



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

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February 6, 2018

To: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair,
The Honorable J. Kalani English, Vice-Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor

Date: Tuesday, February 6, 2018
Time: 3:30 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 229, State Capitol

From: Leonard Hoshijo, Acting Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Re: S.B. 2291 RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

This proposal amends section 387-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), by increasing the minimum wage from \$10.10 to \$12.25 per hour beginning January 1, 2019, and \$15.00 per hour beginning January 1, 2020, and repeals the tip credit. The measure also authorizes the DLIR to annually adjust the minimum wage according to the Honolulu region consumer price index for urban wage earners and clerical workers (CPI-W) beginning September 30, 2020, to the nearest five cents, effective on January 1, 2021

DLIR supports this proposal and notes that Hawaii's unemployment rate was at a record low of 2% in December, 2017.

II. CURRENT LAW

Minimum wage is \$10.10 per hour as of January 1, the last of four incremental raises since 2015. For regularly tipped employees, employers may take a tip credit of up to 75 cents an hour against cash wages paid as long as the tipped employee earns a combined amount of wages and tips of \$17.10 per hour. For example, the employer may pay \$9.35 per hour in wages as long as the employee also earns at least \$7.75 per hour in tips.

III. COMMENTS ON THE SENATE BILL

DLIR supports the elimination of the tip credit. Since this measure repeals the tip credit, the definition of a “tipped employee” in section 387-1, HRS, is not necessary and should be repealed. DLIR also recommends that the definition of “wage” in section 387-1, HRS, be amended to eliminate the reference to tips when using the tip credit in 387-2. Comparative information on tip credit provisions in the United States is attached.

DLIR notes that beginning September 30, 2020, and on September 30 of each year thereafter, the CPI calculation of an adjusted minimum wage rate in the measure as drafted requires the DLIR to use the CPI-W or a successor index for the twelve months prior to September 1 of each year. However, the Honolulu CPI-U is published by first and second half of a year rather than monthly; therefore, the information for the twelve months prior to September 1 would not be available before September 30 of each year. The Honolulu CPI-U for the previous half year is published approximately two weeks after July 1 and January 1.¹

For each published CPI data series, two separate indexes are available: All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) and Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). Both the CPI-U and the CPI-W reflect only the buying habits of urban consumers. The CPI-U is the most comprehensive of the two and represents the expenditures by all urban consumers, about 89 percent of the total U.S. population. The CPI-W represents a subset of the CPI-U population, that is, the expenditures by urban households that derive more than one-half of their income from clerical or hourly wage occupations. These households comprise about 28 percent of the total U.S. population.²

Eighteen states began the new year with higher minimum wages. Eight states (Alaska, Florida, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, Ohio, and South Dakota) automatically increased their rates based on the cost of living, while eleven states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington) increased their rates due to previously approved legislation or ballot initiatives.

Voters in Arizona, Colorado, Maine, and Washington approved in November, 2016 ballot measures to raise their respective minimum wages. Arizona, Colorado, and Maine will incrementally increase their minimum wages to \$12 an hour by 2020. Washington's will be increased incrementally to \$13.50 an hour by 2020.

Also in 2016, New York became the second state to pass a new law that would raise the minimum wage in New York City to \$15 per hour by the end of 2019, in neighboring counties by 2021, and the rest of the state TBD. Washington D.C. followed suit, enacting a law to raise the minimum wage in the District to \$15 per hour by July 1, 2020.

California's new law increases the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by Jan. 1, 2022, for employers with 26 or more employees. For employers with 25 or fewer employees the minimum wage will reach \$15 per hour by Jan. 1, 2023. Increases may be paused by the governor if certain economic or budgetary conditions exist. Beginning the first Jan. 1 after the minimum wage reaches \$15 per hour for smaller employers, the minimum wage is indexed annually for inflation.

1 https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/2017/consumerpriceindex_honolulu_20170714.htm

https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/2018/consumerpriceindex_honolulu_20180112.htm

2 <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/factsheets/available-cpi-data.htm>

State	Minimum Wage	Future Enacted Increases	Indexed Automatic Annual Adjustments
Alabama	none		
Alaska	\$9.84		Indexed annual increases begin Jan. 1, 2017. (2014 ballot measure)
American Samoa	varies ¹		
Arizona	\$10.50	\$11.00 eff. 1-1-19 \$12.00 eff. 1-1-20	Rate increased annually based on cost of living beginning Jan. 2021 (2016 ballot measure)
Arkansas	\$8.50		
California ²	\$11.00	\$12.00 eff. 1-1-19 \$13.00 eff. 1-1-20 \$14.00 eff. 1-1-21 \$15.00 eff. 1-1-22	Indexed annual increases based on CPI begin Jan. 1, 2023
Colorado	\$10.20	\$11.10 eff. 1-1-19 \$12.00 eff. 1-1-20	Rate increased annually based on cost of living beginning Jan. 1 2021 (2016 ballot measure)
Connecticut	\$10.10 ³		

State	Minimum Wage	Future Enacted Increases	Indexed Automatic Annual Adjustments
Delaware	\$8.25		
D.C.	\$12.50	\$13.25 eff. 7-1-18 \$14.00 eff. 7-1-19 \$15.00 eff. 7-1-20	Indexed annual increases based on CPI begin July 1, 2021
Florida	\$8.25		Annual increase based cost of living. (Constitutional amendment 2004)
Georgia	\$5.15		
Guam	\$8.25		
Hawaii	\$10.10		
Idaho	\$7.25		
Illinois	\$8.25		
Indiana	\$7.25		
Iowa	\$7.25		
Kansas	\$7.25		
Kentucky	\$7.25		
Louisiana	none		
Maine	\$10.00 ⁴	\$11.00 eff. 1-1-19 \$12.00 eff. 1-1-20	Indexed annual increases based on CPI begin Jan 1, 2021
Maryland	\$9.25	\$10.10 eff. 7-1-18	
Massachusetts	\$11.00 ⁵		
Michigan	\$9.25		Annual increases take effect Jan. 1, 2019, linked to the CPI. Increases not to exceed 3.5%. (2014 Legislation)
Minnesota	\$9.65/\$7.87 ⁶		Indexed annual increases begin Jan. 1, 2018. (2014 legislation)
Mississippi	none		

State	Minimum Wage	Future Enacted Increases	Indexed Automatic Annual Adjustments
Missouri	\$7.85 ⁷		Minimum wage increased or decreased by cost of living starting Jan. 1, 2008. (2006 ballot measure)
Montana	\$8.30/\$4.00 ⁸		Increases done annually based on the CPI and effective Jan. 1 of the following year. (2006 ballot measure)
Nebraska	\$9.00		
Nevada	\$8.25/\$7.25 ⁹		Increases subject to the federal minimum wage and consumer price index. Increases take effect July 1. (Constitutional amendment 2004/2006).
New Hampshire	repealed by HB 133 (2011)		
New Jersey	\$8.60		Indexed annual increases based on the CPI, effective Jan. 1, 2014. (Constitutional Amendment 2013)
New Mexico	\$7.50		
New York	\$10.40 ¹⁰	\$11.10 eff. 12-31-18 \$11.80 eff. 12-31-19 \$12.50 eff. 12-31-20 After 12-31-20, the rate is adjusted annually for inflation until it reaches \$15.00	
North Carolina	\$7.25		
North Dakota	\$7.25		
Ohio	\$8.30/\$7.25 ¹¹		Indexed annual increases based on the CPI. (Constitutional amendment 2006)
Oklahoma	\$7.25/\$2.00 ¹²		
Oregon	\$10.25 ¹³	\$10.75 eff. 7-1-18 \$11.25 eff. 7-1-19 \$12.00 eff. 7-1-20 \$12.75 eff. 7-1-21 \$13.50 eff. 7-1-22	Indexed annual increases based on the CPI are effective July 1, 2023 (2016 legislation)

State	Minimum Wage	Future Enacted Increases	Indexed Automatic Annual Adjustments
Pennsylvania	\$7.25		
Puerto Rico	\$7.25/\$5.08 ¹⁴		
Rhode Island	\$10.10	\$10.50 eff. 1-1-19	
South Carolina	none		
South Dakota	\$8.85		Annual indexed increases begin Jan. 1, 2016. (2014 ballot measure.)
Tennessee	none		
Texas	\$7.25		
Utah	\$7.25		
Vermont	\$10.50		Beginning Jan. 1, 2019, minimum wage increased annually by 5% or the CPI, whichever is smaller; it cannot decrease. Note: Vermont started indexing in 2007 but enacted additional increases in 2014. (2014 legislation)
Virgin Islands	\$9.50	\$10.50 eff. 6-1-18	
Virginia	\$7.25		
Washington	\$11.50	\$12.00 eff. 1-1-2019 \$13.50 eff. 1-1-2020	Annual indexed increases began Jan. 1, 2020. (ballot measure 2016)
West Virginia	\$8.75		
Wisconsin	\$7.25		
Wyoming	\$5.15		

