

Resolution in support of a Universal Basic Income

WHEREAS income inequality in the Commonwealth of Virginia and in the United States continues to rise; and

WHEREAS an increasing number of people are living under the poverty line; and

WHEREAS advances in technology have increased productivity to an extent that many industries need far fewer workers than in the past; and

WHEREAS many lower and middle class people are juggling multiple jobs in order to make ends meet, and these multiple jobs leave them little time to care for themselves or their loved ones, and little time to invest in the training and initiatives that have in the past helped Americans better their station in life; and

WHEREAS the current welfare system provides a disincentive to work because benefits disappear as income increases; and

WHEREAS the current welfare system imposes a series of qualification and claim hurdles that take up the valuable time and resources of those who can least afford them; and

WHEREAS the current welfare system is a patchwork of different programs that each have their own qualification and enforcement bureaucracy; and

WHEREAS the point of human life is to have a meaningful experience that balances purpose, service to others, growth, and joy; and

WHEREAS much of the work that makes society function is unpaid work such as child care, elder care, volunteering, community activism, political involvement, mentoring, and art creation, and such work is dependent on people having enough survival money from other sources in order to take the time to engage in such non-income earning activities; and

WHEREAS our state and our nation have achieved unprecedented levels of productivity and aggregate wealth; and

WHEREAS even the wealthiest among us achieved their success using common resources and common infrastructure; and

WHEREAS we advance our society socially, culturally, and economically when we all have the opportunity to engage in occupations that we find meaningful, and we remove unnecessary barriers to sharing the fruit of our labors; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Virginia 10th Congressional District Democrats support the establishment of a Universal Basic Income that will guarantee to all residents, regardless of paid income and independent of any other means test, a flat equal monthly Basic Income stipend that is enough to enable the resident to survive.

Basic facts about Universal Basic Income

What is Universal Basic Income? How does it work?

A Universal Basic Income is a regular stipend, with no means testing or work qualification, provided by the government to every person. The amount is just enough to cover the basic necessities of life, like food and shelter. People will, of course, be able to earn extra money with paid employment.

Why do we need a Universal Basic Income (UBI)?

- We are in a period of swiftly increasing automation. Many jobs, both blue- and white-collar, are disappearing. Many of the ones that remain are paying less than before, leaving folks juggling multiple jobs to survive. UBI will take care of basic survival.
- Because UBI will ensure basic survival, workers will be able to bargain for better wages or hold out for a job that better fits their abilities and interests.
- Much of the work that makes society function is unpaid: caring for children or the elderly, community work, social activism, art. UBI will help support people doing this work that is so necessary to a healthy society.
- UBI stimulates economic growth by encouraging prudent risk-taking. Since your and your family's survival will no longer be on the line, you can take a risk on that new business idea or project!

Won't people simply become free loaders?

Universal Basic Income is just a basic guaranteed income *floor*.

- Many people will continue to seek paid jobs for many reasons: they want a more comfortable life, they want the status, or they believe in what a company is producing.
- Other people will do the unpaid work that is currently unrecognized by our economy: caring for children or the elderly, community work, or social activism. Right now, it is *society* that is free-riding on the people doing this necessary work by not helping them survive. UBI will fix this.
- Overall, people have an innate drive to participate in meaningful and creative pursuits. UBI would grant them more flexibility to choose the activities which interest them the most, leading to a more efficient allocation of labor (even if not always paid) and a higher overall life satisfaction.
- Undoubtedly, a small fraction of people will do nothing all day, but UBI trials around the world have shown this is a very tiny fraction indeed. We already have free-riders in today's society, and they drag down those they currently depend on: family, friends, the welfare system. UBI minimizes the consequences of free-riding on others, while making it easier for people to become self-sufficient.

Why now?

Our society is extremely wealthy and productive. We have more than enough to cover our basic needs. So let's ask ourselves: do we live in order to work and make more money, or do we work in order to live a meaningful, rewarding life?

Learn more about UBI!

<https://goo.gl/VgFasj>