

SEARCHING FOR WORK THAT PAYS: NORTHWEST JOB GAP STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Northwest Job Gap Study explores the gap between the number of living wage jobs being created in the Northwest and the number of people needing living wage jobs. It also seeks to raise awareness and promote public dialogue about the job gap and policy options to address it.

This first phase of the Northwest Job Gap Study—which covers the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington—aims to provide answers to the questions: What is a living wage? And are we creating enough jobs that pay a living wage?

Findings are based on data from 1996, the most recent year for which data on job openings, wages, and employment are available.

WHAT IS A LIVING WAGE?

A living wage is a wage that allows families to meet their basic needs without resorting to public assistance and provides them some ability to deal with emergencies and plan ahead. It is not a poverty wage.

Living wages are calculated on the basis of family budgets for several household types. Family budgets include basic necessities, savings, and state, local and federal taxes. Living wages for a single adult range from \$9.02 an hour or \$18,760 a year in Montana to \$10.25 an hour or \$21,322 a year in Washington. This assumes full time work on a year round basis. For a single adult with two children, living wages range from \$14.42 an hour or \$29,995 a year in Idaho to \$16.86 an hour or \$35,079 a year in Washington. Differences in state living wage estimates are largely attributable to differences in housing and child care costs.

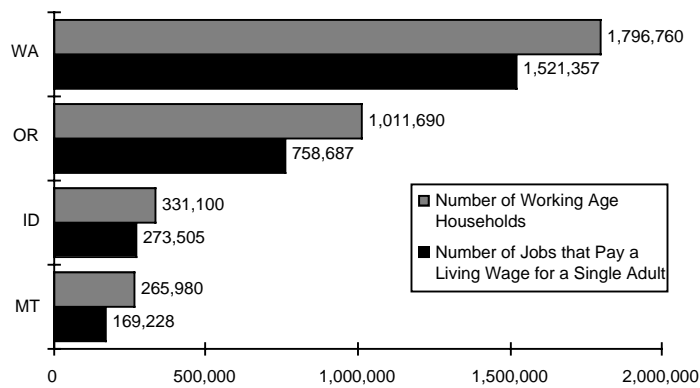
A comparison of living wages to state minimum wages shows that the minimum wage is about half of the living wage for a single adult and 30 percent of the living wage for a single adult with two children. The median wage in each state is slightly greater than the living wage for a single adult, which suggests that slightly more than half of the workers in each state earn the living wage for a single adult. For a single adult with two children, the median wage is about two thirds of the living wage.

ARE WE CREATING ENOUGH JOBS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE?

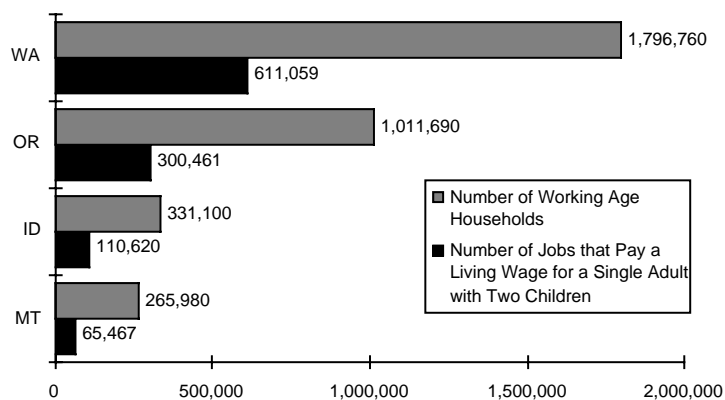
The Northwest economy is not creating enough living wage jobs for all those who need them, according to several indicators. These include the number of working age households compared to the number of jobs that pay a living wage, the percentage of jobs and job openings that pay less than a living wage, and the number of job seekers compared to the number of job openings that pay a living wage.

A comparison of working age households to jobs that pay a living wage shows there were more working age households than living wage jobs in every Northwest state in 1996, as shown in the charts below. The shortfall between the number of working age households and

WORKING AGE HOUSEHOLDS COMPARED TO JOBS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE FOR A SINGLE ADULT



WORKING AGE HOUSEHOLDS COMPARED TO JOBS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE FOR A SINGLE ADULT WITH TWO CHILDREN



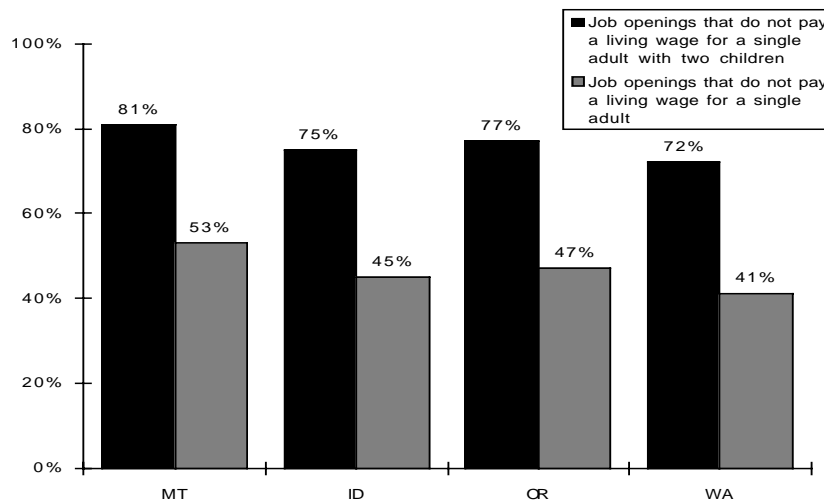
the number of jobs that pay a living wage for a single adult ranges from about 58,000 in Idaho to about 275,000 in Washington. For those jobs that pay a living wage for a single adult with two children, the shortfall ranges from about 200,000 in Montana to over 1 million in Washington.

About 40 percent of all jobs in the Northwest pay less than a living wage for a single adult and about 75 percent pay less than a living wage for a single adult with two children.

