



Rabbi Jonathan Biatch,
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The Torah instructs us to treat workers with justice. The book of Deuteronomy tells us, “You shall not oppress a hired laborer that is poor and needy, regardless of whether he belongs to your people or is of the strangers that are in the land within your gates” (24:14). Jewish tradition further underscores the importance of wages to a worker's livelihood, as in the Talmud we are taught that “one who withholds an employee's wages is as though he deprived him of his life” (Baba Metzia 112a). Finally, we understand that each human being is created in God's image, and we further believe that each

human being is deserving of dignity and honor as one of God's creations. The inevitable result of these statements is that we must be willing to advocate in society for laws which would assure that every worker – willing and able to work – receives a wage which allows him or her to maintain a decent standard of living. In this way, people live, thrive, and become able to participate in all the benefits that we derive from society.