



**Public Hearing Testimony of  
Danté Bartolomeo  
Commissioner  
Department of Labor  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
March 9, 2023**

Good morning, Representative Sanchez, Senator Kushner, Representative Ackert, Senator Sampson, Representative Wilson, Senator Cabrera, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony regarding **SB 1177 AN ACT CONCERNING ONE FAIR WAGE**. My name is Danté Bartolomeo and I am the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Labor.

The Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) appreciates the intent of SB 1177. Tipped workers' wages were not increased by the 2019 law that increased the minimum wage for other workers. Their tipped wages remained at \$6.38 for servers and \$8.23 for bartenders. Current law indexes the minimum wage to an inflation indicator but not the tipped wage. If no action is taken, the gap between the minimum wage and the tipped wage will widen over time.

CTDOL believes that the desired intent of SB 1177 is to eliminate the subminimum wage for learners and tipped workers to ensure that all tipped workers make at least the minimum wage. However, CTDOL is concerned that a potential unintended consequence of this proposal may result in customers tipping less, even at high-end establishments, and drive down those tipped workers' wages.

CTDOL have engaged in conversations with the proponents of this bill and would be happy to discuss SB 1177 as the committee deliberates this matter further. A moderate approach, such as raising the subminimum wage rate for the tipped workers, instead of doing away with tipped wage, may be an alternative to addressing the concern raised by the proponents.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.