The job market that job seekers face is similarly limited. Of all job openings, 40 to 50 percent pay less than a living wage for a single adult and 70 to 80 percent pay less than a living wage for a single adult with two children, as shown in the chart below. It is important to note the distinction between jobs and job openings. Not all jobs come open during the course of a year. Job openings are of particular interest because they provide employment opportunities for people looking for work.

The percentage of jobs and job openings that pay a living wage vary from state to state for a number of reasons, including the mix of industries and related occupations in a state, and the prevailing wage levels, which also vary from state to state.

JOB OPENINGS THAT DO NOT PAY A LIVING WAGE



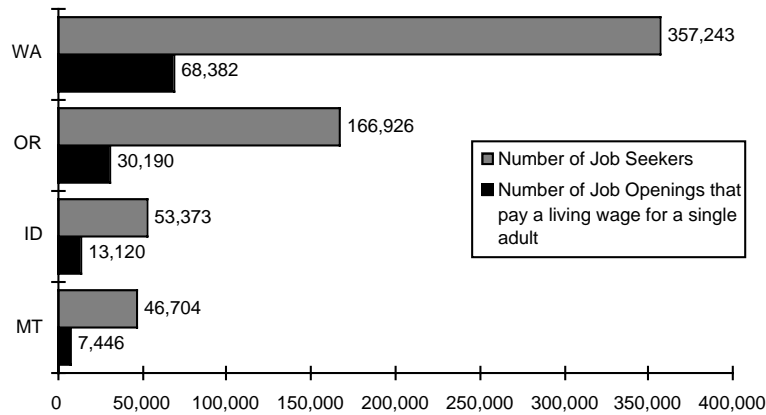
There are also more people looking for work than there are job openings that pay a living wage. As shown in the table and charts on the following page, for each job opening that pays at least the living wage for a single adult, there are on average four to six job seekers, depending on the state. For each job opening that pays at least the living wage for a single adult with two children, there are on average 10 to 17 job seekers.

Job Gap Ratios (Job Seekers per Job Opening)

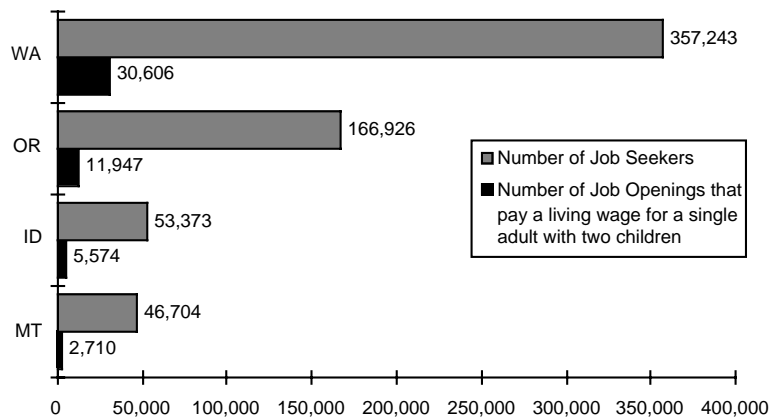
	Idaho	Montana	Oregon	Washington
All Job Openings	2 to 1	3 to 1	3 to 1	3 to 1
Job Openings Paying a Living Wage				
Single adult	4 to 1	6 to 1	6 to 1	5 to 1
Single adult with two children	10 to 1	17 to 1	14 to 1	12 to 1

Job gap ratios are calculated by dividing the number of people who were looking for work at some point during 1996 by the number of job openings that year. The ratios indicate that, for example, there are four to six times as many job seekers as there are job openings

JOB SEEKERS COMPARED TO JOB OPENINGS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE FOR A SINGLE ADULT



JOB SEEKERS COMPARED TO JOB OPENINGS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE FOR A SINGLE ADULT WITH TWO CHILDREN



that pay at least the living wage for a single adult, not necessarily that there are four to six people competing for each job of that type. The ratios do not take into account characteristics of job seekers such as their household size, their skills, or education and training.

Despite strong growth in the regional economy and the creation of many new jobs over the last decade, the Northwest is not creating enough living wage jobs for all those who need them.

Findings from the first phase of the Northwest Job Gap Study are intended to help guide and shape the efforts of business, labor, government, and the community—in terms of both policy and practice—around economic, workforce, and community development.

Next phases of the Northwest Job Gap Study will focus on identifying which occupations and industries provide living wage job opportunities to people needing them; analyzing workforce demographics such as race/ethnicity, gender, and education and training levels in the context of living wage jobs; and identifying ways to promote living wage jobs and make sure people needing these jobs are able to get and keep them. Also, education and outreach will be conducted to raise awareness and promote public dialogue about the job gap.



SEARCHING FOR WORK THAT PAYS: NORTHWEST JOB GAP STUDY

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Northwest Job Gap Study explores the gap between the number of living wage jobs being created in the Northwest and the number of people needing living wage jobs. It also seeks to raise awareness and promote public dialogue about the job gap and policy options to address it.

The Northwest Job Gap Study—which covers the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington—aims to provide answers to the questions:

- What is a living wage?
- Are we creating enough jobs that pay a living wage?
- Which occupations and industries provide living wage job opportunities for people needing them?
- How can we promote living wage jobs and make sure people needing these jobs are able to get and keep them?

This report examines the first two of these questions. Findings are based on data from 1996, the most recent year for which data on job openings, wages, and employment are available.

WHAT IS A LIVING WAGE?

A living wage is a wage that allows families to meet their basic needs without resorting to public assistance and provides them some ability to deal with emergencies and plan ahead. It is not a poverty wage.

Living wages are calculated on the basis of family budgets for several household types. Family budgets include basic necessities such as food, housing and utilities, transportation, health care, child care, clothing and other personal items; savings; and state, local, and federal taxes. (Family budgets are presented in the State Findings section of this report. Detailed information on components of the family budgets can be found in the Technical Notes & Resources section.)

State by state living wage estimates, as shown in the table below, are:

- For a single adult, the living wage ranges from \$9.02 an hour or \$18,760 a year in Montana to \$10.25 an hour or \$21,322 a year in Washington. This assumes full time work on a year round basis.

