

INCOME INEQUALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Statement of Purpose

Mayor-elect Ed Murray believes that in order for people to thrive in a more equitable economy and affordable city, we must move forward on a broad “Opportunity Agenda,” which he outlined during the campaign. His incoming administration is committed to pursuing, supporting, and implementing a number of important strategies to address opportunity gaps that prevent income and social mobility for all Seattle residents. These strategies include:

- Increasing minimum compensation levels for low-income Seattle workers;
- Ensuring universal health insurance regardless of employment;
- Making affordable housing more available, and closer to where people work;
- Preserving and strengthening our public transit systems to connect people to jobs;
- Creating a fertile environment for the creation and growth of new jobs and industries; and,
- Offering education and training options structured to help working adults succeed and linked to better paying jobs in demand by industry.

During the campaign, candidate Murray personally endorsed a goal of a \$15 minimum wage. On December 19th, the Mayor-elect will meet with leaders in business, labor, members of the City Council, and other community stakeholders to form an “Income Inequality Advisory Committee” that will be co-chaired by one business and one labor leader to address a cornerstone priority of his Opportunity Agenda: a meaningful increase in the compensation for Seattle workers.

The Advisory Committee is charged with delivering an actionable set of recommendations for increasing the minimum wage within the city of Seattle. Over the next several months, the Advisory Committee – which represents broad and diverse perspectives – will solicit public input, meet with stakeholder groups, and collect and research pertinent data to advise the Mayor and City Council on how best to increase minimum compensation levels for low-wage workers in Seattle.

Consistent with Mayor-elect Murray’s statements during the campaign, the Advisory Committee is directed to develop these recommendations while taking into account the complexity of existing conditions facing employers and workers: such as timing of an increase in compensation and ensuring that Seattle businesses continue to thrive.

The Advisory Committee will submit their recommendations by May 2014 to the Executive, who will then transmit a formal proposal for City Council review and action.