STATE MINIMUM WAGE LEGISLATION

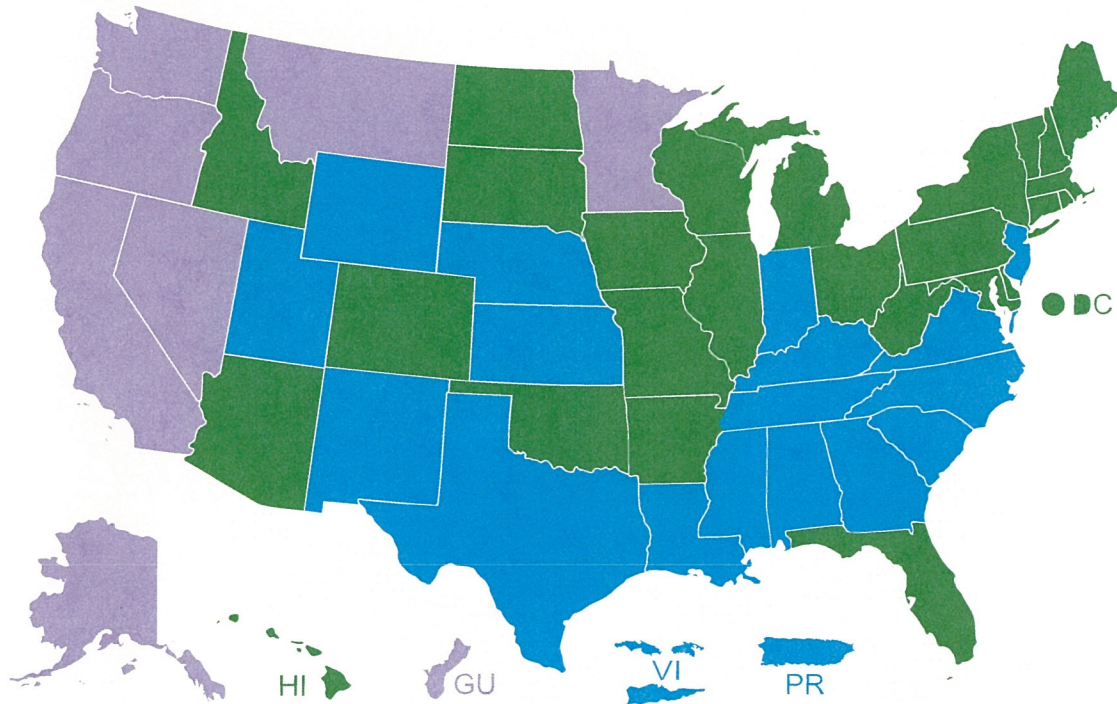
Sources: U.S. Dept. of Labor, <http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/america.htm>; and state web sites.

United States Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division Wage and Hour Division (WHD)

Minimum Wages for Tipped Employees

January 1, 2018

[Historical Tables](#)

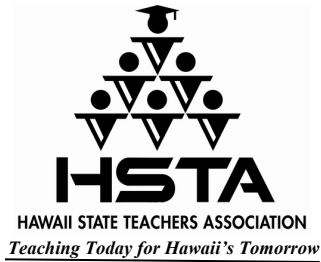


Select a State

- State requires employers to pay tipped employees full state minimum wage before tips.
- State requires employers to pay tipped employees a minimum cash wage above the minimum cash wage required under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (\$2.13/hour).
- State minimum cash wage payment is the same as that required under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (\$2.13/hour).

Table of Minimum Hourly Wages for Tipped Employees, by State

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1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
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Justin Hughey
Vice President
Amy Perruso
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Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
LABOR

RE: SB 2291 - RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 2291**, relating to minimum wage.

In Hawai'i, today, a minimum wage worker would need to work 116 hours per week to afford a one-bedroom apartment at fair market rent, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Similarly, Honolulu rent has increased by more than 25 percent over the past three years. Affordable rent for a minimum wage worker in our state, per NLIHC, is \$481/month.

At the same time, our state continues to suffer from a shortage of affordable housing. Experts at the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism now estimate that Hawai'i needs 66,000 new housing units by the year 2025 to keep up with demand, the overwhelming majority of which is needed to meet the demand of people who qualify for affordable housing. Yet, for every 100 extremely low-income renters on O'ahu, there exist only 40 affordable rentals, according to the Urban Institute.

Hawai'i's high cost of living continues to price people out of paradise. Our children no longer stay here upon graduating from high school or college. Instead, they flee to the mainland or abroad, where they can afford to survive. To stop this trend, we must increase the minimum wage to at least \$15/hour for island workers.

To preserve the islands' longstanding devotion to helping working families, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature
Regular Session of 2018

THE SENATE

Committee on Labor

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 229

Tuesday, February 6, 2018; 3:30 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 2291
RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE**

The ILWU Local 142 strongly supports S.B. 2291, which increases the minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour in 2019 and \$15 per hour in 2020; repeals language allowing the hourly wage of a tipped employee to be increased on account of tips; and requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to annually calculate the adjusted minimum wage rate to the nearest five cents using the Honolulu region CPI-W.

Despite boasting the lowest unemployment rate in the country, families in Hawai'i are still struggling. The stark reality is that many work more than one job to survive; forcing families to live paycheck to paycheck just to make ends meet.

A person working 40 hours a week at the current minimum wage of \$10.10 per hour would have an annual income of \$21,008 per year. That is not a living wage. Couple that with housing that can exceed half the household income and it's no wonder so many of our local families struggle or choose to leave Hawai'i.

The ILWU strongly urges passage of S.B. 2291. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter.



February 6, 2018

3:30 PM

Conference Room 229

To: Senate Committee on Labor

Sen. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Sen. J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Vice President of Research, Joe Kent

RE: SB2291 – RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

Comments Only

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its comments on SB2291, which would increase the minimum wage to \$15/hour by 2020 and remove the “tip credit” for employees whose wage includes tips.

Grassroot Institute is deeply concerned about the possible effect of this legislation on the state’s small businesses and economy—especially in the case of restaurants, which are known for their razor-thin profit margins. Moreover, we believe that this bill will fail in its intent to help lift the state’s working families out of poverty. As our previous research on the issue found, increasing minimum wage benefits only a small proportion of low-income working families while raising the cost of low-skilled labor by a significant degree. In addition, an increase in the minimum wage will reduce teenage employment—an item that is often overlooked, but should be taken seriously by those looking to ensure the long term health of our economy and stem the flight from our islands as young people give up hope of making a living in the state.

Under the current proposal, the minimum wage is increased from \$10.10 to \$15.00 in a two year period. This means that the annual full-time costs for low-skilled labor (40 hour workweek) will increase by \$10,192, which is approximately a 49% increase. For companies that primarily employ low-wage workers, this is a significant increase in labor costs—one they may choose to absorb by hiring fewer workers and raising prices. It is hard to imagine how further raising the cost of living and creating higher unemployment benefits the state economy.

In fact, new research on a minimum raise increase in Seattle demonstrates that it ultimately resulted in lower real wages for low-wage employees. A report published in the National Bureau of Economic Research looked at an increase in the minimum wage from \$9.47 to \$11/hour in 2015, with a further increase to \$13/hour in 2016. The second raise, which is lower than the increase contemplated in this bill, resulted in a reduction of hours worked – to the extent that earnings for low-wage workers actually dropped. As the study found:

[W]e conclude that the second wage increase to \$13 reduced hours worked in low-wage jobs by around 9 percent, while hourly wages in such jobs increased by around 3 percent. Consequently, total payroll fell for such jobs, implying that the minimum wage ordinance lowered low-wage employees' earnings by an average of \$125 per month in 2016.¹

The removal of the tip credit is an additional source of concern. The lack of a tip credit places a substantial burden on restaurants, which will be forced to privilege wait staff (who already average, with tips, salaries well above minimum wage) over back-of-the-house and non-tipped staff.

Grassroot Institute of Hawaii looks for solutions that would strengthen our state's economy and benefit both businesses and employees. This bill threatens both the solvency of the businesses themselves and the ability of low-wage workers to provide for their families. Companies in Hawaii could be forced to lay off workers or cut hours or benefits in order to afford increased wages. In addition, they are also likely to slow (or even eliminate) new hiring.

If we want to establish our state as a place for entrepreneurship and economic growth, we must reduce regulation and government intrusion in business. We suggest the legislature looks to tax relief and cutting red tape as a better route toward encouraging businesses to reward employees with higher salaries.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony.

Sincerely,
Joe Kent
Vice President of Research
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ Ekaterina Jardim, et. al. "Minimum Wage Increases, Wages, and Low-Wage Employment: Evidence from Seattle." National Bureau of Economic Research: NBER Working Paper No. 23532. Issued in June 2017, Revised in October 2017. Available at <http://www.nber.org/papers/w23532>.



Eric W. Gill, Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Gemma G. Weinstein, President

Godfrey Maeshiro, Senior Vice-President

Monday, February 5, 2018

Senate Committee on Labor
Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Re: SB 2291

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair English and Committee Members,

UNITE HERE Local 5 – a local labor organization representing 11,000 hotel, health care and food service workers throughout Hawaii would like to offer comments in support of SB 2291, relating to minimum wage.

SB 2291 would increase the minimum wage to \$15.00 starting in January 2020 with periodic adjustments thereafter in accord with the consumer priced index, and would repeal the “tip credit.” \$15.00 is far from a living wage in Hawaii, but as a minimum wage for all workers in our State it does begin to set a decent standard. But Hawaii can also do better.

As an organization representing thousands of service workers in the health care and hospitality industries – two of Hawaii’s most important – we understand first-hand the important role raising Hawaii’s minimum wage can play in helping to sustain Hawaii’s economic future. We have seen how decent wages can drastically improve and provide more life choices for Hawaii’s working families.

Record numbers of tourists are visiting our islands, our #1 industry is doing well, yet the quality of life for ordinary working people in our communities remains stagnant at best. Our low unemployment rate is disguised by the fact that more and more of our local people are having to work multiple jobs just to remain in the islands. Our State has the highest cost of living in the nation and the lowest average adjusted income rate. Fifty-six percent of renters – many of whom are hourly wage earners – pay 30 percent or more of their income towards rent, fourth highest in the nation. And Hawaii still holds the distinction of having one of the highest rates of homelessness in the country.

Our people are being pushed off our islands while so many of us can’t afford homes, and more and more of our local jobs go to mainland companies while locals struggle to earn

a living wage. Added to all of this, it's becoming harder and harder for our working families just to afford basic necessities like rent.

Our State government needs to play a bigger, more productive role in improving our lives, and we agree - there is no real substantiated need or reason for Hawai'i's tip credit law. In fact, it's more of a "tax" on Hawai'i's working people than a "credit."

We thank you for hearing SB 2291 and would urge the committee to pass the measure.



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Labor

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

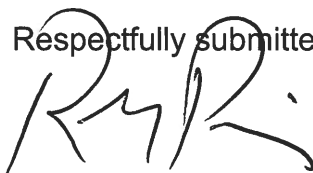
February 6, 2018

S.B. 2291 – RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the purpose and intent of S.B. 2291 which increases the minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour in 2019 and \$15 per hour in 2020, repeals language regarding the tip credit, and requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to adjust the hourly minimum wage in accordance with the Honolulu region consumer price index.