- For a single adult with one child, the living wage ranges from \$11.68 an hour or \$24,302 a year in Idaho to \$13.12 an hour or \$27,288 a year in Washington.
- For a single adult with two children, the living wage ranges from \$14.42 an hour or \$29,995 a year in Idaho to \$16.86 an hour or \$35,079 a year in Washington.
- For two adults, one of whom is working, with two children, the living wage ranges from \$12.29 an hour or \$25,559 a year in Montana to \$14.04 an hour or \$29,197 a year in Oregon.
- For two adults, both of whom are working, with two children, the living wage ranges from \$16.36 an hour or \$34,032 a year in Idaho to \$18.45 an hour or \$38,369 a year in Washington. This means that the combined wages of both working adults need to total this amount.

Differences among state living wage estimates are largely attributable to differences in housing and child care costs.

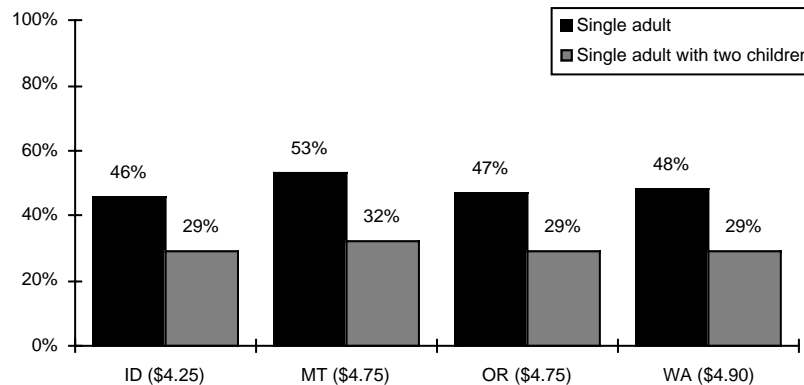
Living Wage Estimates

	Idaho	Montana	Oregon	Washington
Single adult	\$9.22	\$9.02	\$10.07	\$10.25
Single adult with one child	\$11.68	\$11.71	\$13.08	\$13.12
Single adult with two children	\$14.42	\$14.80	\$16.36	\$16.86
Two adults (one working) with two children	\$12.51	\$12.29	\$14.04	\$13.95
Two adults (both working) with two children	\$16.36*	\$16.58*	\$17.98*	\$18.45*

* The combined wages of both working adults need to total this amount.

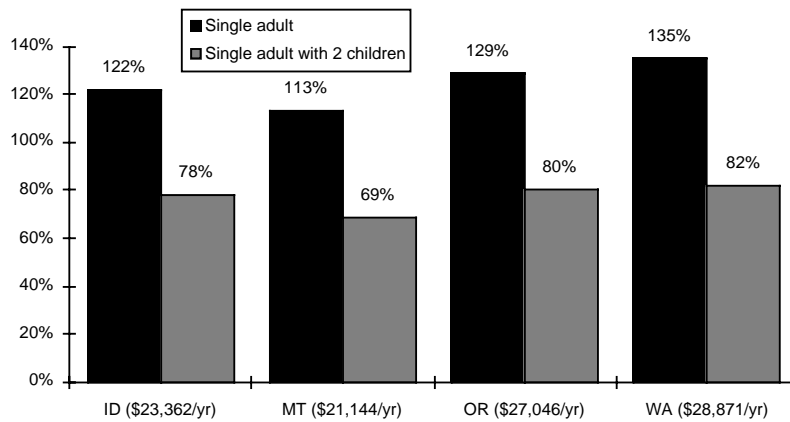
One way of measuring the adequacy of incomes is to compare the living wage to minimum wages, average wages, and median wages. Minimum wages are about half of the living wage for a single adult and about 30 percent of the living wage for a single adult with two children, as shown in the chart below.

MINIMUM HOURLY WAGE AS A PERCENT OF LIVING WAGE



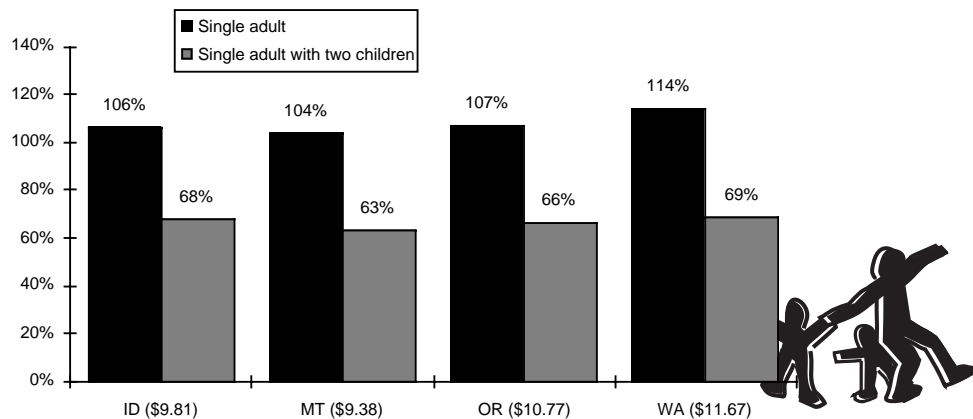
State average annual wages are higher than the living wage for a single adult, ranging from 113 percent of the living wage in Montana to 135 percent in Washington, as shown in the chart below. However, state average wages are lower than the living wage for a single adult with two children, ranging from 69 percent in Montana to 82 percent in Washington.

AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGE AS PERCENT OF LIVING WAGE



The median wage in each state is slightly greater than the living wage for a single adult, ranging from 104 percent in Montana to 114 percent in Washington, as shown in the chart below. This suggests that slightly more than half of the workers in each state earn the living wage for a single adult. The median wage in each state is about two thirds of the living wage for a single adult with two children.

MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE AS A PERCENT OF LIVING WAGE



ARE WE CREATING ENOUGH JOBS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE?

