

**Angel Candelario  
Testimony for Public Hearing  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
March 7th, 2019**

Good Morning,

My name is Angel and I am a cancer survivor.

I was diagnosed with leukemia when I was eight.

My mother was a single parent who made sure me and my three siblings had food on the table and a roof over our head.

She juggled all of this while making sure I received treatment.

Now that I am an adult, I want to be able to provide for my family the way my mom did for me.

She was recently diagnosed with stage four breast cancer.

And getting better is all she should be focused on, but how is that possible when the medical bills are mounting up?

I have worked over 55 hours a week to make sure my mother receives the care she deserves.

And I'm not the only one putting in extra hours and still struggling to get by.

Hardworking people across Connecticut skip meals to pay the electricity bill, ration prescriptions to buy their kids shoes.

These are impossible choices – and Connecticut can do better.

That's why I decided to join the fight for \$15 over three years ago.

I joined not only to fight for a \$15 minimum wage but to also bring awareness to the injustices so many of us face.

We need to have a voice, so we can all come together to demand things like better working conditions, pay increases, and healthcare.

\$15/hr would mean people like me who are diagnosed with leukemia could still pay the rent and put food on the table, even with medical bills.

It would mean moms and dads who work year-round would earn an extra \$2,700 a year—enough to begin to make a difference.

That's why I am making it a priority to speak with Connecticut leaders today and urge them to pass SB 2 and HB 5004 which will gradually raise the minimum wage from \$10.10 to \$15.00 per hour by 2022.

A living wage is one that allows families to meet their basic needs, without public assistance, and that provides them some ability to deal with emergencies like mines and plan ahead.

It is not a poverty or survival wage.

I urge lawmakers to support Connecticut's working families by increasing the minimum wage to \$15.