

The Fair Labor Standards Act

The Fair Labor Standards Act was signed into law on June 25, 1938. This act brings a variety of new changes, some of which are quite controversial with those who lean conservative. Among the reforms this act brings include a national minimum wage, the abolition of child labor, a standardized work-week, and overtime pay. This act is one that affects everybody in the nation, but primarily brings benefits to the working-class people.

Prior to the passing of this act, it was common to see hazardous workplaces with very low pay. Oftentimes, young children would be employed in factories and mines. This act would change that, prohibiting children under the age of 18 from working in these hazardous conditions. Because of this, the number of children harmed in these hazardous workplaces is expected to drop by the thousands. This is seen as a huge victory for many, including long-protesting union members fighting for the rights of the next generation.

The establishment of other workers' rights is also massive as for the first time in US history, a national minimum wage has been established at 25 cents per hour. Standards would also be developed to keep track of wages, by establishing a 44-hour work week. And for the hard workers who spend more time at the workplace than that, the act also states that overtime pay will be awarded. With these new standards set in place, fair compensation for hard work is in line, combatting the meager working conditions of the Depression and pre-Depression eras.

However, this act has also faced resistance from opponents of the act, with many believing that a set wage will make products more expensive. There are also stated fears of employers taking employment cuts to keep the cost of labor down, which, in a relatively fragile post-Depression state, is a very real fear to have. However, the benefits outweigh the costs in this situation, as many workers working under the Fair Labor Standards Act have seen drastic quality-of-life benefits, and a guarantee of a fair and just income to make a living for their families.