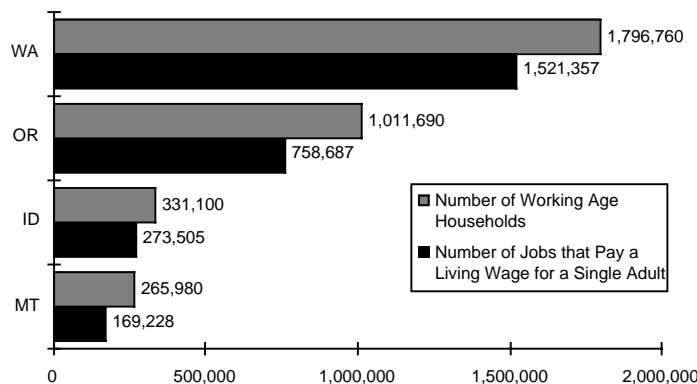
The Northwest economy is not creating enough living wage jobs for all those who need them, according to several indicators. These include the number of working age households compared to the number of jobs that pay a living wage, the percentage of jobs and job openings that pay less than a living wage, and the number of job seekers compared to the number of job openings that pay a living wage.

A comparison of working age households to jobs that pay a living wage shows there were more working age households than living wage jobs in every Northwest state in 1996. Working age households are those with at least one adult between the ages of 18 and 64. The shortfall between the number of working age households and the number of jobs that pay a living wage for a single adult ranges from about 58,000 in Idaho to about 275,000 in Washington. For those jobs that pay a living wage for a single adult with two children, the shortfall ranges from about 200,000 in Montana to over 1 million in Washington.

State by state figures, as shown in the charts below and on the following page, are:

- In Idaho, there were about 330,000 working age households, but fewer than 275,000 jobs that could support a single adult and about 110,000 jobs that could support a single adult with two children.
- In Montana, there were about 265,000 working age households, but fewer than 170,000 jobs that could support a single adult and fewer than 66,000 jobs that could support a single adult with two children.
- In Oregon, there were more than 1 million working age households, but fewer than

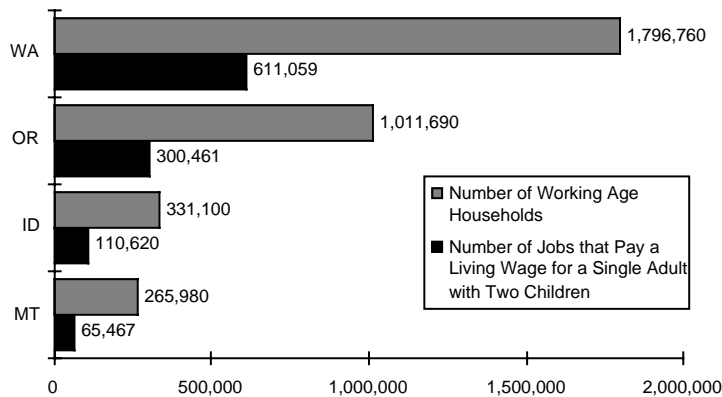
WORKING AGE HOUSEHOLDS COMPARED TO JOBS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE FOR A SINGLE ADULT



760,000 jobs that could support a single adult and only slightly more than 300,000 jobs that could support a single adult with two children.

- In Washington, there were about 1.8 million working age households, but only about 1.5 million jobs that could support a single adult and about 610,000 jobs that could support a single adult with two children.

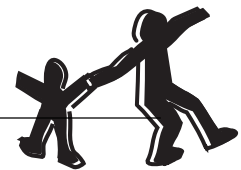
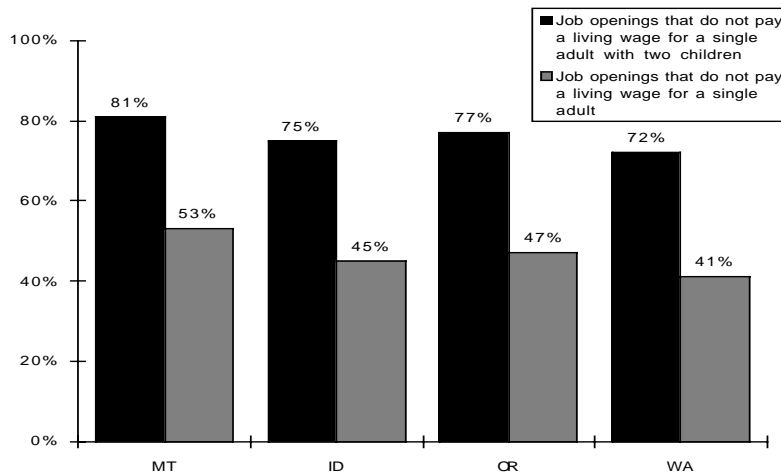
WORKING AGE HOUSEHOLDS COMPARED TO JOBS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE FOR A SINGLE ADULT WITH TWO CHILDREN



About 40 percent of all jobs in the Northwest pay less than a living wage for a single adult and about 75 percent pay less than a living wage for a single adult with two children. State by state figures are:

- In Idaho, 42 percent of all jobs pay less than the \$9.22 an hour living wage for a single adult and 75 percent pay less than the \$14.42 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children.
- In Montana, 45 percent of all jobs pay less than the \$9.02 an hour living wage for a single adult and 73 percent pay less than the \$14.80 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children.
- In Oregon, 44 percent of all jobs pay less than the \$10.07 an hour living wage for a single adult and 76 percent pay less than the \$16.36 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children.
- In Washington, 37 percent of all jobs pay less than the \$10.25 an hour living wage for a single adult and 73 percent pay less than the \$16.86 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children.

