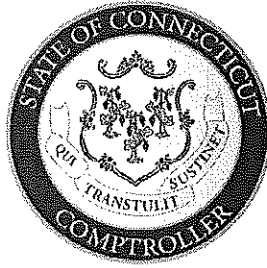


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Written Testimony
Kevin Lembo
March 7, 2019

S.B. No. 2 AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM FAIR WAGE
H.B. No. 5004 AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM FAIR WAGE
H.B. No. 7191 AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding SB 2-An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage, HB 5004-An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage and HB-7191-An Act Increasing the Minimum Wage.

These bills seek to provide greater economic security to Connecticut families by gradually increasing the minimum fair wage to \$15 per hour and indexing that rate of pay annually thereafter.

Without the sacrifices and hard work of so many working families in Connecticut, our businesses and our entire economy could not function. Increasing wages for these hard working families, will improve their standard of living, while expanding economic activity in our state.

Over the last 40 years the US economy has seen great gains, but our lowest income workers have been left behind. Today states and cities across the country are taking action to increase the minimum wage to ensure that the benefits of a growing economy benefit the lowest income earners, rather than just those at the top.

Recent studies by the University of California at Berkley have found that cities that have begun to increase their minimum wage toward \$15 an hour have not experienced job losses in the food and hospitality sector, the largest economic center impacted by the minimum wage hike.

Moreover, the increased wages that result from the higher minimum wage will have two direct beneficial impacts on our state's economy. First the additional revenue earned by minimum wage workers will directly result in increased spending in the local economy through increased consumption. Second, the higher wages will increase labor market participation, making it easier for employers to fill open positions and expanding the state's total labor force.

All Connecticut workers should be able to earn a living wage. The proposals before the Labor committee to increase the minimum wage in our state to \$15 an hour show our commitment to ensuring a fair wage for all workers.

I thank you for raising this important issue and I urge your support for an increase to the minimum wage.