

Kayla Kirkland

"I've only had low wage jobs. I worked at a drugstore when I was 16, and back then that was perfect. My 9+ dollars an hour had no other purpose than providing me with spending money. I worked at Blockbuster and I've had a few gigs here and there but the only thing I'm really experienced in is childcare. Unfortunately, I have had to settle for freelance babysitting and informal nanny jobs.

msk

There are a lot of ways the instability of low wages affect myself and family, most obvious being I still live with them. It's not easy to see my parents struggle. Watching my father get laid off from the granite shed after years and years of hard work and then wind up in several jobs that paid him less per hour than what he was making in high school is something no one deserves.

My mother works in HR and could retire, but can't afford to. All these experiences aren't unique. It's happening everywhere and it's no mystery why we see people losing faith in the principle of hard work"

"The best example of how difficult it got working for just under \$11hr was my experience as a shift manager at Blockbuster. Like many large companies these days, low level employees were treated like dogs and constantly had to face unrealistic sales goals, having to solve crisis after crisis caused by being perpetually understaffed, and often asked to not punch in our hours since no one but the store manager was allowed to have a full time position.

I could work 34 hrs and 45 minutes but the company would be mad if I got to 35 hours and they had to give me full time benefits.

I was often working a 8-4 weekday shift by myself. Since there was no one to take over, I could not take any of the breaks I was entitled to. .

* Movies weren't selling so they tried to train us as DISH sales reps. We could get a bonus if someone installed a satellite to their home. Since people don't go to blockbuster to buy satellite television, it's not surprising that no one was able to get that bonus. Then We started to sell Blu-ray players and we knew Blockbuster wasn't about selling and recommending movies anymore.

I've had plenty of bad experiences in low paying jobs where you feel taken advantage of without the hope of your work paying off, but nothing so bad as being harassed and devalued the way that dying company treated the people who worked for them. "

"There is no way to truly understand what it's like to be stuck in a system of perpetual impoverishment in today's world unless you see it firsthand. I know it can be easy to look down on the poor sometimes. Especially as politicians. You've all done well with your lives. Interacting with politically active people and politicians all day, I think it's fair to ask how often you consider

Vermonters who don't have the time or resources to participate in politics. Just to pay attention these days is a luxury.

Many
~~Many~~ Vermonters live below the poverty line, and still... Their voices are usually absent from debates about their livelihood.

~~Instead we hear a lot from businesses and people who give advice on how the poor should fix themselves.~~

I'm sure you all do your best listening to calls and comments from Vermonters and make thoughtful choices based on what you hear, but this problem is getting worse.

Doing nothing is a political statement. The people will remember it. Hopefully as representatives you can see people not just asking for action, but see all the people who need it.

liveable
With a ~~minimum wage increase~~ I would be able to save. I would be able to use the extra financial freedom to travel and find help and resources for myself ~~instead of being so hindered by the sensory and communication issues from autism.~~ Having unstable or insufficient employment opportunities is sadly typical for adults on the spectrum and if I had the money, I'd seek help so I can build the skills and strategies I need to be independent. 17

With professionals that often are far away

This isn't a very relatable answer, but if i had enough steady income, I want to invest toward possibly overcoming the things that hold me back while I still can"