JOB OPENINGS THAT DO NOT PAY A LIVING WAGE



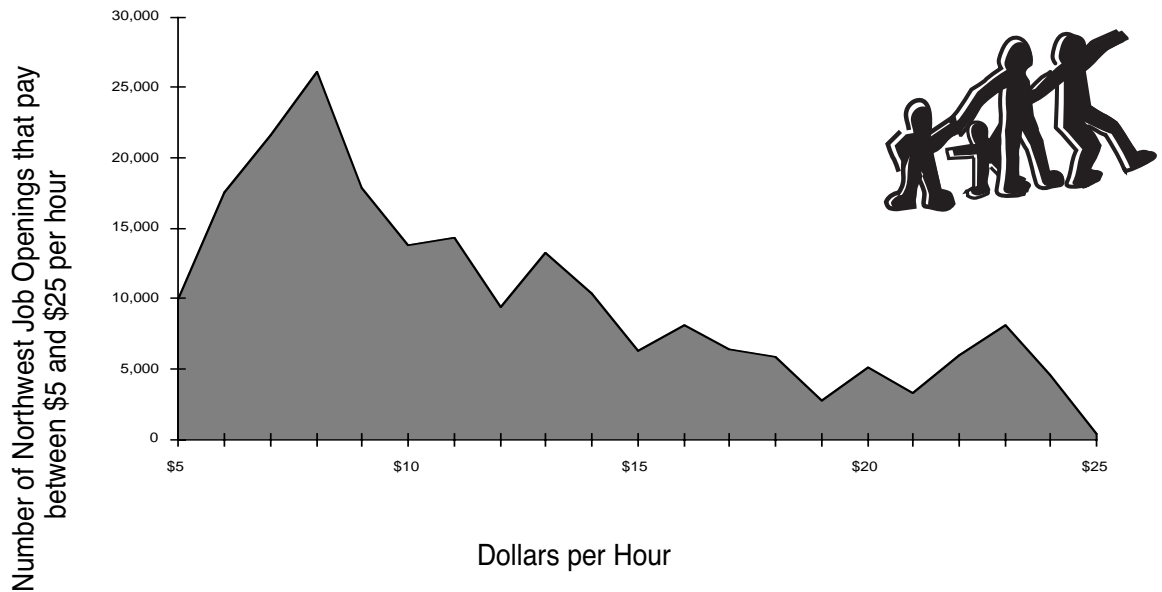
The job market that job seekers face is similarly limited. Of all job openings, 40 to 50 percent pay less than a living wage for a single adult and 70 to 80 percent pay less than a living wage for a single adult with two children, as shown in the chart above. It is important to note the distinction between jobs and job openings. Not all jobs come open during the course of a year. Job openings are of particular interest because they provide employment opportunities for people looking for work. State by state figures are:

- In Idaho, 45 percent of job openings pay less than the \$9.22 an hour living wage for a single adult and 75 percent pay less than the \$14.42 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children.
- In Montana, 53 percent of job openings pay less than the \$9.02 an hour living wage for a single adult and 81 percent pay less than the \$14.80 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children.
- In Oregon, 47 percent of job openings pay less than the \$10.07 an hour living wage for a single adult and 77 percent pay less than the \$16.36 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children.
- In Washington, 41 percent of job openings pay less than the \$10.25 an hour living wage for a single adult and 72 percent pay less than the \$16.86 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children.

Job openings data, coupled with median wage estimates for each occupation, provide a new and interesting way of looking at the distribution of wages. Neither average nor median wages, as previously discussed, portray the distribution of wages in the states very well. Job openings by wages are not arrayed in a classic “normal” distribution. The full wage distribution across all occupations, as shown in the chart below, has distinctive peaks and valleys. There is a cluster of occupations in each state at relatively low wage levels, and a wide range of higher wage occupations with fewer job openings. A better

measure of the performance of the labor market in terms of providing living wage jobs is the percent of job openings that pay a living wage. This measure is not affected by the shape of the wage distribution curve depicted in the chart; it would be an equally valid measure if the wage distribution were “normal” or had peaks and valleys.

DISTRIBUTION OF NORTHWEST JOB OPENINGS BY WAGE RATE

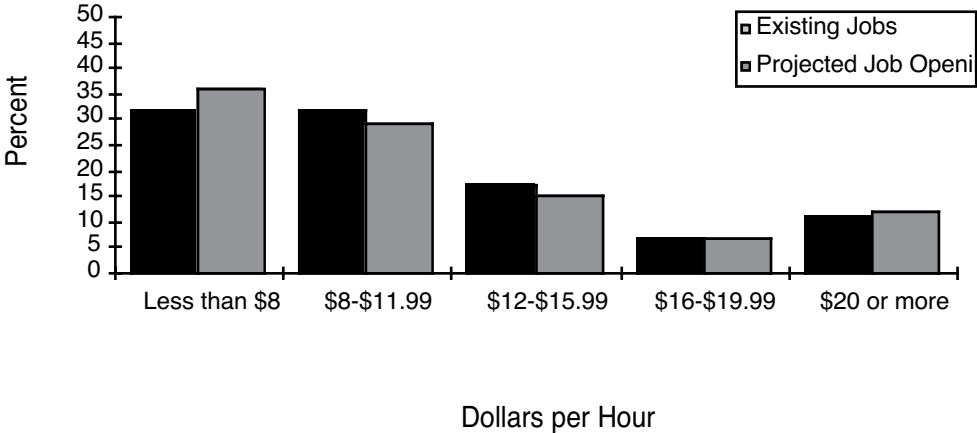


*There are few job openings in the economy that pay more than \$25 an hour. Due to lack of space they have not been included here.

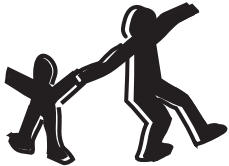
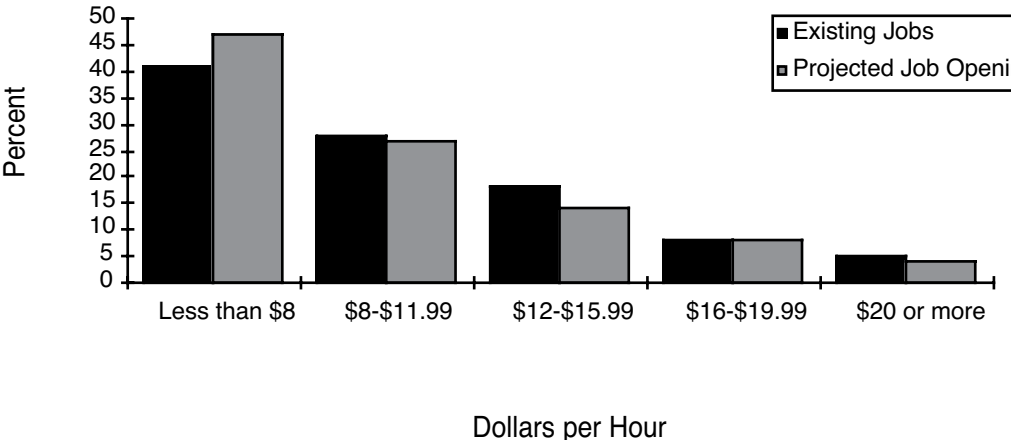
The percentage of jobs and job openings that pay a living wage vary from state to state for a number of reasons, including the mix of industries and related occupations in a state, and the prevailing wage levels, which also vary from state to state.

