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**Albuquerque Joins National Movement to Raise Minimum Wage**  
*Becomes Fourth City to Restore Wage Floor While D.C. Fails to Act*

**ALBUQUERQUE, NM** – Working families in Albuquerque will benefit from an increased minimum wage under a new law adopted by the city council last week. Albuquerque joins three other cities and twenty-one states in the growing movement to raise the minimum wages through action at the state and local levels.

The federal minimum wage has been stuck at \$5.15 per hour since 1997, and is at its lowest level in 53 years, adjusted for inflation. “There’s a lot of talk about values these days. What Albuquerque has done speaks directly to one of our strongest shared values, that people who work hard should live in dignity and be able to support a family. This is a rising tide all around the country, even if Washington, D.C. hasn’t noticed. It will,” said Michael Waldman, Executive Director of the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law. The Brennan Center advised the proponents of the Albuquerque law.

In recent years, four cities and twenty-one states – including Arkansas and Michigan in recent months – have raised their state minimum wages above the federal level. “Over half of our nation’s population now lives in states and cities where lawmakers have stopped waiting for Congress to act and raised the minimum wage on their own,” said Paul Sonn, deputy director of the Brennan Center’s Poverty Program.

Albuquerque’s minimum wage will increase to \$6.75 on January 1, 2007, phasing up to \$7.50 by 2009. 25% of the New Mexico’s population lives in Albuquerque. Advocates including New Mexico ACORN, New Mexicans for a Fair Wage, Voices for Children, and the New Mexico Conference of Churches led the drive for the Albuquerque minimum wage.

The Brennan Center is advising cities and states across the country working to raise the minimum wage. Last year, the Brennan Center successfully defended Santa Fe’s citywide minimum wage law in court, helping establish the power of cities to regulate minimum wages. The Center recently advised community groups in Arkansas and Michigan on their successful state minimum wage campaigns, and is now working with groups in Arizona, Colorado, Missouri and Ohio organizing ballot initiatives to allow voters to raise the minimum wage this November in those states.

For more information on the Albuquerque minimum wage increase and the national movement to raise the minimum wage, please contact the Brennan Center’s Raj Nayak at 212-992-8639, cell 312-399-9904. The Brennan Center’s updated [policy brief](#), “Citywide Minimum Wage Laws: A New Policy Tool for Local Governments,” is also available on the Brennan Center’s website at [www.brennancenter.org](http://www.brennancenter.org). The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that provides technical and legal assistance to community coalitions and lawmakers promoting policy initiatives to raise the minimum wage for working families.

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