Prior to the incremental increases that began in 2015, the hourly minimum wage had not changed since January 1, 2007, which equates to 8 years of salary stagnation for minimum wage employees. Although the current minimum wage is now \$10.10 per hour, Hawaii's high cost of living continues to outpace wage increases. We believe indexing the minimum wage to the Honolulu consumer price index is one tool that will help spur Hawaii's economic recovery by increasing a minimum wage earner's purchasing power and thus generating much needed consumer spending.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 2291.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



Written Statement of
DR. PATRICK K. SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT/CEO OCEANIT

Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

February 6, 2018
3:30 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In Support of
SB2291 RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair, Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee

From: Dr. Patrick K. Sullivan, President/CEO

Re: Testimony in Support of SB2291

Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **IN SUPPORT of SB2291.**

Oceanit is a local science and engineering company that focuses on advanced technology, life sciences, information systems, energy, oil and gas and consulting engineering services. As an employer to approximately 100 people, including summer interns and part-time college students, we have no objection to the increase in minimum wages to \$15 an hour by 2021. In an effort to secure and retain good talent, Hawaii must raise its minimum wages to be competitive with the other states.

Therefore, we **SUPPORT SB2291.**



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

345 Queen Street, Suite 500 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Telephone: (808) 597-1441
Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Labor

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO

February 6, 2018

S.B. 2291 – RELATING
MINIMUM WAGE

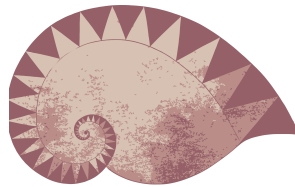
The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly supports S.B. 2991 which increases the minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour in 2019 and \$15 per hour in 2020, repeals language allowing the hourly wage of a tipped employee to be increased on account of tips and requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to annually calculate the adjusted minimum wage rate to the nearest five cents using the Honolulu region CPI-W.

Let's cut to the chase – the minimum wage in Hawaii is simply too low. A full-time minimum wage worker doesn't come close to the hourly wage needed to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment in Hawaii. The fact is, minimum wage workers financially struggle with almost everything and usually need to work two or three jobs just to make ends meet but often times are unable to because they are not provided any advanced notice of their schedules. This makes it even more challenging and more difficult. Fortunately, it seems like Hawaii businesses agree. Just this year, First Hawaiian Bank, Bank of Hawaii, Central Pacific Bank, American Savings Bank and Territorial Savings all announced they would pay their workers \$15 or more an hour and we applaud them. We hope the legislature agrees with these Hawaii businesses and raises the minimum wage to \$15 an hour so all workers are able to have more financial stability.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President



Pono Hawai'i Initiative

Josh Frost - President • Kau'i Pratt-Aquino - Secretary • Patrick Shea - Treasurer
Kristin Hamada • Nelson Ho • Summer Starr

Tuesday, February 6, 2018

Relating to Senate Bill 2291
Testifying in Strong Support

Aloha, Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair English, and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor,

The Pono Hawai'i Initiative (PHI) **strongly supports SB2291 Relating to Minimum Wage**, which increases the state minimum wage to \$15 by 2020. It also repeals language allowing the hourly wage of a tipped employee to be increased on account of tips. Lastly, the bill requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to annually calculate the adjusted minimum wage rate to the nearest five cents using the Honolulu region CPI-W.

Hawai'i has the highest cost of living in the country and despite the state minimum wage recently going up to \$10.10, the lowest income workers continue to struggle to support their families. California and New York have already passed legislation to increase their minimum wages to \$15 an hour, along with several cities. It is time for Hawai'i to follow suit; there is no reason to wait.

A worker earning minimum wage, \$10.10, today grosses only \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness. We can and must do better for our low-wage workers.

Increasing the minimum wage would also help address our housing and homelessness crisis. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, one currently has to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour). This is more than 3 times the current minimum wage. We can and must do better for our residents.

Additionally, amending our laws to allow the minimum wage to automatically increase based on inflation would ease the burden and uncertainty for both workers and employers. Small regular increases create far less shock to our economy and small businesses than the state's current practice of raising it in unpredictable spurts. Already, 19 other states have implemented automatic inflation adjustments with little or no ill-effect. Hawai'i can and must follow suit.

It is also important that all low-wage workers can expect, can count on a base minimum wage. This is currently not the case for tipped employees, who receive less than the minimum wage and are forced to count on the goodwill of customers to make up the difference. Several other jurisdictions have eliminated this unfair practice and Hawai'i can and should join them by eliminating the tip credit.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Opponents to any increase in the minimum wage, the elimination of the tip credit will raise the specter of business closures and a rise in the unemployment rate. As we have seen over the last four years, this fear-mongering is little more than a fairy-tale told to legislators to scare them out of doing what is right. As the minimum wage has increased since 2014, so too has the unemployment rate shrunken.

If a minimum wage increase is done right, incrementally, there is little chance the unemployment rate will rise. And if businesses must increase their prices a bit to compensate for the increased salary costs, it won't be the end of the world either; more people will have more money in their pockets to spend in those very same establishments because people will be making more.

Please support this measure and vote it favorably out of your committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,
Gary Hooser
Executive Director
Pono Hawai'i Initiative, an organization member of the Common Good Coalition



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director

TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 2291, RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

Senate Committee on Labor
Hon. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Hon. J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

Honorable Chair Tokuda and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 400 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 2291, relating to minimum wage.

Hawai'i residents face the highest housing costs in the nation, at more than twice the national average. Researchers who authored the National Low Income Housing Coalition's *Out of Reach 2017* report found that a full-time worker would need to earn \$35.20/hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment at fair market value in our state, with Honolulu experiencing a 67 percent increase in fair market rent between 2005 and 2015. Average rent for a two-bedroom unit surpassed \$2,000 in recent years, with **minimum wage workers needing to log 116 hours per week to afford a modest one-bedroom apartment at fair market value and 139 hours per week to afford a two-bedroom**—a number that is equivalent to working 20 hours a day with no days off year-round. In the past three years alone, Honolulu rent has increased by more than 25 percent. While 43 percent of Hawai'i residents are renters (a number that does not include individuals and families renting outside of the regulated rental market), they earn an average wage of \$15.64/hour, over \$8.00 less than the minimum housing wage for the islands and scarcely enough to meet their basic needs, forcing them to take second and third jobs that, quite frequently, pay minimum wage. One out of every four households in Hawai'i report that they are “doubling up” or are three paychecks or less away from being homeless, per the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice. Additionally, 54 percent of households are cost-burdened, meaning that they pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing costs, a number that rises to 83 percent of extremely low-income households. Homelessness is directly tied to our state's exorbitant cost of living and penchant for catering to people who use the islands as their own private Monopoly board. We beseech you to seek innovative ways of making Hawai'i more affordable for our

economically disadvantaged neighbors and hardworking families, who are, far too often, the same slice of our state's population.

Our state's cost of housing has skyrocketed over the last decade, leaving many families searching for affordable alternatives, in shelters, or on the streets. For context, the median price of condominiums on O'ahu increased 6 percent in the summer of 2017 to a record \$425,000, while the median price for single-family homes increased by 3 percent to \$795,000, according to the Honolulu Board of Realtors, a number that they expect to increase by at least another 5 percent in 2018. Average fair market rent for two-bedroom apartments in *outlying* communities in the City and County of Honolulu now exceeds \$2,700, with the cost of a four-bedroom home in urban Honolulu now exceeding \$1.1 million. At least 43 percent of residences in Hawai'i are owner unoccupied, according to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, meaning that nearly 50 percent—and by some estimates well over half—of Hawai'i's homes are likely investment properties. Many of those properties, in turn, are owned by mainland and foreign buyers, whose real estate market speculation is a prime driver of Hawai'i's highest-in-the-nation cost of housing. According to a study released in May of 2016 by the Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, there are “clear distinctions” between the average price of homes bought by local residents, mainlanders, and foreigners. Analyzing purchases made between 2008 and 2015, DBEDT found: “The average sale price was highest among foreign buyers. The average sale price of the total of 5,775 homes sold to foreign buyers from 2008 to 2015 was \$786,186, 28.3 percent higher than the average sale price to the mainlanders (\$612,770) and 64.7 percent higher than the average sale price to local buyers (\$477,460).”

To provide basic financial security to Hawai'i's workforce, **we must raise the minimum wage to at least \$15/hour**. Experts at DBEDT now estimate that Hawai'i needs 66,000 new housing units by the year 2025 to keep up with demand, more than 80 percent of which is needed to meet the demand of people who qualify for affordable housing. Yet, for every 100 extremely low-income renters on O'ahu, there exist only 40 affordable rentals, according to the Urban Institute, of which only 11 are “naturally affordable,” meaning they are affordable without federal subsidies. Though our state is committed to a goal of building 22,500 affordable rental housing units in the next 10 years, figures from the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation show that in 2015 and 2016, we added only approximately 1,000 affordable rental units to our state's inventory, with further plans finalized for a mere 3,240 more affordable rentals by 2022. Put simply, we are failing to pay people the wages needed to survive in the so-called Aloha State, while simultaneously failing to build housing for our Hawai'i's low-income workforce. Unsurprisingly, **the islands have suffered “brain drain” to the tune of 30,000 lost residents since 2010, a number that will accelerate until we pay workers what they're worth.**

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance

IBEW1260

‘A‘OHE HANA NUI KE ALU ‘IA

February 6, 2018

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Labor

SB2291 - RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English and Members of the Committee,

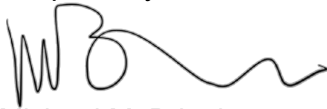
The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1260, AFL-CIO (IBEW1260), represents more than 3500 members, has advocated for all workers in the State of Hawaii for over seventy-five years and respectfully offers the following testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Senate Bill 2291 (SB2291).

Although our members are far above the minimum wage, IBEW1260 understands providing a livable wage to low-wage earners benefits working families at all income levels as experience has been shown in California, New York and Washington states. Additionally, studies show that the negative effects of such increases on employment are easily negated by increases in workers purchasing power, reductions in employee turnover, productivity increases and modest price increases.

