



For Immediate Release

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Human Services Nonprofit Volunteers of America Chesapeake Speaks on Importance of Raising Minimum Wage

Lanham, Md. (December 11, 2013) – As one of this region’s largest health and human services nonprofits, **Volunteers of America Chesapeake** is publically commending the leadership in Montgomery County, Prince Georges County and the District of Columbia on the decision to raise minimum wage, and urging others to do the same.

“The recent decision in these three jurisdictions to raise the local minimum wage shows remarkable leadership in addressing poverty without turning to public assistance,” says Franklyn Baker, Volunteers of America Chesapeake’s Chief of Staff and External Affairs Officer. “What distinguishes the local effort is the political coordination across three adjacent jurisdictions. This helps preempt opposition based on geographic competition – and will entitle 2.5 million area residents to hourly wages higher than any of the 50 states.”

Baltimore was the first city in the country – and Maryland the first state – to enact “living wage” requirements for public contractors. Hundreds of U.S. municipalities then followed suit. With the Congress unable to act on the federal minimum wage, communities across the country must step up.

While it is unlikely to significantly reduce the soaring demand for nonprofit health and human services like those Volunteers of America Chesapeake provides in Maryland, D.C. and Virginia, the a minimum wage increase is critical to any serious effort to addressing widening income inequality in our region and throughout the nation.

ABOUT VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA CHESAPEAKE

From Baltimore to Hampton Roads Virginia, Volunteers of America Chesapeake works to uplift the most vulnerable people among us. We are a faith-based health and human services nonprofit serving Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. We run 31 programs and offer services in core areas including homelessness, intellectual disabilities, veterans, mental illness and corrections. Every year we leverage the financial and in-kind investments of the members of our communities to impact more than 8,000 people, moving more than 1,000 from homelessness to permanent housing and lift hundreds to higher levels of self-sufficiency. In Northern Virginia alone we impact 1 out of every 3 persons challenged with homelessness. Through a dedicated and committed team of management, staff and volunteers and guided by our Core Values: Caring, Respect, Faith, Quality and Trust, Volunteers of America Chesapeake exists to serve others in need. For more information about Volunteers of America Chesapeake, visit: <http://www.voachesapeake.org>