

# UNITEHERE!Local 11

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October 7, 2024

*Via E-Mail:*

Honorable Thomas Bach  
President, International Olympic Committee (IOC)  
Maison Olympique  
1007 Lausanne, Switzerland  
[thomas.bach@olympic.org](mailto:thomas.bach@olympic.org)

Honorable Casey Wasserman  
Chairperson, LA28  
10900 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 700  
Los Angeles, CA 90024  
[info@teamwass.com](mailto:info@teamwass.com)

Honorable Gianni Infantino  
President, Fédération Internationale de Football Association  
FIFA Strasse 20, P.O Box # 8044  
Zurich, Switzerland  
[gianni.infantino@fifa.org](mailto:gianni.infantino@fifa.org)

Honorable Kathryn Schloessman  
CEO, Los Angeles World Cup Host Committee  
633 West Fifth Street, Suite 1800  
Los Angeles, CA 90071  
[kschloessman@lasec.us](mailto:kschloessman@lasec.us)

RE: Support for Los Angeles Olympic Wage (File No. 14-1371-S13)

Dear Messrs. Bach, Wasserman, and Infantino, and Ms. Schloessman,

On behalf of more than 30,000 hospitality and food service workers who are the backbone of LA tourism, we are hereby calling on the International Olympic Committee (IOC), LA28, and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) to publicly endorse the LA Olympic Wage Ordinance, (File No. 14-1371-S13) as it comes before the Los Angeles City Council for consideration.

First introduced in April of 2023, the LA Olympic Wage Ordinance would effect a graduated increase in the LA minimum wage for hotel and food service workers, culminating in

a \$30/hour minimum wage ahead of the L.A. 2028 Olympics. The measure also guarantees hospitality workers access to full family healthcare as part of the terms of employment and includes crucial protections against abusive subcontracting practices now pervasive in hotel housekeeping work.<sup>1</sup>

LA tourism bounced back strongly from the pandemic with the support of billions of dollars in public investment. Yet for the very workers who make LA's tourism business run, the recovery has been anything but smooth; hospitality workers remain disproportionately rent-burdened and continue to be displaced or risk losing their homes as the costs of rent skyrocket.<sup>2</sup> With LA already grappling with the nation's largest homelessness crisis, our City has a clear opportunity and responsibility to support the very workers who form the backbone of our flourishing tourism economy.

Over the next four years, Los Angeles will play host to some of the world's most monumental athletic events. Between the FIFA World Cup, the Olympics and Paralympic Games, LA is poised to undergo an unprecedented boom in tourism infrastructure that will yield billions in profits for the hospitality industry. Such development could transform the lives of Los Angeles' working families and will undoubtedly leave a lasting mark on our regional economy.

Too often, however, mega events have only worsened life for the working families surrounding them. During the last U.S.-based Summer Olympics, over 3,000 Atlanta residents had their homes demolished to make way for the Olympic Village, while another 30,000 were displaced due to resulting gentrification.<sup>3</sup> In 2016, over 22,000 residents of Rio De Janeiro were displaced to make way for the Games.<sup>4</sup>

As Los Angeles prepares to host both the World Cup and the Olympics, organizations like the IOC and FIFA must act to prevent this tragic legacy from repeating itself. Only by taking action now can our region ensure that the economic benefits of these global events are shared equitably by all those who make industry profits possible.

The LA Olympic Wage Ordinance is critical to ensuring that events by FIFA and the IOC have a positive overall impact on the region. A report by the City's Chief Legislative Analyst showed that the proposed gradual wage increase to \$30.00 per hour by 2028 would improve

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<sup>1</sup> See Suhauna Hussain, *LA Hotel Strike: Migrants from Homeless Shelter Replace Striking Workers*; Gascon Investigates, Los Angeles Times (October 23, 2023). <https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2023-10-23/hotels-are-replacing-striking-workers-with-migrants-from-skid-row-shelter>.

<sup>2</sup> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/16AMSfkIoPkWd8gqf0TH4I4iz0NsRq\\_1p/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16AMSfkIoPkWd8gqf0TH4I4iz0NsRq_1p/view).

<sup>3</sup> Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (Geneva), *Fair Play for Housing Rights: Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights*. (Geneva: Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, 2007), p. 120. <https://www.ruig-gian.org/ressources/Report%20Fair%20Play%20FINAL%20FINAL%20070531.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> *Rio 2016: The Exclusion Games* (World Cup and Olympics Popular Committee of Rio de Janeiro, November 2016), p. 36.

issues of pay inequity and boost LA’s regional economy.<sup>5</sup> With an average \$250/week in increased take-home pay as a result of the measure, the Olympic Wage would be poised to make a crucial difference in housing affordability for the region’s tourism workforce.

To date, the Olympic Wage has been endorsed by almost five hundred local faith, community, activist, and business organizations.<sup>6</sup> The broad-based nature of this coalition reflects just how urgent it has become to raise wages and make life affordable for the very workers who will make these global events possible.

The World Cup and the Olympic Games represent a turning point for Los Angeles as rising inequality threatens the region’s prosperity. Both FIFA and the IOC have committed themselves to promoting sustainable economic development and humanitarian values, including in the IOC’s case “to promot[ing] a positive legacy from the Olympic Games to the host cities, regions and countries” as part of its mandate under the Olympic Charter.<sup>7</sup> Yet to date, actors like the IOC, LA28, and FIFA have done far too little to ensure that our communities will actually benefit. Supporting the Olympic Wage would mark a critical first step in forging a new, better deal for working families as our City enters the global center stage and would help pave the way for a lasting legacy of equitable economic growth from these megaevents.

As the measure comes before the LA City Council in the weeks ahead, we respectfully request your public, full-hearted support for the LA Olympic Wage Ordinance. [Attached is an endorsement form](#). Please let us know if you have any questions. We need your support no later than October 21, 2024.

In Solidarity,



Ada Briceño  
Co-President



Kurt Petersen  
Co-President



Susan Minato  
Co-President

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<sup>5</sup> Report of the Chief Legislative Analyst, *Living Wage Ordinance/Hotel Worker Minimum Wage Ordinance Study Findings* (September 5, 2024), [https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2014/14-1371-s13\\_rpt\\_cla\\_9-05-24.pdf](https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2014/14-1371-s13_rpt_cla_9-05-24.pdf); cf. also Nick Stewart Bloch, *The Sky Never Fell: An Analysis of the Predictions and Outcomes of the 2014 Raise LA Hotel Worker Minimum Wage Ordinance* (February 2024), [https://laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2024\\_The-Sky-Never-Fell\\_LAANE.pdf](https://laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2024_The-Sky-Never-Fell_LAANE.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> <https://laane.org/tourism-workers-rising-coalition/>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/General/EN-Olympic-Charter.pdf>; see also <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/16d1f7349fa19ade/original/FIFA-Statutes-2024.pdf> (referencing FIFA’s commitment to ensuring respect for international human rights).