor. Additionally, the city is empowered to issue a stop-work order if disclosures are incomplete. These transparency measures will make it easier for the city to enforce its wage theft provisions. [Click here to view the Contractor Transparency Amendment.](#)

San Diego County, CA Board of Supervisors Used Contracting Power to Fight Wage Theft, Advance Worker Power, and Establish a Wage Floor: The San Diego Board of Supervisors crafted a new wage theft policy specific to janitorial, landscaping, and security workers. The county’s new policy has three main components. First, it requires that a portion of the money set aside for the contract be held to compensate workers in case of violations; that portion will only be released at the end of the contract if there are no wage theft claims. Second, it requires that companies bidding for city contracts include labor peace and collective bargaining

agreements. Third, it establishes a wage floor every five years based on comparisons to other jurisdictions. [Click here to view the policy.](#)

San Diego County, CA Office of Labor Standards & Enforcement Began Using Restaurant Permitting Powers to Help Wage Theft Victims Recover Wages:

The San Diego County Office of Labor Standards Enforcement & Enforcement (OLSE) launched the The Good Faith Restaurant Owners Program which helps workers in the retail food industry collect outstanding unpaid wage theft judgments stemming from an Order, Decision, or Award (ODA) issued by the California Labor Commissioner. The program incentivizes businesses to satisfy their outstanding judgments for owed workers' wages by potentially suspending the food permits of non-compliant businesses. The OLSE was authorized to do this via a 2021 ordinance the San Diego County Council passed; that ordinance established the OLSE and directed it to develop protocols for denial, suspension, or revocation of licenses, permits, or County Contracts of employers who violate labor standards. [Click here to view that ordinance.](#)

San Diego, CA Passed the Contractor Transparency Amendment:

San Diego City Council passed the Contractor Transparency Amendment, which will require companies like Verizon, who are construction and right-of-way permit holders, to disclose the subcontractors they are using to complete permitted work. Companies like Verizon and AT&T use subcontractors to avoid legal liability and to avoid employing their own unionized employees who are presumably entitled to better working conditions than subcontracted workers. Right-of-way permits generally allow utility construction work on public roads by licensed utility companies. This City ordinance follows on the heels of the passage of a subcontractor transparency ordinance by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in May 2022, an ordinance that the Communications Workers of America were critical in passing. [Click here to view the ordinance](#) (Section 129.0121).

San Jose, CA City Council Strengthened Wage Theft Policies by Including Public Works

Contracts: Prior to an update this spring, a city law disqualifying contractors with a history of wage theft violations excluded public works contracts. The San Jose City Council updated the ordinance to remove the exception for public works contracts; however, employers that can demonstrate a plan for future compliance, including a complaint process (such as that in a collective bargaining agreement), will not automatically be disqualified. In addition, the ordinance expanded the city's search for violations to include a broader listing of past violations than was previously the case. [Click here to view the ordinance.](#)

Public Leadership

Localities have leveraged their **soft powers to support workers' rights and organizing**. Local agencies devoted to protecting workers' rights have used a range of tools to educate workers about their rights, inform employers about their obligations, and **share information** with the broader community about issues affecting workers. They have issued reports, conducted extensive public education and outreach, made materials available on their websites, garnered media coverage, and more. Localities without dedicated labor agencies can also use these soft powers to **promote public and worker education**. Moreover, local elected officials—whether individually or collectively alongside other officials and community labor groups—can use their **public platforms and convening authority** to provide public education and support workers, including those who are actively forming and joining unions. While there are numerous examples of local elected officials and local governments using public leadership to build power for workers, the following are some particularly innovative developments we saw last year.

Local Elected Officials Used Their Public Profile To Show Solidarity At Worker Actions: Local elected officials often use their elevated public profiles to demonstrate support for workers and add pressure to employers to meet worker demands. In the midst of UPS contract negotiations in summer 2023, **Local Progress members** across the country including **Philadelphia City Councilmembers Kendra Brooks** and **Jamie Gauthier**, **Minneapolis City Council Members Aisha Chugtai** and **Robin Wonsley**, and **Agawam City Councilor Tom Hendrickson** attended practice pickets in their localities; such practice pickets played a key role in helping [340,000 UPS Teamsters win a strong contract](#), including wage hikes for full- and part-time workers, creation of more full-time jobs, and securing important workplace protections, including air conditioning.

[Los Angeles, LA's Comptroller's Office Investigates and Fines Illegal Picket-Busting Activity by Hollywood Studio:](#) In Spring and Summer 2023, the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) went on strike and began picketing at various studios in the Los Angeles area, including at NBCUniversal. NBCUniversal made picketing even more grueling for workers by ordering trees covering their studio sidewalk to be pruned, removing a key source of shade in the intense Los Angeles heat. Workers filed federal labor law complaints with the NLRB about the tree pruning as an illegal interference of picketing. **Local Progress member and Los Angeles Comptroller Kenneth Mejia** took [notice of this](#), and launched an investigation to review if NBCUniversal had violated Los Angeles city code by pruning the trees without city permits. After concluding the studio had not received permits to prune the trees, [Comptroller Mejia](#) levied the maximum possible fine for first-time offenders (\$250) at NBCUniversal.

[New York City, NY's Comptroller's Office Used Its Leverage as a Stockholder to Place Pressure on Apple and Starbucks](#): New York City's Retirement Systems, managed by **NYC Comptroller and Local Progress Member Brad Lander**, holds shares in [Starbucks \(\\$155 million worth\)](#) and [Apple \(\\$3.4 billion worth\)](#). The Comptroller called on both companies to perform an independent audit regarding whether they have violated any labor laws and regulations. This pressure later resulted in **[Starbucks shareholders approving a proposal to conduct an independent assessment of management's response to worker organizing](#)**.