President Barack Obama once said, “No one who works full-time should have to live in poverty,” IBEW1260 agrees and respectfully ask the Committee to **SUPPORT SB2291** ensuring all Hawaii’s workers rise together.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this issue.

Respectfully,



Michael M. Brittain
Asst. Business Manager
IBEW1260 / AFL-CIO

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/4/2018 8:59:47 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stacey Moniz	Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

On behalf of the Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (HSCADV) and our 22 member organizations across the state, I am submitting testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB2291 which would bring the state minimum wage to \$15 per hour. We're especially concerned for the tipped workers in bars and restaurants who are paid sub-minimum wages. \$15 per hour will quickly not be enough so I hope you will support raising the minimum wage sooner rather than later. Thank you for your support of SB2291.

Peace be the journey,
Stacey



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

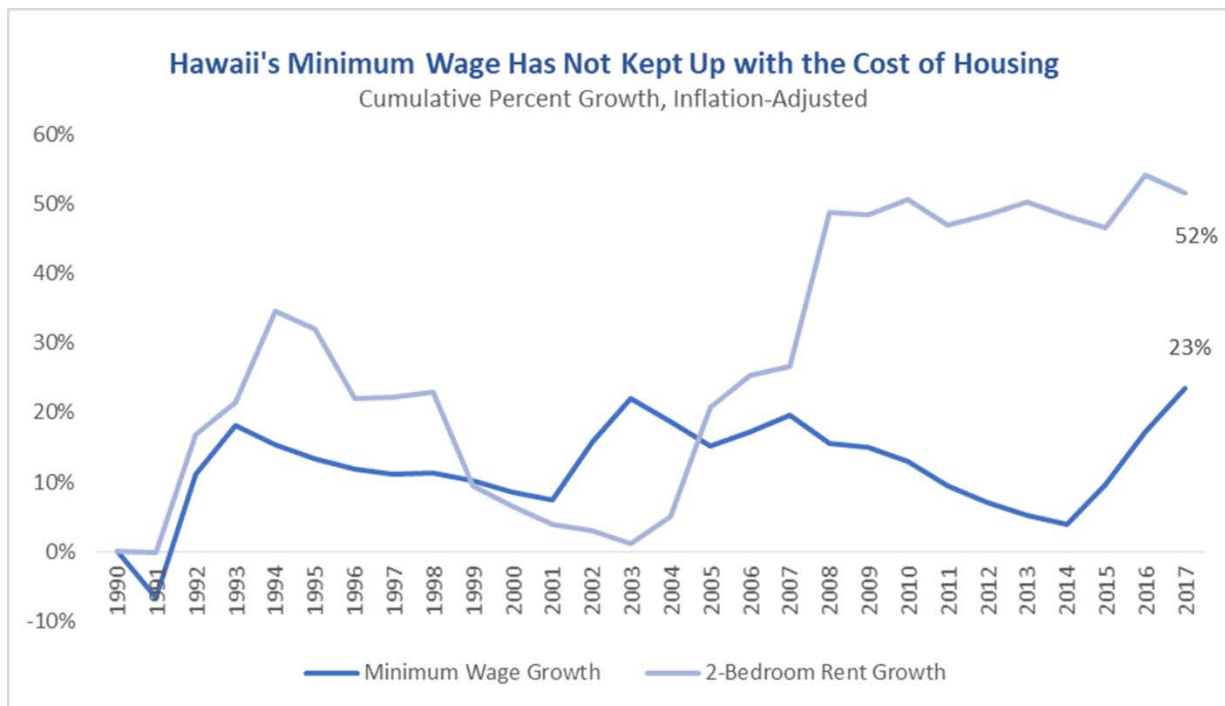
Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Supporting SB 2291 – Relating to Minimum Wage
Senate Committee on Labor

Scheduled for hearing at Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM, in Conference Room 229

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB 2291**, which would increase the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2020, repeal language allowing the hourly wage of a tipped employee to be decreased, and require the department of labor and industrial relations to annually calculate the adjusted minimum wage rate using the Honolulu region CPI-W.

Hawai'i's minimum wage increased to \$10.10 on January 1. At this rate, a person working full-time, with no days off, takes home only \$21,000 a year. This was the last step of the minimum wage increases passed by the Legislature in 2014, so it's now losing ground to inflation.



With the highest cost of living in the nation, mainly caused by sharp increases in the cost of housing, \$10.10 is not a living wage for a single adult in Hawai'i, much less adults supporting

children and others. In our tourist and service-oriented economy, many working families are falling further and further behind even as the economy continues to grow.

\$15 an hour is barely enough to pay for basic needs such as food, housing, transportation, and health care, let alone incidentals and emergencies. According to the Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, the self-sufficiency income standard for a single adult with no children in Hawai'i in 2016 was nearly \$33,000 per year, or \$15.84 per hour for full-time work with no weekdays off.

The self-sufficiency wage for that same adult rises to \$27.00 per hour with the addition of a child. Due to the large disparity between the current minimum wage and a living wage, many individuals work two or more jobs to maintain a basic standard of living for themselves and their families.

The minimum wage has been falling behind productivity the cost of living for decades. If it had kept up with worker productivity, it would be more than \$15 by now. The proposed increase in Hawai'i would not happen overnight -- instead, it would be implemented in steps over two years to allow businesses to adjust accordingly.

In addition, small businesses need customers. A \$15 minimum wage would put money into the pockets of the people most likely to spend in their communities, and the higher wages mean more productive and loyal employees and lower turnover and training costs for local businesses.

And despite claims to the contrary, decades of research have shown that raising the minimum wage does not increase unemployment rates. That's because for every business that depends on paying poverty wages, there are others that grow and thrive when working people have more money to spend.

We appreciate your consideration of this testimony.



February 4, 2018

To: Hawai'i State Senate Committee on Labor
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 (3:30 pm)
Place: Hawai'i State Capitol, Rm. 229
Re: Testimony of American Association of University Women –
Hawai'i in **SUPPORT of S.B. 2291**, relating to minimum
wage

Dear Senator Jill N. Tokuda (Chair), Senator J. Kalani English (Vice Chair), and
Members of the Committee,

I am grateful for this opportunity to testify in **strong support of S.B. 2291**, relating to
minimum wage.

My testimony is on behalf of the approximately 400 members of the American
Association of University Women (AAUW) in Hawai'i, who list equal pay as an
important current concern. My testimony is informed by many years of teaching about
gender equality in courses at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa.

In Hawai'i, women make up the majority of minimum wage workers, approximately
55%. These women connect to households, and some of them are sole-earners and single
parents, meaning that many children depend on these minimum wage workers for
housing, food, and the things that make life enjoyable. The lives of many Hawaiian
families would be improved by the passage of this bill.

In conclusion, passage of S.B. 2291 is an important step in creating a more equitable
work environment in Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely

Susan J. Wurtzburg

Ph.D., Policy Chair



February 6, 2018

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Labor

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta, Co-Chair

RE: SB 2291 Relating to Minimum Wage
Hearing: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 p.m., Room 229

POSITION: Strong Support

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus writes in strong support of SB 2291 Relating to the Minimum Wage which raises the minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour by 2020.

According to data from the Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, the self-sufficiency income standard for a single adult with no children in 2016 was nearly \$33,000 per year, or \$15.84 per hour for full-time work with no weekdays off. The self-sufficiency wage for that same adult rises to \$27.00 per hour with the addition of a child. Due to the large disparity between the current minimum wage and a living wage, many individuals work two or more jobs to maintain a basic standard of living for themselves and their families.

55% of the workers affected by increasing the minimum wage to \$15 in Hawaii would be women; with the majority of workers in the three women-dominated industries: retail; food and drink service; and arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodations.

Tipped workers (restaurant and bar staff, hair stylists) are overwhelmingly women, so eliminating the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers is especially important to women and their families

We ask the committee to pass this measure.

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic, and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawaii's women and girls. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

February 2, 2018

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair
Committee on Labor

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **SB 2291 - Relating to Minimum Wage**
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to support HB SB2291 – Relating to Minimum Wage.

Fourteen percent (14%) of children in Hawaii live beneath the federal poverty level. These are our most “at-risk” keiki. The best way to improve outcomes for these children is to help lift their families out of poverty. To do that we need to raise wages and lower the cost of living. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets of families and boosts local businesses and the state economy.

SB 2291 would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawaii's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 in January, this equates to only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker — not nearly enough to get by in Hawaii. According to the new Aloha United Way report on Asset Limited, Income Constrained and Employed Households (ALICE), 48% of Hawaii households are ALICE or below. These are families where they work (often 2 or 3 jobs,) but are not financially stable and self-sufficient. Hawaii has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. This is coupled with a very high cost of housing. Currently, a worker in Hawaii needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

Almost half of our families are living paycheck-to-paycheck. It's time that Hawaii help lift children out of poverty.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee PASS this bill.

Senate Committee on Labor
February 6, 2018, 3:30PM
Conference Room 229

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 2291

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

The majority of minimum wage workers in Hawaii, and tipped-wage workers, are women. Tipped workers who earn the sub-minimum wage – as low as \$9.35 in Hawaii – are more likely to be sexually harassed at work, according to a study published by the Restaurant Opportunities Center¹. Due to their dependence on tips because of the low sub-minimum wage, tipped workers are more likely to endure sexual harassment, rather than report problems.

Minimum wage in Hawai'i, is now \$10.10 an hour. For a full time-worker who takes no weekdays off all year, this is \$21,000 per year. We have one of the highest costs of living. Our housing, food, and utility costs have consistently ranked amongst the top in the United States. However, unlike the other states with a high cost of living, our minimum wage will not increase past \$10.10. Almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai'i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

Kathleen Algire
Director, Public Policy and Advocacy
YWCA O'ahu

¹ Restaurant Opportunities Center, *The glass floor: Sexual harassment in the restaurant industry*, 2014.
http://rocunited.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/REPORT_The-Glass-Floor-Sexual-Harassment-in-the-Restaurant-Industry.pdf



Senate Committee on Labor

Board of Directors:

Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action Supports SB 2291

Gary L. Hooser
President

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English and Members of the Committee:

Andrea N. Brower
Ikaika M. Hussey
Co-Vice Presidents

My name is Anne Frederick and I am the Executive Director for the Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA). I am submitting testimony in support of SB2291 to increase the minimum wage.

