



**Testimony of Win Heimer, Executive Vice President  
Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans  
Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee  
Connecticut General Assembly  
March 7, 2019**

**In support of SB 2, HB 5004 and SB 764**

Senator Kushner, Representative Porter and members of the committee:

Thank you for giving me this opportunity...

My name is Win Heimer. I am a resident of West Hartford and the executive vice president of the Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans. The Alliance is the state affiliate of the national Alliance for Retired Americans and comprises 50,000 members in Connecticut.

We urge your support for SB 2, An Act Increasing The Minimum Fair Wage and HB 5004, also titled An Act Increasing The Minimum Fair Wage. We applaud that both bills call for gradually increasing the minimum wage to \$15 by 2022 and then indexing it to inflation. We also support SB 764, An Act Prohibiting On-Call Shift Scheduling.

We believe that raising the minimum wage to fifteen dollars an hour is a modest first necessary step up towards a bare minimum that can bolster economic security for thousands of Connecticut workers. It should be indexed to inflation and phased in as soon as possible. Contrary to popular misconceptions, those who would benefit the most from a \$15 minimum wage would be adult women who work full-time. According to the Connecticut AFL-CIO, a single adult would need to work 75.5 hours per week in order to make a living wage working at the current ten ten per hour.

The Alliance for Retired Americans notes that paying people higher wages for their work means more than just a bigger paycheck for those workers and their families today. Those higher wages mean increased Social Security benefits for workers when they retire. Higher wages would also strengthen the Social Security trust fund for future generations, since those who earn more pay more into Social Security.

As the Connecticut AFL-CIO rightly observes: "Today, a full-time worker in Connecticut has to make at least \$24.47 an hour just to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment. At \$10.10 an hour, our state's minimum wage simply isn't enough to support a lone adult, let alone a family."

Raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour is long overdue. Our neighboring states of New York and Massachusetts are doing it. Other states in the region are considering it. We must raise the minimum wage to stay competitive in our region and attract and retain workers in Connecticut.

We urge you to get it done here during the current legislative session.

Additionally, we support SB 764, An Act Prohibiting On-Call Shift Scheduling which would help stabilize working families by limiting on-call scheduling for thousands of Connecticut low-wage workers with unpredictable work schedules. Limiting on-call shift scheduling will stabilize working families, helping to make them more financially independent, help the economy, and make our state more competitive regionally.

Thank you for your consideration.