The industry mix effect can be seen clearly in a comparison of Washington and Montana, two states with very different industry structures. The relatively high frequency occupations in Washington tend to be higher wage occupations than those found in Montana, and there is a clear association of these occupations with major industries that are important drivers of each state’s economy. For example, due to the presence of Boeing and its subcontractors, Washington has a high frequency of certain transportation equipment industry occupations, including electrical installers and repairers with a median wage of \$14.55 an hour and aeronautical engineers with a median wage of \$30.61 an hour. Montana, on the other hand, has a larger mining industry as well as major railroad switching yards and maintenance facilities. Occupations in these two industries also show up with relatively high frequency, including dragline operators at a median wage of \$10.88 an hour and railroad conductors and yardmasters at a median wage of \$12.45 an hour.

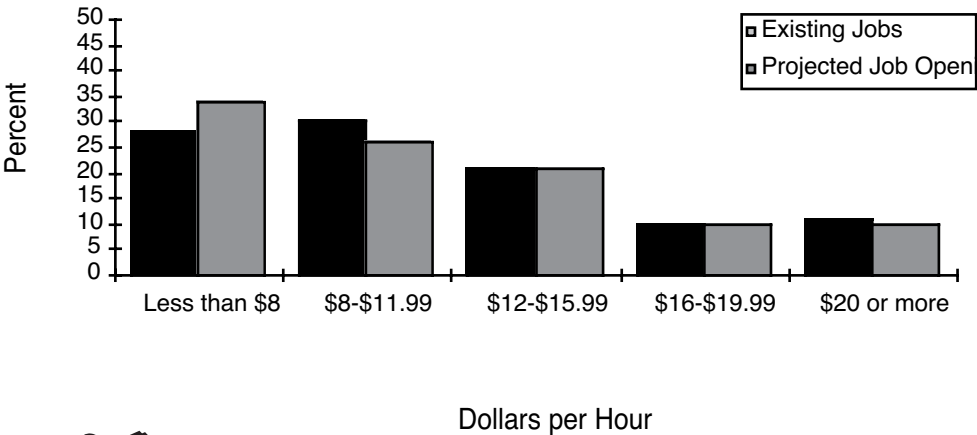
CHANGING DISTRIBUTION OF JOBS IN IDAHO'S ECONOMY



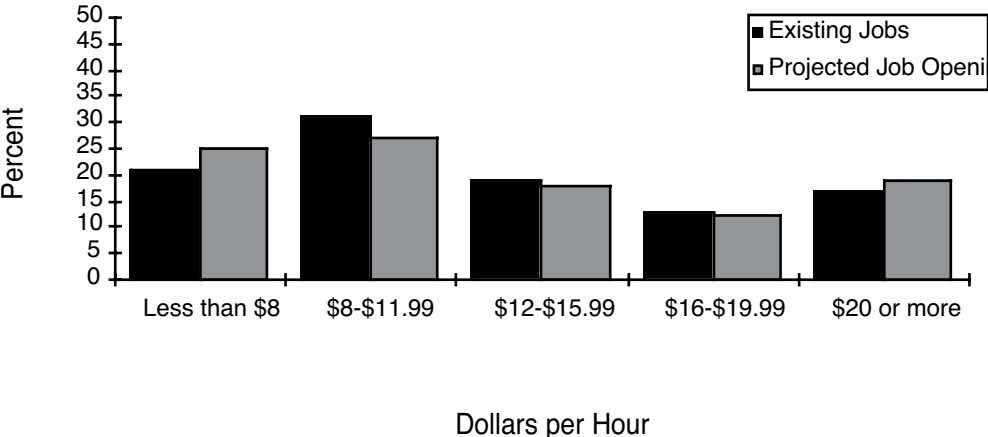
CHANGING DISTRIBUTION OF JOBS IN MONTANA'S ECONOMY



CHANGING DISTRIBUTION OF JOBS IN OREGON'S ECONOMY



CHANGING DISTRIBUTION OF JOBS IN WASHINGTON'S ECONOMY



Wages for any single occupation also vary across the Northwest states, for a variety of reasons, including its connection to key industries in the state and costs of living. Understanding the complexity of such wage variations may be helpful in efforts to reduce the job gap.

Comparing jobs with job openings reveals that there are more lower paying jobs and job openings than higher paying ones, as shown in the charts on the previous pages. In all four states, there is a higher percentage of job openings paying less than \$8 an hour than existing jobs paying less than \$8 an hour. The difference is at least five percent in each state for the under \$8 an hour category. There are smaller but consistent differences across all four states at the \$8 – 19.99 an hour wage levels as well, with an equal or a lower percentage of job openings than existing jobs. At the \$20 or more an hour wage level, there is a higher percentage of job openings than existing jobs in two states; in the other two, it is the opposite.

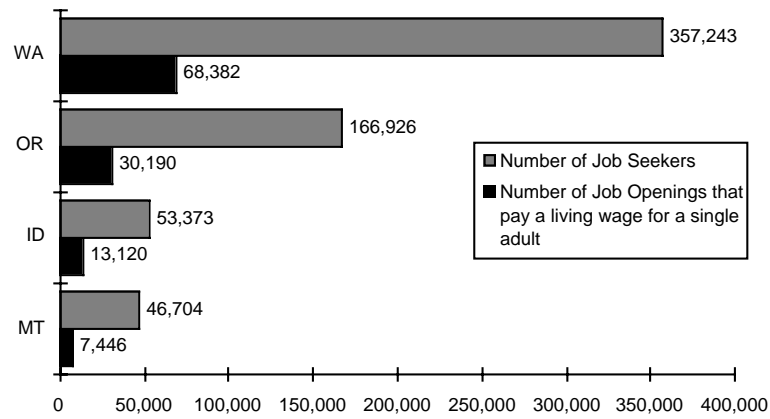
These trends can be interpreted in at least two ways. If there are more low wage job openings than exist in the current job base, and at least in some states, more high wage job openings than the current job base, then the labor market may be polarizing. In the future, there may be fewer living wage jobs in the middle of the income distribution, but more very low and very high wage jobs. Another interpretation is that workers enter the labor force in low wage jobs and then either move from one low wage job to another or move up to better jobs over time. Some may argue that this accounts for the disproportionate share of job openings at the lowest level. While this is true to an extent, if one focuses the analysis exclusively on those job openings due to industry expansion, there is still growth at the lowest and highest wage levels. This pattern supports the “polarization” hypothesis with proportionately fewer jobs in the middle of the pay range where living wages can be found.

