

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Tercyak, and the rest of the members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

My name is Briana Fernandez. I live in Manchester and today I urge you to pass HB 5069, and SB 32. Both of these bills would be an enormous help to me, and other fast food and service employees in Connecticut.

Currently, I am unemployed, but in the past I worked at McDonalds, and as a Personal Care Worker. Both of those jobs pay incredibly low wages. My dream is to become a teacher, but in order to do that, I have to go to school. Making the current minimum wage doesn't give me the chance to save up to go to school, never mind moving out of my parents house, or getting my drivers license and a vehicle. People often argue that minimum wage jobs are a starting place, and that if you work hard, you move up to better jobs. That is exactly what I am attempting to do, but with such low wages, I can't even make ends meet.

I was fired from McDonald's for calling out sick. I believe this illustrates the lack of respect low-wage workers receive. To me, both ensuring that large companies like McDonalds is responsible for its workers, and raising the minimum wage are about giving workers like me just a bit more respect and a fighting change to better ourselves.

The truth is, large companies like McDonald's can afford to pay higher wages, but instead that money goes towards their profits. McDonald's made \$5.46 billion in profits last year alone. Couldn't a small bit of that go to workers so they can afford their own place to live, or a driver's license, or to go to college?

Thank you and I hope you will support HB 5069 and SB 32.