Kim Coco Iwamoto
Treasurer

HAPA is a statewide environmental, social and economic justice organization. HAPA engages over 10,000 local residents annually through our work. HAPA hosts annual town hall events across the state to gather the concerns of our supporters. Issues of economic hardship due to the high cost of living and low wages continue to be a primary concern.

Bart E. Dame
Secretary

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

Paul Achitoff

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Malia K. Chun

Laura Harrelson

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

Katie McMillan

Walter Ritte Jr.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

Karen Shishido

Leslie Malu Shizue Miki

Kekaulike Prosper Tomich

Cade Watanabe



With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai'i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Anne Frederick, Executive Director
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA)



OFFICERS	DIRECTORS			MAILING ADDRESS
John Bickel, President	Guy Archer	Jan Lubin	Cameron Sato	P.O. Box 23404
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Marsha Schweitzer, Treasurer	Gloria Borland	Stephen O'Harrow		Hawai'i 96823
Karin Gill, Secretary	Chuck Huxel	Doug Pyle		

February 2, 2018

TO: Honorable Chair Tokuda & Members of the Labor Committee

RE: SB 2291 Relating to Family Leave

Support for hearing on Feb. 6

Americans for Democratic Action is an organization founded in the 1950s by leading supporters of the New Deal and led by Patsy Mink in the 1970s. We are devoted to the promotion of progressive public policies.

We support SB 2291 as it would raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. We would prefer the hike happen in 2019 and not 2020. We also like the provision for an annual adjustment tied to CPI-W. This would bring the minimum wage to what it was a few decades ago before it fell behind due to inflation. Also evidence from Seattle indicates it neither causes more unemployment nor causes inflation.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

John Bickel
President

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 1:07:33 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
RE: SB 2291 RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018

Position: SUPPORT 2291

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English and Members of the Committee:

I write this testimony in support of this bill. Hawai'i adjusted for cost of living is one of the most cost prohibiting places in live compared to almost every other state. Also, wages have remained stagnant for the decades and have not kept up with inflation. Prior to this wages in years past would keep up with production compensation was more equitable. We must turn back this tide and recognize that every year a worker's pay is not equitable to the production brought fourth their purchasing power is diminished. This piece of legislation is a clear way for the legislature to show voters that they support local people here in Hawai'i.

There are people which detract from the idea of raising the minimum wage saying it as that it will cause a spike in prices and exacerbate problems with prices for goods and services currently. Unfortunately, for them this myth has been debunked. Places that have raised the minimum wage have not seen a catastrophe in their economy as touted by those detractors. In the area's where the minimum wage has been raised, reverberations through the economy of the different quantiles has contributed to growing their economy furthermore, more resources for workers provides more disposable income for people to spend on more goods and services which in turn that money is recirculated back into the economy.

Mahalo,

Member-At-Large

Neighborhood Board No. 15

Kalihi-Palma



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Labor
Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at 3:30 P.M.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol**

RE: SENATE BILL 2291 RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **opposes** SB 2291, which raises the minimum wage from the present \$10.10 per hour to:

- \$12.25 per hour on January 1, 2019; and
- \$15.00 per hour on January 1, 2020;

We oppose the removal of the tip credit completely. We also oppose the implementation of an automatic increase in the minimum wage based on the consumer price index.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

This bill will **increase the minimum wage by \$4.90 per hour in the next two years**. This is a huge increase for business, at a time when other costs such as healthcare and other mandates are on the rise. **Should this bill pass, it will seriously harm local businesses, the state economy, job creation and potentially the very employees it is trying to help.**

Hawaii is Different: Prepaid Healthcare Law Mandates Employers to Pay for Insurance Premium Costs

While the Chamber understands that other states have recently considered increases in their minimum wage, it is essential to keep in mind that **Hawaii is the only state in the nation** that requires employers to provide health insurance to its employees, including part-time employees (20 or more hours per week). No other employers in the country have this additional responsibility. In addition, workers' compensation premiums, Social Security tax, Medicare tax, temporary disability insurance, and unemployment insurance tax are all based on wages. Increasing the minimum wage requires additional increases for all the foregoing benefits. This bill will not only increase direct labor costs to business, but will also **increase mandated benefit costs and taxes**.



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

The average annual health insurance premium for a single employee nationwide in 2017, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, was \$6,690 for all plans. When we account for a conservative 6% increase in cost for 2018, health insurance premiums will cost around \$7,091. Under state law, this benefit is paid for almost entirely by the employer. If we add just the cost of health insurance to the **present minimum wage of \$10.10** for a full-time employee, the total benefit received by the employee is **\$13.36 per hour**, one of the highest in the country. Adding on payroll taxes, the present minimum wage benefit to the employee is about **\$14.47**. For part-time workers who receive healthcare benefits, the benefit to the employee is anywhere from **\$15.60-\$17.88 per hour**.

Under the proposed minimum wage increases, in 2018, the total benefit to be provided to the employee (including payroll taxes and healthcare premiums) in 2019 will be around **\$17.03-\$20.60 per hour** and in 2020, it will increase to **\$20.26- \$23.89 per hour, contingent on the number of hours worked**.

Please also note that health insurance premiums increase roughly 5-9% each year. With premiums rising each year, and employers paying on average 90% of the cost of premiums, this represents an **existing 2.5% to 3% increase in compensation to the employee each year**. Lastly, the amounts listed above are for the single coverages. The family coverage premium which is a 50/50 split between employer and employee is over **\$18,760 per year**.

Job Growth Data Unclear

According to national data, prior increases in the minimum wage have led to the loss of jobs in certain economic sectors. Below is data that reflects this concern of the business community. These are “snap shots” of some of the low-wage occupations that proponents of the increase in the minimum wage hope to help. After the 2006/2007 increase in the minimum wage, while there was 3% growth for all sectors overall, **low wage earners in the food industry lost jobs**.

Hawaii								
Occupation	2005	Med. Hrly.	2006	% Change	Med. Hrly.	2007	% Change	Med. Hrly.
All occupations	583,630	\$14.39	599,130	3%	\$14.97	610,310	2%	\$15.54
Food prep and serving	70,850	\$8.92	71,290	1%	\$9.14	72,070	1%	\$9.75
Combined food prep and serving workers	10,120	\$7.24	9,710	-4%	\$7.39	9,270	-5%	\$8.26
Counter attendants, cafeteria, food and coffee shop	6,360	\$7.32	5,630	-11%	\$8.03	5,280	-6%	\$8.63
Dining room and cafeteria attendants and bar helpers	4,440	\$9.59	4,540	2%	\$9.30	3,880	-15%	\$10.15
Source: www.bls.gov								



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

Following the 2014/2015 increase in the minimum wage, Hawaii also experienced job losses, mainly for low-income workers. At this time, data is only available for the first increase (50 cents per hour).

Hawaii						
Occupation	2014	Med. Hrly.	2015	% Change	Med. Hrly.	
All occupations	612,580	\$ 18.01	619,960	1%	\$ 18.63	3%
Food prep and serving	77,150	\$ 11.06	78,520	2%	\$ 11.30	2%
Combined food prep and serving workers	12,690	\$ 8.94	11,240	-11%	\$ 9.18	3%
Counter attendants, cafeteria, food and coffee shop	3,810	\$ 10.28	4,650	22%	\$ 10.27	0%
Dining room and cafeteria attendants and bar helpers	4,580	\$ 11.46	4,420	-3%	\$ 12.67	11%
Source www.bls.gov						

The Minimum Wage is a Base Floor Wage

We would also like to point out that the minimum wage is a floor wage. For many employees earning the minimum wage, it is because this is their first job and generally, are in entry-level positions. Employers must invest time and money to train these individuals. In the food and beverage industry, many employees who earn minimum wage also earn tips, which allows them to earn anywhere from \$18-30 per hour.

We also oppose the removal of the tip credit. The tip credit helps provide better compensation to non-tipped employees. Removal of the tip credit is likely to hurt food and beverage workers, who among the types of employees this bill attempts to help.

Large Increases Would Negatively Impact Business

While only a small percentage of workers earn the minimum wage, a large increase would greatly impact many businesses as they will be forced to raise the wages of their other employees. As an example, if John started working with a company a year ago and earns \$9.50 per hour and then Lisa is hired after the new law at \$9.25 per hour, the employer will have to raise John's hourly wage to provide parity in compensation. This could increase businesses labor costs by up to 15-20% in the first year alone.

The Consumer Price Index Is A Tool To Measure Inflation, CPI Does Not Reflect Hawaii's Overall Economy And The Legislature Should Retain The Ability To Adjust The Minimum Wage

The Chamber also opposes an automatic increase in the minimum wage tied to the consumer price index ("CPI"). The CPI is one tool used by economists to measure the change in the cost of a basket of goods and services. The CPI is limited, based on the types of goods and services that are measured. We believe that the Legislature is in the best position to set the



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

minimum wage according to the many other economic factors that the CPI does not take into account, such as the overall rate of growth, unemployment, wage differentials across industries, cost of prepaid healthcare and many others. For example, when Hawaii and the national economy went through the Great Recession and unemployment was over 7% statewide (and higher on the neighbor islands), the CPI actually increased by 2%. Had the minimum wage been tied to CPI at that time, employers would have had to bear increased labor costs during the worst recession since the Great Depression.

Important Considerations

As a direct result of the significant proposed increase in the minimum wage, some businesses may have to cut back hours, reduce benefits, or limit the hiring of new employees. In Hawaii between December 2015 and November 2016, the average hours worked per week dropped from 33 to 32.1. While that may seem small, this reduction effectively lowered a person's work hours by 46.8 hours in a year. At \$9 per hour that reduced their total annual income by over \$420.

