

Rein's NY Style Deli-Restaurant

HB 5291 AA Increasing the Minimum Wage, Removing the Minimum Wage Tip Credit and Increasing Penalties for Failure to Pay the Minimum Wage

Good afternoon Members of the Labor Committee. My name is Steven Kassman and I am the General Manager and Partner of Rein's NY Style Deli-Restaurant in Vernon, Connecticut.

We fully support the position of the Connecticut Restaurant Association on the negative aspects of this proposed wage hike.

I'd like to take this opportunity to discuss another effect higher labor costs will have on our restaurant. This is our 40th year in business. One of the reasons for our longevity and success are the many unique menu products that we make in our own kitchen. Our customers have grown to trust and expect the tasty quality that we provide.

Over 40 employees, of our staff of 150 people, are involved in the preparation and production of our menu items. Increased payroll costs will force us to look at out-sourcing some of our products, to reduce our labor costs.

Pre-packed, pre-portioned, and pre-sliced foods are not how independent restaurants built their reputations. Our customers want our potato salad, our mushroom barley soup, and our sour cream coffee cake. These are all examples of labor intensive items made by our staff.

This proposed bill will not help our business or our employees. As an independent restaurant, we want to be able to afford to hire and train our own employees to make our recipes our way, and to always offer unique, flavorful foods.

Thank you for your time.