Another indicator of the job gap is the number of job seekers compared to the number of job openings that pay a living wage. Overall, there are more people looking for work than there are job openings that pay a living wage, as shown in the charts and table on the following pages.

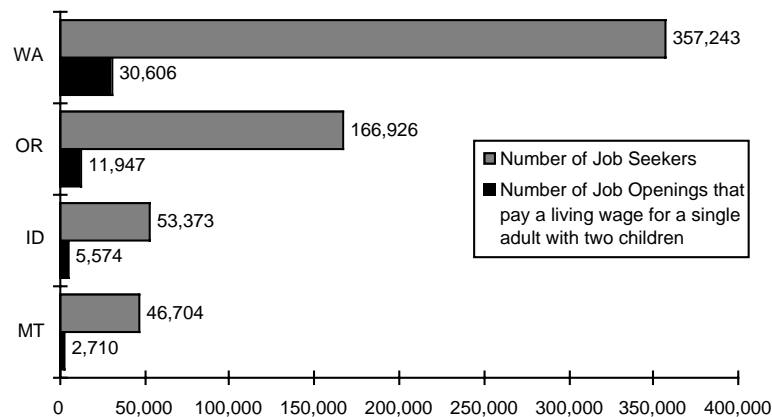
Idaho has the smallest number of job seekers per job opening—an average of two job seekers for every job opening. The other states have an average of three job seekers for every job opening. However, not all job openings pay a living wage, even for a single adult. For each job opening that pays at least the living wage for a single adult, there are on average four to six job seekers, depending on the state. For each job opening that pays at least the living wage for a single adult with two children, there are 10 to 17 job seekers. The ratio of job seekers to job openings is higher for larger households because job seekers from smaller households can compete for the higher wage jobs, but fewer higher wage jobs are available.

A job gap ratio of 4 to 1, for example, does not necessarily imply there are four people competing for each job opening at that wage level. It simply indicates that over the course of a year there were four times as many job seekers as there were living wage jobs at or above that wage level. Available data do not provide details on what sorts of jobs workers from households of different sizes actually pursue, so no precise conclusions can be reached about the applicant pool for jobs at different wage levels. The applicant pool also depends on the skills and education and training of job seekers, as well as other factors. Large ratios suggest greater competition among job seekers for available job openings.

JOB SEEKERS COMPARED TO JOB OPENINGS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE FOR A SINGLE ADULT



JOB SEEKERS COMPARED TO JOB OPENINGS THAT PAY A LIVING WAGE FOR A SINGLE ADULT WITH TWO CHILDREN



State by state figures are:

- In Idaho, for each job opening that pays at least the \$9.22 an hour living wage for a single adult, there are four job seekers on average. For each job opening that pays at least the \$14.42 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children, there are 10 job seekers on average.

- In Montana, for each job opening that pays at least the \$9.02 an hour living wage for a single adult, there are six job seekers on average. For each job opening that pays at least the \$14.80 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children, there are 17 job seekers on average.
- In Oregon, for each job opening that pays at least the \$10.07 an hour living wage for a single adult, there are six job seekers on average. For each job opening that pays at least the \$16.36 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children, there are 14 job seekers on average.
- In Washington, for each job opening that pays at least the \$10.25 an hour living wage for a single adult, there are five job seekers on average. For each job opening that pays at least the \$16.86 an hour living wage for a single adult with two children, there are 12 job seekers on average.

For those job openings that pay a living wage and require no more than some combination of a high school diploma, on-the-the-job training, work experience, and/or post-high school vocational training, the competition may be even stronger. In every state, slightly more than half of all job openings that pay a living wage for a single adult require that amount of education and training, as shown in the chart on the following page. For those job openings that pay a living wage for a single adult with two children, the proportion is less than a quarter.

Job Gap Ratios (Job Seekers per Job Opening)

	Idaho	Montana	Oregon	Washington
All Job Openings	2 to 1	3 to 1	3 to 1	3 to 1
Job Openings Paying a Living Wage				
Single adult	4 to 1	6 to 1	6 to 1	5 to 1
Single adult with two children	10 to 1	17 to 1	14 to 1	12 to 1

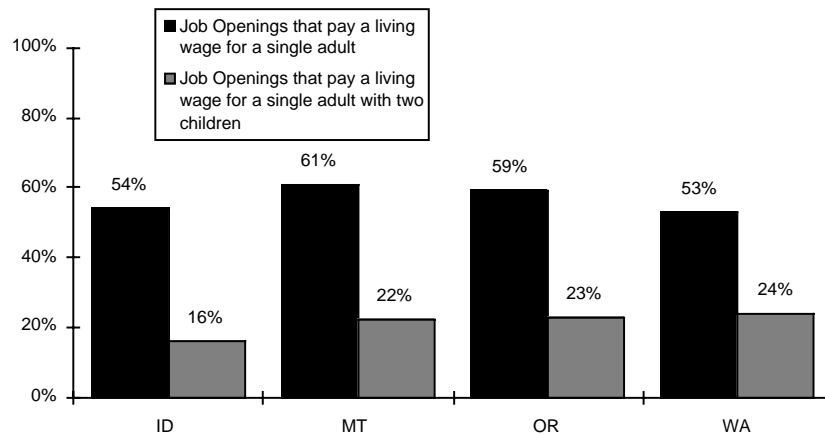
Job gap ratios are calculated by dividing the number of people who were looking for work at some point during 1996 by the number of job openings that year. Job seekers include:

- The unemployed—people who are not employed, but looking for work. Included are those who have been laid off, quit their jobs, are entering the workforce for the first time, or are re-entering it. Not included are those who are unemployed due to temporary layoff or those looking only for part-time work.
- Involuntary part-time workers—people who work less than full time, but want to work full time.
- Discouraged workers and marginally attached workers—people who are not employed and not currently looking for work, but have looked for work within the past year. In the case of discouraged workers, they are not seeking work because they believe there are no jobs available or there are none for which they qualify. And in the case of marginally attached workers, it is because of personal or financial reasons.

