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## **New Report: Embracing High-Road Development Policies Will Boost Wages and Job Quality for Workers Left Behind by Economic Development**

Today, the DC Fiscal Policy Institute released a report outlining how District leaders can adopt a "high-road" approach to economic development projects to support workers, strengthen the economy, and create higher quality projects.

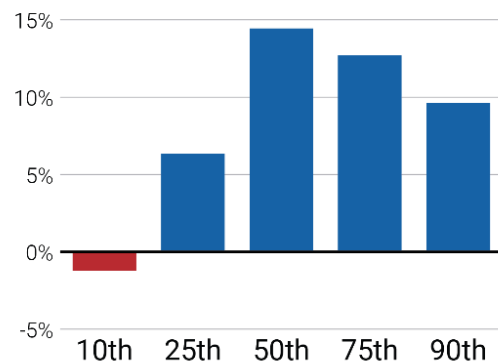
The report, [\*High-Road Development: Building Prosperity for Workers and the District\*](#), examines development trends alongside the District's growing inequality. Despite economic growth, poverty in the District has remained persistently high, disproportionately impacting Black households. Job creation has not translated into wage growth for all workers, and wages earned by the lowest-wage DC workers have barely changed in the last decade. Large taxpayer-funded subsidies used to attract business activity in projects like the Wharf and Union Market have not been paired with quality jobs for District residents, making it harder for low-wage workers to make ends meet as the cost of living in DC continues to rise.

By enforcing existing labor laws, requiring any economic development subsidies to be paired with strong job creation and quality standards, and penalizing subsidy recipients if they fail to meet job quality requirements, policymakers can ensure that that city-subsidized economic development projects are creating jobs with higher wages and better benefits for workers.

"The District's economy requires workers at every skill level, but when developers pay low wages, low-income residents remain poor or sink deeper into poverty," said Brittany Alston, Workforce Policy Analyst at DCFPI. "By taking a high-road economic development approach—in which developers partner with unions, invest in workers, and provide quality employment opportunities to residents—the District can work towards growth that is shared with the residents and workers who have been left behind."

### **DC's Lowest Earners Saw Wage Loss Over the Past Decade**

Percent change in hourly wage by wage percentile, 2006 to 2016.



Note: The DC minimum wage increase took effect July 2014. Percent change calculated from figures adjusted for inflation  
Source: Occupational Employment Statistics, US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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