

March 2019

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 5004, SB 2, and HB 7191 with suggested amendments

Dear Chairwomen Senator Kushner and Representative Porter, Vice-Chairs Senator Osten and Representative Joshua Hall, Ranking Members Senator Miner and Representative Polletta and Distinguished Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

My name is Paula Bacolini, and I am a Glastonbury, CT resident for over 30 years. I am writing in support the following bills:

HB 5004: AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM FAIR WAGE.

To provide more economic security to Connecticut families by increasing the minimum fair wage.

SB 2: AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM FAIR WAGE.

To provide more economic security to Connecticut families by increasing the minimum fair wage.

I also support the Governor's bill and urge the committee and legislators to amend this bill as discussed below: **HB 7191: AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE.**
To implement the Governor's budget recommendations.

Although I support increasing the minimum wage as this is a step in the right direction, I do not feel that a \$15 per hour minimum wage by 2022 will be enough for families. It will not support a single mother in a two bedroom apartment, nor will it enable students to earn enough money for their college tuition.

I urge the committee and the legislators to start working now for \$25 per hour minimum wage, and add an amendment to this legislation to achieve \$25 minimum wage by 2025. We must keep up with inflation and put an end to corporations reducing work hours to avoid paying full time benefits to their workers, while they take millions of dollars in bonuses and stock prices.

As of today, if you were to look back on what the minimum wage was in the 1960's, and make cost of living adjustments, the minimum wage today should be at least \$25 per hour. I recall that I needed to work 3 jobs at the minimum wage to put myself through college in the late 60's and still had student loan debt for 10 years after graduation. As a single parent, had I not had a good college education, I could not have made ends meet to support myself and my child.

On HB 7191, I agree wholeheartedly with the CT State Director of the Working Families Organization, Carols Moreno's Written Testimony to this committee, in which he details how legislators should amend the Governor's Bill, HB 7191, by removing the Expanded

Submission Training Wage and replacing the Employment Cost Index with the Consumer Price Index. This would make the HB 7191 fair to young workers and allow accurate cost of living adjustments. Please see Mr. Moreno's written testimony on these three bills.

When CT workers earn more, they will pay more income taxes, and spend more of their disposable income, which is good for businesses and the local economy. In addition, they become more independent, and are less reliant on safety net services, which will ultimately save taxpayer dollars for other investments. Raising wages is good for Connecticut's economy.

I urge the Committee to vote yes and pass HB 5004, SB 2, and HB 7191 out of committee with the suggested amendments. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Paula Bacolini
Glastonbury CT 06033