

Kyra Franklin
Testimony for Public Hearing
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 7th, 2019

Good morning everyone! My name is Kyra.

Thank you for coming out to support workers in Connecticut.

And a special thanks to Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee co-chairs Robyn Porter and Julie Kushner for making this press conference and today's hearing happen.

I am excited to be here today. And I am excited that the hard work the Fight for \$15 and a Union is finally paying off.

First in New York, California, Massachusetts, and then New Jersey.

Now its Connecticut's turn to make history, because workers like me cannot afford to live paycheck to paycheck any more.

We want to create a better life for ourselves and our families.

We want to own a house, go to college, or just be able to afford the essentials like food and water.

When I was little, I always dreamed of going to college and becoming a teacher.

I imagined myself making a difference in the lives of others.

Has anyone in here been lucky enough to have a teacher that positively impacted their life?

I had a teacher Mrs. Taylor, she would always tell me, "I could be anything I wanted to be."

That's when I decided to become a teacher.

I am currently attending Manchester Community College, studying child care.

But with that dream comes tons of bills and student loan debt.

That struggle continues as I currently work at Wendy's making \$10.10 an hour while trying to put myself through school.

And our family is not the only family struggling to make ends meet or to afford a better life.

Yes, New York and California has a minimum wage of \$15 dollars an hour.

But we cannot forget about the other states where the minimum wage is still well below the federal poverty line.

We can't forget about the 332,000 Connecticut workers this bill would affect.

We need to continue to push America's leaders to do everything in their power to turn every low-wage job into good jobs our families and communities need.

Working people should share in the wealth they help create and their incomes should rise as they become more productive.

And increasing the minimum wage to \$15 per hour is a key first step.