

BILL - A4161 and S2702 (New Jersey's Prevailing Wage Bill) – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does this bill do?

This bill – A4161 introduced by Assemblyman Joseph Roberts in the Assembly and S2702 introduced by Senator Joseph Coniglio in the Senate – establishes prevailing wage standards for State building service contracts in New Jersey.

How many workers will the bill cover and where do they work?

Local 32BJ's initial research estimates the bill will cover approximately 500 building service workers at any property owned or leased by the State, including departments of state government, the NJ Board of Public Utilities, the Motor Vehicle Commission, state institutes of higher education, the Council on Affordable Housing, the New Jersey Commission on Science and Technology, and others.

What are the federal prevailing wage rates?

The hourly rates differ slightly by county: Monmouth, Ocean, Bergen, Passaic, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Sussex and Union - \$13.65. Mercer - \$13.69. Hunterdon, Middlesex, Somerset and Warren - \$12.58. Camden and Cape May - \$11.83. Health & Welfare supplement is \$2.87 an hour.

How much do State building service workers make now?

Local 32BJ estimates that most state contracted building service workers currently make average wages as low as \$6.15/hour.

What happens if a contractor does not comply with the law?

The bill gives the State the right to terminate the contractor's right to proceed with the work if it is found that any worker covered by the contract has been paid less than the prevailing wage.

Is this the same as the Federal government prevailing wage law?

Yes, the Federal government has had a prevailing wage provision in its agreements with building services contractors since the "Service Contract Act of 1965" was passed. In addition, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and California have prevailing wage laws for State contracted work.

Why is Local 32BJ fighting to pass this bill?

Local 32BJ supports prevailing wages for workers. Good wages help workers support their families and give back to the economy and community through taxes and spending. Further, publicly contracted work must not undermine the hard fought gains that workers have made in the private sector. Contractors who pay minimum wage on low-bid government work should not be allowed to undercut responsible cleaning contractors who pay a living wage to their workers.

Have other states passed Prevailing Wage laws?

Yes, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and California all have prevailing wage laws for building service workers. New Jersey already has a prevailing wage law for construction work. This legislation would help ensure that state contracted building service workers in New Jersey have a chance to achieve the American Dream.

Don't public sector workers earn high enough wages?

The current law in New Jersey requires the state to accept the lowest bidder for building service work. This system, which pays low wages to workers who are providing services to the state, has hidden costs, because low wages force workers to use government subsidized programs for basic necessities such as health care at a cost to the state and its taxpayers.

Is there a law in New Jersey regarding prevailing rates for building and construction trades work?

Yes, there are prevailing wage standards in place for State building and construction trades contracts in New Jersey.