Increasing the minimum wage will also greatly affect job opportunities, especially for new, unskilled workers. In addition to traditional adult workers changing industries, young adult workers also often receive their initial work experience by starting at unskilled jobs.

When Seattle instituted a \$15 per hour minimum wage, their economy had interesting and similar results. A study conducted by the University of Washington concluded that the increase in the minimum wage reduced the number of hours worked each week, affected employment by about 1.2 percentage points and had a minimal impact on workers' average total earnings. Overall, Seattle's experiment with the minimum wage may have magnified both the positive and negative impacts, resulting in little to no net benefit. Workers who did not lose hours may have enjoyed gains in income, while those who lost hours had a hard time finding a second job to make up for their lost hours and may have earned much less. Notably, neither Seattle nor Washington State have a prepaid healthcare mandate on all businesses that **adds to the minimum wage anywhere from \$3.45-\$7.06 per hour per employee.**

If the minimum wage increases too rapidly, the market (as driven by consumers) will decide at the point of sale what they are willing to pay for. The Chamber respectfully submits that the quality of life of residents in Hawaii is largely a cost issue, driven in large part by the cost of housing.

While our economy is presently on strong footing, we note that the minimum wage has never been decreased when the economy enters a recession. The Council on Revenues also recently lowered the State's forecasted revenue growth because of a projected slowdown. Also, employers just went through minimum wage increases for the past couple of years, so we encourage the committee to take this into consideration.

For all the above reasons, we respectfully ask that this bill be held. Thank you for the opportunity to express our views and concerns.



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 229
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018 AT 3:30 P.M.**

To The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair;
The Honorable J. Kalani English, Vice Chair; and
Members of the Committee Labor

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB2291 RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

Aloha, my name is Pamela Tumpap and I am the President of the Maui Chamber of Commerce. I am writing share our opposition to SB2291.

The Maui Chamber of Commerce opposes the proposed bill to increase the minimum wage to \$12.25 in 2019 and \$15 per hour in 2020, then requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to annually calculate the adjusted minimum wage rate using the Honolulu region CPI-W. We feel there should be no further legislation made to increase the minimum wage at this time as we do not yet know the impact of previous minimum wage increases on businesses and trying to follow a national model of \$15 per hour dismisses the distinct differences between Hawaii businesses and other businesses in the nation. Further, with our state's extremely low unemployment rate, now is not the time to increase the minimum wage in the law as the market is fairing that out on its own.

The minimum wage is not meant to be a living wage, but an entry level, training wage based on unskilled labor. The Maui Chamber of Commerce finds that a majority of its members already pay employees above the minimum wage for their skilled workforce. We do, however, support education, internships and training programs that help workers improve their skills and value to employers to bring them up to a living wage and beyond. In addition, Hawaii businesses face one of the highest costs of doing business in the nation including higher labor costs, fuel and electric rates, health insurance, and more. Increasing the minimum wage can also cause a wage compression, decrease the amount of jobs for the elderly and paid interns, cause a reduction of hours which can then impact employer paid medical benefits and bring significant hardships upon small businesses.

Finally, we do not want the minimum wage to be calculated by the DLIR based on the Honolulu region consumer price index. We do not want any automatic calculations that are tied to any specific index because that takes out the careful and thoughtful analysis that is needed. The Honolulu region consumer price index is not reflective of neighbor island counties and should not be used to set statewide minimum wage amounts.

Please see the attached Maui Chamber of Commerce Position Statement on a minimum wage increase.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this matter and therefore ask that this bill be deferred.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

Minimum Wage Position Statements

A Minimum Wage Is A Starting Wage

Hawaii residents face a high cost of living which can lead some to recommend increasing the Minimum Wage. However, the Minimum Wage is a starting wage for unskilled labor. It is very different from and should not be confused with a living wage which is paid to skilled workers with knowledge and experience that improves performance and adds value to the organization.

The Maui Chamber of Commerce finds that a majority of its members pay employees above the minimum wage for their skilled workforce. We support internships and training programs that help our youth and workers increase their skills to increase their income to a living wage and beyond.

Comparing Hawaii to Other States with Respect To A Minimum Wage Increase Dismisses Distinct Differences

Hawaii businesses face one of the highest costs of doing business in the nation. This includes higher labor costs, fuel and electric rates, health insurance and more. National models of \$15 per hour are being proposed that exceed the previous White House recommendation of \$10.10 per hour (with the Obama Administration) or the higher number being discussed of \$12/hour; however, Hawaii is now at \$10.10 per hour as of January, 2018. While this increase passed, it came with great controversy during the legislative session given national and global financial uncertainty and no economic analysis to predict the impact on businesses.

A Minimum Wage also creates what is known as a wage compression, meaning a compression between wages paid to unskilled labor and skilled labor that results in a wage inflation. Even employers who currently pay more than the minimum wage well understand that other employees will also expect a wage increase when new employees are automatically paid more, which raises wage costs across the board.

When considering Minimum Wage increases, the Maui Chamber of Commerce supports State analysis on the impacts to businesses, the economy and residents before passing a Minimum Wage increase as businesses will be hit with higher costs that do not equate to higher skill levels or improved productivity and those costs will be passed on to consumers. Studies show that rising consumer prices disproportionately hit those who can least afford to pay for it. Floating incomplete legislation comes at a tremendous cost to the taxpayers. Therefore, financial, economic and business studies should be conducted, understood and communicated to the public before any further Minimum Wage increases are enacted.

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

Small Businesses Don't Have The Same Economies of Scale

Our County and State are made up of many small businesses who cannot take advantage of economies of scale that larger companies can without increasing costs.

While many of our Chamber members pay more than the current minimum wage and are willing to consider reasonable Minimum Wage increases, the Maui Chamber was unified with Chambers of Commerce across the state that even the \$10.10 per hour minimum wage increase (which went into effect January, 2018) would create a hardship for many businesses, particularly small businesses. Close to 90% of our members are small businesses with 25 or fewer employees. While the economy is picking up, many are still operating with fewer employees than before, less financial resources, more difficulty in borrowing needed capital, and are struggling to keep up with rising costs that are beyond their control, especially rising health care costs. They need an environment where they can stabilize their business, then grow and thrive.

Unless government can prove how raising the Minimum Wage to beyond \$10.10 per hour will allow them to grow their business and create jobs (instead of eliminating internships and lower level positions and passing on higher costs to consumers) then the Maui Chamber of Commerce opposes any further increase and encourages a small business exemption.

We Support Focus On A Living Wage

A Minimum Wage increase is not the answer to reducing poverty. Of the 1.8 million people earning the minimum wage, only 20.8% of them are the head of their household. The rest are students or young adults. Many of those are part of households well above the poverty line. Reports show that we are talking 4% of the population.

The minimum wage was never meant to be living wage. It is an entry level, training wage. Employers pay more for skilled labor, which incentivizes employees to gain additional skills. Many workers, particularly youths, need the experience of having a job, learning the discipline of holding a job, developing a strong work ethic, gaining people skills (courtesy, being helpful), etc. These skills are important. Studies show that youths that started to work early in their lives were much better suited for the workforce as adults. With less opportunities available to them, they will be at a disadvantage when seeking a career.

Many elderly employees are retired, receiving social security, have spouses who receive a pension, etc. and are working to receive medical coverage. With a higher minimum wage increase, many of them will be lose their jobs and medical coverage when companies must cut expenses to survive. Instead of arbitrarily increasing the Minimum Wage, the Maui Chamber of Commerce supports further investment in education and programs to increase skill levels as capable employees have more and better opportunities to make a Living Wage.

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI
PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
February 6, 2018**

Re: SB 2291 RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

Good afternoon Chair Tokuda and members of the Senate Committee on Labor. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii (RMH) is a statewide not-for-profit trade organization is committed to support the retail industry and business in general in Hawaii. The retail industry is one of the largest employers in the state, employing 25% of the labor force.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii strongly opposes SB 2291 Relating to Minimum Wage. The most harmful consequence of this minimum wage increase will be on our smaller retailers which face constant and intense competition, not only from other retailers, but also from internet sellers.

The impact of a minimum wage increase is exponential, causing a compression of wages between newly hired/inexperienced workers and the veteran/experienced employees. Mandating scheduled adjustments at the lowest tier of the employment scale causes a tremendous and prohibitive increase in overall employment costs. Furthermore, an increase in payroll costs also leads to increases in benefit costs that are based on wages, including unemployment insurance, Social Security and Medicare, workers' compensation premiums, and vacation and holiday pay. We must also factor in that Hawaii also mandates healthcare coverage for workers that is also another benefit that is a cost to employers as it too is increasing.

Over the past few years, the retail industry has seen reasonable growth, with existing companies opening new locations and new retailers entering the marketplace. New retail jobs are being created, with compensation levels based on the current economic conditions, reemployment regulations, and the business philosophy of the employer. Increasing the minimum wage is counterproductive to any further growth. Furthermore entry level position jobs may become fewer over time as companies may see the incentive to eliminate non-essential or entry level positions and look for ways to be more automated by use of machines to replace labor such as self-checkout line.

We respectfully ask that you hold this measure. Mahalo again for this opportunity to testify.



Tyler Roukema, Chairman – Outback Steakhouse Keli Gouveia, Incoming Chair – Hula Grill
 Hide Sakurai, Vice Chair – Diamond Dining Dirk Koeppenkastrop, Secretary – Il Gelato
 Ben Dowling, Treasurer – Ocean House Michael Miller, Past Chair – Tiki’s Grill & Bar

Gregg Fraser, Executive Director **Sunny Obrey**, Executive Assistant **Holly Kessler**, Director of Membership Relations

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- Richard Turbin
- Victor Lim

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
 Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair
 Members of the Committee on Labor

From: Victor Lim, Legislative Chair
 Hawaii Restaurant Association

Subj: SB2291 Relating to Minimum Wage

Date: February 3, 2018

The Hawaii Restaurant Association representing about 3,500 restaurants here in Hawaii opposed SB2291 that will raise the state minimum to \$15/hr by January 1, 2020 and also eliminate the Tip Credit currently allowed here in Hawaii.