Not included are people who prefer part-time work.

Job seekers equal between nine and 14 percent of employment in each of the states. The largest group of job seekers in all four states is the unemployed, accounting for about 60 percent of all job seekers, as shown in the table below. Marginally attached and discouraged workers account for seven to 11 percent of the job seekers, while involuntary part-time workers account for about 30 percent of the total.

LIVING WAGE JOB OPENINGS THAT REQUIRE NO MORE THAN SOME VOCATIONAL TRAINING



Estimated Number of Job Seekers

	<u>Idaho</u>	<u>Montana</u>	<u>Oregon</u>	<u>Washington</u>
Number of Job Seekers	53,373	46,704	166,926	357,243
Job Seekers as a percent of total employment	9%	11%	10%	13%
Job Seeker categories				
Unemployed	61%	58%	64%	59%
Involuntary Part-Time	31%	31%	29%	30%
Marginally Attached/ Discouraged	8%	11%	7%	11%

It is important to note that the unemployment rate reflects only the unemployed and, therefore, misses about 40 percent of all job seekers. This suggests that there are many more job seekers for each living wage job opening than conventionally assumed.

The job seeker figures used are likely an underestimate of the actual number of job seekers. Ideally, the count of job seekers would capture everyone, working or not, who needs a living wage job. The figures understate the number of job seekers in that it does not count those who are working full time at less than a living wage job but want a living wage job, because data on this group do not exist. It overstates the number in that all the unemployed are counted, even though some may not be looking for a living wage job. Also, people who left the labor market and then re-entered the same occupation are counted among the job seekers, whereas those who moved directly from one job to another in the same occupation are not. However, assuming even a fraction of the people working at less than a living wage job for a single adult want a living wage job, the count is, on balance, an underestimate.

Job openings include:

- Job openings due to growth—the result of new jobs being created by new or existing firms.
- Job openings due to net replacement—the result of people retiring, entering school or the military, moving across state boundaries, changing occupations, or otherwise leaving the occupation in which they currently work.

The proportion of job openings due to growth and net replacement vary from state to state. Proportionately more job openings result from growth in Idaho (53 percent) than in Montana (41 percent). Conversely, proportionately more job openings result from net replacement in Montana (59 percent) than in Idaho (47 percent). Oregon and Washington fall in between, with a 48/52 percentage split between growth and net replacement in Oregon and a 45/55 split in Washington.

These differences are largely attributable to differences in workforce demographics and growth rates of new and existing firms.

Job Openings

	<u>Idaho</u>	<u>Montana</u>	<u>Oregon</u>	<u>Washington</u>
Job Openings	25,335	17,000	61,796	120,765
Growth as percent of total	53%	41%	48%	45%
Net replacement as percent of total	47%	59%	52%	55%

The analysis does not include job openings that result from people changing employers but remaining in the same occupation, since these are largely invisible to the average job seeker. Also not included, for similar reasons, are job openings for unpaid family workers and self-employment.

Job openings are broken down by occupation, wages paid, and education and training required. Wage and education and training data were collected and analyzed for over 800 occupations. In determining which job openings paid a living wage, the state median wage for an occupation was used, where available; this means that half the people in the occupation earn less and half more than that amount. Not everyone will start at the median wage, but many should progress to that wage over time.

(A more detailed description of the methodology can be found in the Technical Notes & Resources Section.)

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

This first phase of the Northwest Job Gap Study develops estimates of living wages needed to support families in the Northwest and documents the extent to which there is a gap between the number of living wage jobs being created and the number of people needing living wage jobs. Despite strong growth in the regional economy and the creation of many



new jobs over the last decade, the Northwest is not creating enough living wage jobs for all those who need them, as indicated by the number of working age households compared to the number of jobs that pay a living wage, the percentage of jobs and job openings that pay less than a living wage, and the number of job seekers compared to the number of job openings that pay a living wage.

Findings from the first phase of the Northwest Job Gap Study are intended to help guide and shape the efforts of business, labor, government, and the community—in terms of both policy and practice—around economic, workforce, and community development.

Next phases of the Northwest Job Gap Study will focus on identifying which occupations and industries provide living wage job opportunities to people needing them; analyzing workforce demographics such as race/ethnicity, gender, and education and training levels in the context of living wage jobs; and identifying ways to promote living wage jobs and make sure people needing these jobs are able to get and keep them. Also, education and outreach will be conducted to raise awareness and promote public dialogue about the job gap.

SEARCHING FOR WORK THAT PAYS: NORTHWEST JOB GAP STUDY

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ABOUT THE NORTHWEST JOB GAP STUDY

The Northwest Job Gap Study is a joint project of the Northwest Policy Center at the University of Washington Graduate School of Public Affairs and the Northwest Federation of Community Organizations.

The Northwest Policy Center is an applied policy research center that works with policy makers and practitioners to improve strategies for a vital Northwest economy, with an emphasis on the health and well-being of the region's people, communities, and environment.

The Northwest Federation of Community Organizations is a regional federation of four statewide, community-based social and economic justice organizations: Montana People's Action, Idaho Citizen's Network, Oregon Action, and Washington Citizen Action. These organizations represent a broad based, grassroots constituency including disenfranchised and low-to-moderate income residents. They engage in community organizing and coalition building, and conduct issue campaigns at the state and community level.

Guiding the Northwest Job Gap Study and its research and analysis, and education and outreach efforts are state steering committees made up of representatives of business, labor, government, and community groups.

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