NELP on Walmart's Wage Announcement:
Workers “Achieved Something Unprecedented”

The below statement can be attributed to Christine L. Owens, executive director of the National Employment Law Project, in response to Walmart’s wage announcement:

“Today, courageous Walmart workers who for years have been fighting for higher pay and better treatment from the nation’s largest employer have achieved something unprecedented: a commitment from Walmart to raise wages company-wide to a minimum of $10 an hour in 2016.

“The announcement is clearly the result of years of organizing by Walmart employees, who have united under the banner of OUR Walmart and engaged in strikes, protests, consumer education, and investor outreach to draw attention to the company’s deplorable working conditions. Few could have envisioned a group of workers forcing Walmart, ruthlessly committed to cost-cutting, to unilaterally raise wages. But, standing together, Walmart employees have done just that, providing inspiration to worker movements everywhere.

“Yet the changes in company policy announced by Walmart are inadequate for the hundreds of thousands of employees who struggle to support themselves and their families. When compared to the $16 billion in profit that the company rakes in annually, Walmart's promise of $10 an hour – which even for a full-time worker is not enough to keep a family of four out of poverty – is meager. Walmart has not committed to giving employees the full-time hours they want and need, nor made any commitment to respect employees who are fighting for better working conditions.

“Walmart workers have helped make the company one of the largest and most profitable corporations on Earth, building untold wealth for the Walton family. For this, they are seeking a $15 an hour wage, an opportunity for full-time work, and dignity. Surely this is a small price to pay to help its associates truly 'live better.'”

For interviews with experts from NELP, please contact me at emmas@berlinrosen.com.

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The National Employment Law Project is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts research and advocates on issues affecting low-wage and unemployed workers. For more about NELP, visit www.nelp.org.