We are the industry that provide the first job for those entering the work force whether from high school or immigration and allow many to move on in their life careers in many diverse fields including those staying in the restaurant industry from managers to owners.

In today’s tight labor market, the market place has set what the starting wage will be in both restaurant and retail sector even though our state rate is currently \$ 10.10/hr. The “Supply and Demand” effect in working well in our state. Jumping to \$ 15.00 in a two year time span will create tremendous hardship for many of our members who are small entities, to be able to absorb the cost increases and pass it through to their customers.

The elimination of Tip Credit for the employers in the Service Industry for Tipped Employees will also drastically increase the cost to many sit down restaurants by giving super increases to servers while eliminating the resources for the rest of the staff.

For all the reasons above, we oppose this bill. Thank you for allowing us to share our view.

Aloha.





1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

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John Shilf, Rainbow Sales & Marketing, *Advisor*
Barry Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

TO:
Committee on Labor
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: Tuesday, February 6, 2018
TIME: 3:30pm
PLACE: Conference Room 229

RE: SB 2291 Relating to Minimum Wage

Position: Oppose

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

Minimum wage in Hawaii has increased by over 23% in the past three years, and we are now one of only 11 states with a minimum wage over \$10/hr. Another dramatic wage increase at this time can lead to job loss, closed businesses, and increased food prices.

Because of the historically low unemployment rate in Hawaii, which is currently around 2%, many businesses already offer more than the minimum wage as their starting salary, even for entry-level unskilled positions. However, increasing the minimum wage drives up the entire wage table causing a chain reaction that leads to much higher labor costs. Many businesses simply cannot absorb such a drastic increase. Grocery businesses generally operate at a profit margin of less than 3%; often it is between 1% and 2%. Businesses like this cannot afford to have their labor costs increase without making changes in other areas, such as cutting jobs, or increasing the prices of food for Hawaii consumers, which are outcomes we should all be working to avoid.

We believe that it is also important to understand that generally minimum wage jobs are the type of positions that are meant to be filled by young people just entering the work force while

still living at home, people who are semi-retired or partially stay at home and doing work outside their area of expertise, and other people for whom the job is not their sole source of income. Educated skilled adults, who are supporting families, and who have been in the work force for years have valuable experience and should be able to command higher wages. To truly help Hawaii's working families to thrive we need a strong economy and programs that focus on ensuring our work force has good education and marketable job skills. Trying to make minimum wage jobs pay the same as skilled labor is not the right answer for our employees, our businesses, or our economy.

Economically speaking not every type of labor generates \$12 or \$15 worth of value per hour. If wages go up to these levels all jobs that don't meet that criteria will be gone. As we are now seeing with Amazon's new cashierless grocery store in Seattle, the technology already exists that will eliminate some low wage jobs. Artificially increasing the cost of labor forces businesses into a situation where they have no choice but to either stop employing people in certain jobs, or increase prices for everyone, or even both. This is not a choice that our member businesses want to have to make and so we urge you to hold this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Labor

From: Michael Miller, Tiki's Grill & Bar
Subject: SB2291 Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. We, at Tiki's Grill & Bar, hereby oppose House bill SB2291 Relating to the Minimum Wage Increase. Increases the minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour in 2019 and \$15 per hour in 2020. Repeals the tip credit.

We are a locally owned and operated restaurant in our 15th year of business. Our owners and myself are all graduates of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and are very active in our community.

We believe in our community and we provide opportunities for people to grow and learn as well as to provide experiences for both locals and visitors every day.

All of our staff who are paid minimum wage actually bring home between \$15 and \$30 per hour because they earn gratuities by giving excellent service and working hard with each other. So why do we care?

We love growing people. We create the opportunities for our people to not just do their job, but to strive to advance, do well personally and for the company. It's not just about the pay.

Our industry gives people the ability to move up, but a person needs to have personal motivation to do more, to earn more. Employees come and work with us with or without a high school diploma or a college degree and English can also be their second language. An employee can start as a host, a busser or a dishwasher with ZERO skills and we will take the time and effort to train him or her. Our employees continually learn skills and grow.

To advance, employees have choices: to move to higher positions within the company, or leave for another opportunity. An example of growth within would be to move from a host to waiter or from a dishwasher to a prep-cook. Or an employee leaves us for better opportunities because s/he has learned new skills on the job and has the drive to grow outside the company. Our current General Manager started as a busboy and worked his way up. Our Sous Chef worked his way up from a dishwasher to his current position.

Restaurants historically carry slim profit margins, and this is even more challenging in Hawaii, with its existing regulations and cost of living. The implementation of this bill is not free, which



at its basic level, reduces the ability of restaurants to provide opportunities by reducing the number of new hires, decreasing the amount that can be spent on current employees, particularly non-tipped employees in the "back of the house."

The elimination of Tip Credit for the employers in the Service Industry for Tipped Employees will also drastically increase the cost to many sit down restaurants by giving super increases to servers while eliminating the resources for the rest of the staff.

We will need to raise our prices to stay in business. Our bloodline is our economy that is based on tourism, if we keep raising our prices we will lose visitors to other locations that offer more value to visitors.

By raising the minimum wage, we may be forced to reduce the hours we can offer our employees, and we will not be as competitive as we should be to attract the best employees.

The effect on the industry, community, and employees is more than just a dollar amount. Additional governmental regulations increase the government's role in making decisions for businesses.

We urge you NOT to pass this bill out of committee and say, "Mahalo" for considering our point of view while making laws and rules that affect Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Michael Miller / Director of Operations
michaelm@tikisgrill.com

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 12:21:55 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tyler Roukema	Outback Steakhouse	Oppose	No

Comments:

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 11:16:46 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dirk Koeppenkastrop	IL Gelato Hawaii	Oppose	No

Comments:

Testimony Bill SB2291

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

Members of the Committee on Labor

From: Victor Lim, Legislative Chair

Hawaii Restaurant Association

Subj: SB2291 Relating to Minimum Wage

Date: February 3, 2018

My name is Dirk Koeppenkastrop and I am the founder and owner of IL Gelato Hawaii. I am a graduate from the University of Hawaii and as there are no higher-level jobs as a chemist my wife and I started a small business here in Honolulu six years ago.

We make all natural high quality gelato (ice cream) here in Hawaii and sell wholesale to restaurants and operate two retail locations. We have approximately 50 employees and

most of them part time. The proposed bill is challenging the existence of our gelato business.

In our gelato stores we offer work to high school students and unskilled workers who often have their first jobs with us. They come with little to no experience and need a lot of training and supervision, which we provide. This was acceptable when the minimum wage was \$7.25 per hour. With wages are going beyond \$10.00 we will have a problem to continue to operate our business.

Our workers have the opportunity to earn tips on top of their hourly wage, giving an incentive to provide excellent customer service. Our customer's come for high quality ice cream and friendly and service and tipping is common and an additional source of income for our staff.

A scoop of ice cream at our store is \$3.75 and already considered to be too expensive for local families. We get a lot of comments via social media and Yelp reviews that we are too expensive. Our food costs in Hawaii are the highest of the nation. Our rents are the highest of the nation. Energy and insurance cost are higher than anywhere else. **It is very difficult to operate a business in Hawaii.** We cannot increase our scoop prices, as we would lose our local customers. If payroll continues to increase so substantially we need to close our business, which would challenge our existence and we could no longer offer entry-level jobs to those young people.

For all the reasons above, we strongly oppose this bill. Thank you for allowing us to share our view.

Sincerely,

Dirk Koeppenkastrop, Ph.D.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 1:09:10 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nicole	IL Gelato Hawaii	Oppose	No

Comments:

Testimony to Bill SB2291

To: Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair

Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

Members of the Committee on Labor

From: Victor Lim, Legislative Chair

Hawaii Restaurant Association

Subj: SB2291 Relating to Minimum Wage

Date: February 3, 2018

My name is Nicole Lueker and my husband and I are the owners of IL Gelato Hawaii.

We make all natural high quality gelato (ice cream) here in Hawaii and sell wholesale to restaurants and we operate two retail locations. We have approximately 50 employees and most of them part time. The proposed bill is challenging the existence of our gelato business.

In our gelato stores we offer work to high school students and unskilled workers who often have their first jobs with us. They come with little to no experience and need a lot of training and supervision, which we provide with passion and great care. This training often has to start with the most basic skills like how to sweep a floor, how to fill and empty a dish washer, how to answer a phone call, how to address a customer. Beyond this basic training, they then learn successively more skill related things. Furthermore,

they learn general valuable skills like team spirit, being respectful and reliable, taking pride in good work etc. We strongly believe that training is very important since it allows our employees to learn skills that are valuable throughout their lives and that give them an opportunity to grow into 'professionals'. This was acceptable when the minimum wage was \$7.25 per hour. With wages that are going beyond \$10.10 we will have a problem to continue to operate our business.

Our workers have the opportunity to earn tips on top of their hourly wage, giving an incentive to provide excellent customer service. Our customer's come for high quality ice cream and friendly and service and tipping is common and an additional source of income for our staff.

A scoop of ice cream at our store is \$3.75 and already considered to be too expensive for local families. We get a lot of comments via social media and Yelp reviews that we are too expensive. Our food costs in Hawaii are the highest of the nation. Our rents are the highest of the nation. Energy and insurance cost are higher than anywhere else. **It is very difficult to operate a business in Hawaii.** We cannot increase our scoop prices, as we would lose our local customers. If payroll continues to increase so substantially we need to close our business, which would challenge our existence and we could no longer offer entry-level jobs to those young people.

For all the reasons above, I strongly oppose this bill. Thank you for allowing me to share my view.

