



Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

2017 ABA Annual Meeting

The Wage Debate: Can The Minimum Wage, A Living Wage, Or Universal Basic Income Reduce Income Inequality?

Income inequality in the United States is the highest it has been since 1928. Since 2000, the middle class has been shrinking, primarily because households are falling behind financially. In today's economy, low-income workers face the perfect storm of stagnant or falling wages, lack of mobility or training for promotions, and limited bargaining power. The minimum wage is twenty-two percent below its late 1960s peak, after adjusting for inflation, and it has failed keep pace with basic living costs. Indeed, no state in the country has a fair market rent affordable to someone earning the minimum wage for forty hours per week. The wage gap between minimum wages and living costs disproportionately affects women and people of color.

Many champion raising the minimum wage to better compensate families. Indeed, the Fight for \$15 movement has galvanized workers across the country, with notable recent successes in New York and California. Others advocate for a living wage, adjusted for different communities, to better account for variations in living costs. Still others resist rising mandatory wages as unfair burdens on employers. But is raising the minimum wage, even to a living wage, the silver bullet to bring low-wage workers out of poverty? A growing number of thought leaders are advancing another tool - the Universal Basic Income (UBI) - which would replace the current welfare system and make up a portion of the gap between wages and living costs. This session will discuss these various tools, how they intersect, and how state and local employers and low-income worker advocates can collaborate to identify solutions to the wage gap.

Friday, August 11, 2017

3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Eastern

New York Hilton Midtown - Regent - 2nd Floor

1335 6th Ave, New York, NY 10019

A Live-stream will be available on the [@ABA CRSJ twitter page](#)

Speakers



Catherine Albisa

Executive Director, National Economic & Social Rights Initiative



Andy Stern

Senior Fellow, Columbia University Richman Center; Author of *Raising the Floor: How Universal Basic Income Can Renew Our Economy and Rebuild the American Dream*

Moderator



Tsedeye Gebreselassie

Senior Staff Attorney, National Employment Law Project



Antonia K. Fasanelli

Executive Director, Homeless Persons Representation Project; Chair, ABA CRSJ Economic Justice Committee; Former Chair, ABA Commission on Homelessness and Poverty

Co-sponsored by: ABA Division for Public Services, Criminal Justice Section, Forum on Affordable Housing and Community Development Law, Center for Racial and Ethnic Diversity, Commission on Homelessness and Poverty, Section of Taxation, and the Commission on Disability Rights

Please register for this free event by sending an email to CRSJ@americanbar.org

ABA Annual Meeting Registration is not required to attend this program