

Gubernatorial Candidate Evelyn Castillo-Bach: Florida's August 18 Election Is a Vote for a Real Living Wage

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Evelyn Castillo-Bach, candidate for Governor of Florida and Executive Director of Balanced Justice Network, today announced her commitment to establish a proper living wage tied to the actual cost of living in Florida communities. Citing United Way ALICE data, Castillo-Bach said, "It is shocking that 47 percent of Florida households cannot afford basic necessities. The next governor must get the Florida legislature to enact a new law to raise the minimum wage so working people earn a living wage without needing to

work 2 or 3 jobs. I commit to get this done. I will not be a desktop governor. I will be in every county, from the Panhandle to the Keys, holding meetings with voters asking them to explain to me why their elected official think they should not earn a living wage."



Evelyn seated with the American flag and Florida flag behind her,

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Evelyn Castillo-Bach

The latest ALICE report from United Way shows the reality of what is happening to a large population of Florida households: 12.4 percent of Florida households live at or below the poverty line. An additional 34.5 percent are ALICE Households — Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed — meaning you are the working poor. You work full time, earn too much to receive government benefits, but you also make too little to cover your living expenses of housing, child care, food, transportation, and health care. Combined, these 2 categories of households account for 46.8 percent of Florida households. [Florida ranked 47th among all states](#) and the District of Columbia in financial

hardship in 2024, with one of the highest percentages of struggling households in the nation.

"People First, Not Politics is not a slogan. It is a promise," said Castillo-Bach. "For most of my adult life I have been an Independent voter because I believe in evaluating merit, not party labels. Now I am running as a Democrat for Governor because Florida working families need a champion who will move heaven and earth to get the legislature to do the right thing. A proper living wage is not a handout. It is recognition that the people who keep our hotels running, who care for our children and seniors, and who harvest our crops deserve to thrive, not merely survive."

The ALICE data underscores the scale of the challenge. In 2024, [only about 40 percent of employed Floridians](#) had the security of a salaried, full-time job. The rest relied on hourly work, part-time jobs, or gig work — arrangements that make income unpredictable and benefits rare. Even among those who worked full-time, 56 percent did not earn enough to afford the ALICE Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child. A wage of \$20 per hour was not enough to meet that budget in 99 percent of Florida counties. Part-time workers fared even worse: 46 percent lived below the ALICE Threshold, compared to 26 percent of full-time workers.

Castillo-Bach emphasized that the burden falls hardest in Florida's working-class communities. The most recent reports show how in rural and mid-size counties, more than half of all households fall below the ALICE threshold. Among households below that threshold, 78 percent of renters and 57 percent of homeowners are housing-burdened, paying 30 percent or more of their income on housing costs, including mortgage payments, utilities, property taxes, and property insurance.

Her proposal uses the United Way ALICE data to set a wage floor that matches the real cost of housing, groceries, and child care in each county — not one flat number that pretends it costs the same to live in every part of Florida.

"Health, Home, and Freedom are the three pillars of this campaign," Castillo-Bach added. "You cannot have a healthy family without a stable home. You cannot have a stable home without a living wage. You cannot have freedom if you are working sixty hours a week and still choosing between groceries and the electric bill. This is about prosperity and life balance. People are not machines. We need the freedom to have leisure time to enjoy our families and live our lives."

Castillo-Bach describes her "People First, Not Politics" campaign as a movement about optimism and empowerment and right versus wrong where hard working Floridians have the power to transform Florida, led by a governor who fights for them with the same intensity they bring to their jobs every single day.

Castillo-Bach, a longtime resident of Pembroke Pines, describes herself as an Independent-Democrat who has built her campaign on independent thinking and practical solutions. She

currently serves as Executive Director of Balanced Justice Network. Her name appears first on the Democratic gubernatorial ballot,. Election date is August 18, 2026.

About Evelyn Castillo-Bach for Governor

Evelyn Castillo-Bach is a long-time Independent voter running as a Democrat for Governor of Florida in 2026. Her name appears first on the Democratic gubernatorial ballot. She serves as Executive Director of Balanced Justice Network. Her campaign is built on the motto "People First, Not Politics" and three pillars: Health, Home, and Freedom.

Evelyn Castillo-Bach Campaign For Governor of Florida 2026

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