[San Diego, CA Created Wage Claim Dashboard](#): The San Diego Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement created a wage claim judgments dashboard where it lists all outstanding wage cases in which the state labor commissioner's office has found unpaid wages originating from their San Diego office. The data will assist in public policy decision making and will also help hold employers publicly accountable.

[Seattle Office of Labor Standards Seeks Artists to Create Large-Format Art Panels To Promote Awareness Of Seattle's Labor Ordinances](#): To promote awareness amongst the general public and workers about the various ordinances that Seattle has passed in recent years to protect gig-economy workers and independent contractors, the Seattle Office of Labor Standards is soliciting quotes from artists who can create large-format art panels to be placed in a prominent location in Seattle. The public art displays will promote three ordinances: (1) [the Independent Contractor Protections Ordinance](#) which provides pay transparency and timely payment for independent contractors, (2) [the App-Based Worker Minimum Payment Ordinance](#) which requires network companies to provide a minimum payment for mileage and time worked to workers using their apps, and (3) [the App-Based Worker Paid Sick and Safe Time Ordinance](#) which requires network companies to provide paid time off for app-based workers to use to care for themselves or family members.

Prospective Ordinances

While the past year has seen extensive labor activity across the country, the coming year is likely to bring even more local pro-worker policies. Below are several ordinances that have been proposed at the local level and merit watching in the coming year.

[New York City, NY Contemplating Bill That Would Cause Fast Food Companies That Repeatedly Violate Workers' Rights to Lose Their Right to Do Business](#): The NYC City Council held hearings on a potential bill that would prevent fast food companies from operating if they had to pay \$500,000 or more over a three-year period for violations of NYC's Fair Work Week Law.

New York City, NY Councilmember And Local Progress Member Tiffany Cabán Introduces Universal Just Cause Termination Legislation:

New York City already provides 70,000 fast food workers with “just cause” protections, and this bill would expand that right to all workers in New York City. The [bill](#) by **Local Progress member Tiffany Cabán**, developed in collaboration with Make the Road, Amazon Labor Union, and the National Employment Law Project, would expand worker protections by ensuring that employers could not arbitrarily fire workers without warning for reasons unrelated to job performance.

Madison, WI Contemplating Wage Boost For Non-Union City Employees:

Madison City Council is proposing an increase in the Mayor’s proposed city budget to include a 3% wage hike for 1,400 permanent employees who are not in protective service unions (police, fire, or bus driver unions). These wage increases would be critical for non-union employees, who comprise a significant portion of the city’s labor force after most municipal employees lost bargaining rights in 2011 under Wisconsin state law. As a result of losing their unionizing rights, their wages have increased at a slower rate than their unionized counterparts.

Miami, FL Contemplates Approving Safety Protections for Workers:

Miami officials are considering a “Que Calor Ordinance” with three main components. First, it would establish a heat exposure safety program to educate workers and their supervisors about the risks of heat exposure and the best ways to minimize heat-related illness. Second, on days with a heat index of 90+ degrees, it would create a right to 10 minutes of paid rest and water breaks every 2 hours to cool down under shade to avoid heat stroke. Third, it would establish a new county Office of Workplace Health and Safety to help enforce labor protections and support employers and workers with implementing heat safety protocols that can prevent heat-related illness and save lives.

Minneapolis, MN City Council Approved An Ordinance Requiring Higher Pay And More Workplace Protections For Rideshare Drivers Operating In The City:

The Minneapolis City Council approved an ordinance that would (1) set minimum compensation for drivers, (2) create a process for drivers to appeal after they’re deactivated, and (3) ban the use of gift cards for rides, which drivers said are often exploited to commit crimes against drivers. The City Council approved this ordinance despite Uber and Lyft expressing that they would no longer operate in Minneapolis if the ordinance passed. The ordinance was [vetoed by the mayor](#), but there may be future efforts in this area. [Click here to view the prospective ordinance.](#)

About

This report represents a collaboration between the Local Progress Impact Lab, and the State and Local Enforcement Project, which is housed at the Center for Labor and a Just Economy (CLJE) at Harvard Law School and at the Economic Policy Institute.

The **Local Progress Impact Lab** brings together local leaders, partners, and issue experts to build the knowledge, skills, and leadership needed to advance racial and economic justice at the local level.

The **State and Local Enforcement Project** helps catalyze the potential of state and local governments to protect workers' rights by increasing and improving enforcement of workplace laws. It is housed at the **Center for Labor and a Just Economy (CLJE) at Harvard Law School**, a hub of collaborative research, policy, and strategies to empower working people to build an equitable economy and democracy. Through convening stakeholders, disseminating ideas, advising policy makers, and shaping how the media understands progressive labor issues, the Center is committed to reimagining the law and developing paradigm-shifting policy.

The **Economic Policy Institute (EPI)** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank created in 1986 to include the needs of low- and middle-income workers in economic policy discussions. EPI believes all workers deserve fair pay and benefits, good working conditions, and the freedom to form a union.

This report was authored by **Terri Gerstein**, the Director of the State and Local Enforcement Project at the Harvard Law School Center for Labor and a Just Economy and a Senior Fellow at Economic Policy Institute, and **Vishal Reddy**, the Justice Catalyst Legal Fellow at Local Progress Impact Lab.