

Middlesex Coalition for Children

Testimony of Izzi Greenberg of Middlesex Coalition for Children In Support of HB 5370, an Act Increasing the Minimum Fair

Labor Committee of the Connecticut Legislature, March 3rd, 2016

Thank you to the leadership and members of the Labor Committee for this opportunity to provide written testimony. My name is Izzi Greenberg and I am the director of the Middlesex Coalition for Children, a group working to improve outcomes for low-income children and children of color in Middlesex County.

I am writing today to testify in favor of House Bill 5370, An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage.

Too many working families in Connecticut are living in poverty or struggling to make ends meet. In Connecticut today, a full-time minimum wage worker who takes no time off earns only \$19,968 a year. That's below the federal poverty level for a family of 3. Workers earning the current minimum wage of \$9.60 simply don't earn enough to meet their families' basic needs. Over the past several decades, despite the growth in our economy, the minimum wage's value has eroded dramatically. If the minimum wage reflected the productivity growth in our economy since 1968, it would have reached nearly \$22 in 2012.

Raising the minimum wage is the right thing to do and will raise the living standards for low-wage working families. At the same time, it provides a boost to the economy by increasing consumer spending. Low-wage workers with more money in their pockets will spend more at local businesses. Raising the minimum wage to \$15 will bring billions of dollars into the Connecticut economy

Parents are not able to adequately provide for their families, and at the current minimum wage, childcare workers, retail and restaurant employees, and many of the people that hold our communities together cannot afford basic needs. The vast majority of minimum wage workers are adults, many of whom support children and families.

Raising the minimum wage is not an easy solution, but it is the right one. I hope you will support this effort and help to bring our lowest paid residents closer to a working wage.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Izzi Greenberg
Executive Director