



Testimony of  
**John Brady**  
Executive Vice President, AFT Connecticut, AFL-CIO

Labor and Public Employees Committee  
March 7, 2019

Good afternoon Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee.

My name is John Brady. I am a Registered Nurse and the Executive Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation of more than 30,000 public and private sectors employees; which includes state workers, healthcare workers, public school teachers, para-educators and school support staff, and higher education faculty and staff.

I come to you today in support of **SB 2 and HB 5004 An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage.**

No resident of the state of Connecticut who works full time should live below the poverty level. The Living Wage in Connecticut is \$19.08/hour. This allows a single adult without children to maintain a basic standard of living. To expect a worker to work for less is an insult to the hard-working residents of Connecticut and a drain on state finances in the form of state assistance that these residents need to survive. Meanwhile, large corporations which underpay said workers reap healthy profits for their CEOs and other top executives.

SB 2 and HB 5004 would slowly raise the minimum wage to \$15/hour and tie it to the cost of living. Although this will still leave these workers under the Living Wage, it would provide a portion of dignity that they deserve as hard-working residents of this state. The additional income would be quickly spent on local economies for needed items such as groceries and transportation, thus boosting the local economy and increasing sales tax income.

The surrounding states of New York and Massachusetts have already enacted bills that will increase their minimum wage to \$15 and Vermont, Maine, and Rhode Island already have a higher minimum wage than Connecticut and are considering increasing it again. They recognize that increased wages for those who work hard is good for workers, good for the economy, and good for the state.

Increasing the minimum wage also helps close the racial pay gap as workers of color are over represented in low-wage jobs. I urge you to support SB 2 and HB 5004 and support the dignity of all workers.

Connecticut has a history of workforce that is founded in innovation and a serious work ethic. Let us honor that.