New Report Highlights the Ways Cash Policies Support Workers

Report analyzes effective cash policies for building worker power before, during and after the pandemic

New York, NY – Today, Economic Security Project published *The Power of Cash: How Guaranteed Income Can Strengthen Worker Power*, a report that assesses various cash programs pre and post-pandemic to show how such policies are critical tools for building worker power. The report presents the ways that cash programs, such as guaranteed income, stimulus checks, and tax credits, have impacted worker’s ability to negotiate and improve their working conditions. The success of cash programs makes clear why we need to develop permanent cash policy if we want to support workers.

The report makes this argument by focusing on four key areas:

1) Structural inequities in the economy, before, during and after the pandemic.
2) Pandemic-era worker organizing and the research strongly suggesting that cash supported unionization efforts.
3) Cash-focused research that served as the foundation for supporting unrestricted cash programs as a pandemic-era response.
4) Key lessons learned around cash and its role in supporting the care economy, boosting entrepreneurship, and challenging historic racial inequities in the economy.

“Over the past year, I sat down with workers across the country, and every worker I spoke with shared stories about how cash has impacted the work they do for their families and communities. For many, being equipped with recurring cash payments meant they could save and invest in their dreams or build a stronger economic platform to negotiate with their employer for a safer working environment. These stories have a clear throughline: cash is helping workers build power and create a more equitable future,” said KyungSun Lee, Program Manager, Coalition Building and Organizing.
“In 2019 I had a solid, union job, great colleagues, and plans to improve my workplace as a union shop steward. The pandemic showed how an unexpected life change can upend all of that. Through direct cash payments, not only were we better equipped to navigate uncertainty and poverty, but we were also empowered to invest in ourselves. I will be forever thankful for people who stepped up with me in support of Let’s GO DMV! and hope that we can continue to build cash programs so everyone can access them,” said Veronica “Vee” Tucker, Founder of Let’s Go DMV! and a longtime hospitality worker.

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Economic Security Project advocates for ideas that build economic power for all Americans. We legitimize bold ideas by supporting cutting edge research and elevating champions, win concrete policy victories for the communities that need to see change now, and provoke the conventional wisdom to shift what’s considered possible. Our team of academics, organizers, practitioners and culture makers disburse grants, run issue campaigns, develop creative interventions and research products, and convene to encourage investment and action from others.