

Commentary/Op-Ed - October 2019

Op-Ed: Securing the future of New York's independent workers

Across the state, hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers are now working independently, subcontracting, or earning income in the gig economy. In this Times Union op-ed, CUF Editorial and Policy Director Eli Dvorkin and Winston C. Fisher argue that while the rise of independent work has clear benefits for New Yorkers and New York's economy, it is also bringing a host of new challenges that could be addressed through a first-of-its-kind system of portable benefits.

by Eli Dvorkin and Winston C. Fisher

Our new op-ed in the *Albany Times Union* makes the case that New York State should take the lead in developing the next generation of public benefits for the future workforce. Written by CUF Editorial and Policy Director Eli Dvorkin and Winston C. Fisher, partner at Fisher Brothers and co-chair of the New York City Regional Economic Development Council, the commentary lays out how the rise of independent work is bringing new sources of income and economic opportunity, but also new challenges (and new insecurities) to New York's workforce. Without action, the op-ed argues, far too many of New York's independent workers will continue to lack access to crucial benefits from workers' compensation to retirement savings, putting themselves and their families at risk—and eroding the middle class.

You can read the op-ed here.

This op-ed is part of the Center for an Urban Future's Middle Class Jobs Project, and builds on the Center's extensive research on human capital and the challenge of generating middle-income jobs, including the recent policy forum Rethinking Public Benefits for the Future of Work.

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Center for an Urban Future (CUF) is an independent, nonprofit think tank that generates innovative policies to create jobs,

reduce inequality and help lower income New Yorkers climb into the middle class. For 20 years, CUF has published accessible, data-driven reports on ways to grow and diversify the economy and expand opportunity that are anchored in rigorous research, not preconceived notions about outcome. Our work has been a powerful catalyst for policy change in New York City and serves as an invaluable resource for government officials, community groups, nonprofit practitioners and business leaders as they advocate for and implement policies to address some of New York's biggest challenges and opportunities.



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