



COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

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July 16, 2019

Dear Representative:

Members of the Coalition on Human Needs (CHN) strongly urge you to support the Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 582), which you will be voting on this week. By gradually increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15 by 2024 and indexing it after that, the Raise the Wage Act will lift the pay of tens of millions of workers. The bill would also phase out the outdated subminimum wage for tipped workers, which has been frozen at \$2.13 since 1991, and sunset the subminimum wage for workers with disabilities and workers under age 20.

Our members, who include national organizations representing millions of human service providers, people of faith, policy experts, and labor, civil rights and other advocates concerned with meeting the needs of low-income and vulnerable people, know that raising subpar wages would improve the lives of millions, decrease poverty and inequity, and stimulate our economy.

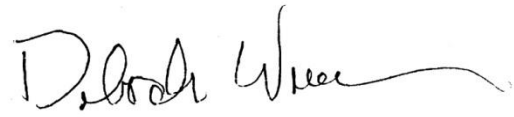
Too often, work – even full-time work – does not provide sufficient compensation to raise families out of poverty. The federal minimum wage has not been raised since 2009 – the longest stretch in history without a minimum wage increase. Since that time, inflation has eroded its value by 17 percent, leaving the hardest working Americans further behind. Today's low-wage workers earn less per hour than their counterparts did 50 years ago. We can and should do better by our workers.

Raising the minimum wage to \$15 will help low-wage workers across the country. More than half of the workers who would benefit are women; more than half are prime-working-age adults between the ages of 25 and 54; more than two-thirds work full time; more than a quarter have children. Forty percent of African Americans and 34 percent of Latinos would get a raise, as would nearly one-fourth of manufacturing workers and one fifth of educators.

A \$15 minimum wage by 2024 would generate \$144 billion in higher wages for workers. And because low-wage workers spend much of their extra earnings, this injection of wages will stimulate the economy and spur greater business activity and job growth. In states that have already approved \$15 minimum wages, business organizations representing tens of thousands of small businesses have endorsed a \$15 minimum wage. The recent report from the Congressional Budget Office confirmed that the benefits of a \$15 minimum wage – including lifting more than 1 million people out of poverty – far exceed the costs.

I urge you to give a raise to tens of millions of hardworking Americans and their families by voting YES on the Raise the Wage Act when it comes before you this week.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Weinstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line at the end.

Deborah Weinstein
Executive Director