Sincerely,

Nicole Lueker

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/2/2018 3:34:23 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Greg and Pat Farstrup		Support	No

Comments:

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/2/2018 4:55:29 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Independent Issue Advocate	Support	No

Comments:

We cannot say we are serious about tackling houselessness in Hawaii and not raise the minimum wage. I know I could not survive on \$10.10 an hour. We each need to ask ourselves why we would expect others to do so. As someone who ran a small business for nine years downtown and saw up close how employees struggled; as someone who passes too many people living on the streets as I make my way to teach at HPU in Fort Street Mall, I am reminded everyday that we are derelict in our duty to our friends, our neighbors and our working families. This has to be a priority if we are serious about crafting public policy in this state that is indeed founded on a culture of aloha and of being pono in how we treat each other. Thank you for moving this bill forward.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/2/2018 5:44:58 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Foster		Support	No

Comments:

Submitted by Scott Foster, Chair, for The Kupuna Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/2/2018 5:54:08 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kat Culina		Support	No

Comments:

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/2/2018 10:00:20 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tina Wildberger	Supporters for Tina Wildberger	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senator Tokuda & Senator English,

Thanks for the chance to comment in support of a \$15/hr minimum wage. My small business Kihei Ice on Maui instituted a \$15/hr minimum wage in October 2015. At the time, that was a 50% increase in wage for entry level laborers. My business has benefited greatly from making this wage adjustment. Please see the opinion piece in today's Maui News about my experience as a small business employer. If we can do it, so can McDonalds!

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/2/2018 9:55:46 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Blair		Support	No

Comments:

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/3/2018 12:08:23 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joy Marshall		Support	No

Comments:

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/3/2018 9:36:37 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Debra Koonohiokala Norenberg		Support	No

Comments:

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/3/2018 10:05:07 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Morgan Bonnet		Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai'i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/4/2018 8:40:51 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shannon Rudolph		Support	No

Comments:

Strongly Support

Testimony for the
LABOR COMMITTEE
HEARING: February 6, 2018
Conf. Room 229
3:30 pm

SB 2291
(Raising Minimum Wage to \$15.00)

Testifier: Karen K. Cobeen
From District: Senate District 4, Hawaii Island
Position: IN SUPPORT.
To: Sen. Jill Tokuda, Chair
Sen. J. Kalani English, Vice Chair
Committee Members

Aloha:

I wish to testify in support of SB2291 in that I feel it is way past time for Hawaii, one of the most expensive states in the country in which to live to finally look to the fairness and equity of living wages. It continues to be an embarrassment I believe that 37 people leave the state every day according to recent studies.

If the state continues to lose those who make up the real cultural base of this state, there will remain only those wealthy out of state people and investors from foreign countries. Costs continue to rise in Hawaii with little or no relief for regular working people. This technically erases the culture, which perhaps is the intent.

It's time to do the right thing. Raise wages in Hawaii.

Respectfully,
Karen K. Cobeen
P.O. Box 7028
Kamuela, HI 96743
808-938-0089

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/4/2018 6:24:28 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lea Minton		Support	No

Comments:

**Chair Tokuda
Vice Chair English
Senate Committee on Labor**

**Tuesday February 6, 2018
3:30 PM**

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2291 RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, Members of the Committee,

My name is Jun Shin. I am 18 years old, and a board member at-large for Young Progressives Demanding Action – Hawaii (YPDA Hawaii). I am testifying in strong support of SB2291, and I ask it to be advanced through this committee.

It is common knowledge that living in Hawaii is pretty hard. According to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Living Wage Calculator, one working adult needs to be making \$15.39 per hour to be making a living wage. If you're a single mom/dad raising one child, \$27.18 is the living wage, two children, \$29.45 and three children, \$38.74. The current minimum wage as of January 1st, 2018 is \$10.10. This is not enough for either individual adults or for our working families to live off of in Hawaii.

By investing in workers through increasing the minimum wage, you will be investing in the economy. If you leave people with some money in their pockets, they are going to spend it. They are going to use that money and spend it in their communities, going out to eat, buying cars, refrigerators, etc, and that in turn will give back to the economy. Workers will invest in businesses if given the chance.

Please, I urge you to pass SB2291. More and young people are taking opportunities elsewhere as they cannot afford to live here. Not only as a member of YPDA Hawaii but as a student and a young person, I would like to ask you as our representatives to think past tomorrow and think of this as an investment in the future. My generation will soon be entering the work force as well and if you are able to help ease the financial burdens that workers are facing today, I believe that you will see a workforce with higher morale, more passion, and more innovation than ever before.

Thank you for your hard work and deliberation on this issue,

Jun Shin,
Board Member At-Large
Young Progressives Demanding Action – Hawaii
1561 Kanunu St. #2106 Honolulu, HI 96814
Cell: 808-255-6663
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 12:20:50 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brodie Lockard		Support	No

Comments:

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 8:07:57 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Karen Kahn		Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB2291, a bill to raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. Hawaii is among the areas of the country with the highest cost of living. Wages and salaries are not commensurate with those costs. For the many workers who toil in the service and hospitality industries, it is impossible to earn an income that adequately supports a family and allows that family to save for the future. Many hold multiple jobs, which takes them away from the important work of caring for children. The \$15 minimum wage is not an excessive jump, and remains below what the minimum wage should be had it been tied to inflation decades ago. A working person in Hawaii, or anywhere in the U.S., should earn a decent living--not live on the edge of poverty.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 8:43:48 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nathan Yuen		Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2291 which raises the minimum wage in the State of Hawaii. With the cost of living so high in Hawaii workers need a decent minimum wage. Higher wages for people making minimum wage will likely be spent -- rather than saved -- and boost economic activity in Hawaii. I urge you to pass this bill from committee.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 9:49:57 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lucia You		Support	No

Comments:

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 11:36:46 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lynn Onderko		Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Chair,

My name is Lynn Robinson-Onderko, I am a resident of Ewa Beach, I want to thank you for hearing my testimony in strong support for SB2291. Working families deserve to make a living wage. Minimum wage should always reflect inflation. Please do the right thing for our workers and vote yes on this measure.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 12:04:53 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diane S. Martinson		Support	No

Comments:

In Hawai`i, with an exceptionally high cost of living, we have local young adults in entry level positions as well as a steady flow of workers coming into the state with minimal educational backgrounds. As a result, we have parents holding down minimum wage jobs, trying to make ends meet. They work long hours providing services our community needs, but they still can't pay their bills. Life is a constant cycle of doing triage with bills--what to pay this month and what to set aside for next month or the month after that. For those who remain in these positions, an endless cycle of poverty is ensured unless the minimum wage is raised. I support raising the minimum wage and tying future increases to the CPI-W.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 11:44:40 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marion McHenry		Support	No

Comments:

This is an extremely important bill that must pass! Our state has the highest cost of living. Areas that have increase the minimum wage to \$15 are having economic success from it.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 1:23:51 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nate Hix		Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members Chang, Ihara and Taniguchi,

I'm Nate Hix a local resident and testifying in support of SB 2291 that would raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, which equates to \$30,000 annually for a full time worker.

Here in Hawaii it costs \$30,000 for a single person to meet their basic needs. However, a full time employee earning the current minimum wage makes only \$21,000, meaning businesses here are allowed to pay workers far less than what it costs to even keep that employee alive.

This exploitation of the people of Hawaii results in the rest of society needing to make up the \$9,000 difference to help low-wage earners survive and be able to show up to work everyday. This help shows up in many forms, whether its a single mom living on her auntie's couch; a young family receiving groceries from a food bank; or a dad working two jobs with barely enough time to see his kids who receives healthcare paid for by the state. Large corporations in Hawaii are exploiting the state's generous social safety net, costing all Hawaii taxpayers millions. To keep these corporations from burdening the rest of society, we need to require that they pay full time workers at least what it costs to survive.

We find it appalling when we hear of sweatshops in other countries exploiting workers by paying them less than what they need to live. And yet, for some reason, we find the same practice in our home state to be completely acceptable, as more than 40% of jobs in Hawaii pay below a living wage. We pride ourselves on taking care of one another, evidenced by our average household size being

the second largest in the nation, but this economic and social burden our society holds is enabled by our state allowing corporations to get away with paying unhealthy wages.

For over a century now the state of Hawaii has allowed colonizers and corporations to take advantage of the local population. By passing this bill though, you can show that our priorities now align with the people, and not with those looking to continue to exploit us.

Thank you for your time and for considering giving the people of Hawaii the justice they've long deserved.

Nate Hix

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair

Senator Kalani English, Vice-Chair

Date: Tuesday, February 6, 2018

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Place: Conference room 229

SB2291, RELATING TO MINIMUM WAGE

In STRONG SUPPORT

My name is Bart Dame and I am testifying as an individual today.

As you are aware, the Legislature passed a bill in the 2014 session, increasing the minimum wage in steps to its current level, \$10.10. At the time, many of us advocated that future hikes in the minimum wage occur automatically, adjusting to keep up with increases in the cost of living. Such an approach would have spared us from having to return every few years to re-argue the matter, while protecting low-income workers from erosion of their wages due to inflation.

This bill has three parts. 1) it would raise the minimum wage in two steps, first to \$12.25 on Jan 1, 2019, then to \$15 on January 1, 2020. I support this hike.

2) It would eliminate the tip credit. I have heard testimony from some restaurant owners saying they would pay “back of the house” employees more if the tip credit were increased. Yet I have also heard restaurant owners testify they are forced by market conditions to pay kitchen workers more than they would if they didn’t need to pay them the higher wage to keep responsible employees. I suspect the second admission is more accurate. Regardless of the intentions of a restaurant owner, there is a strong market incentive to not pay wages higher than are necessary to attract and retain competent and responsible employees. Which means, regardless of whatever implicit promises they may make here, if the tip credit is increased, wages for kitchen help will be dictated by the market, not by the generosity, sincere or not, of the employer. This is especially true of employers who are constantly reminding us of how financially marginal their operations already are. Any savings they might make from an increased tip credit should be presumed to go to improving the kitchen, increasing advertising, paying for the ever-increasing rent or, perhaps, to help pay for a well-deserved vacation for the owner and their spouse.

3) This bill would tie future increases in the minimum wage to an objective calculation of increases in the Consumer Price Index. This provision has been included in similar bills in the past, always to be deleted at the demand of industry lobbyists. I would hope, by now, legislators would recognize how those lobbyists say two simultaneous and contradictory things. First, they say they are willing to hike the minimum wage, but plead that it be done in small amounts, spread over a number of years and that such hikes be predictable. They then contradict themselves by adamantly opposing this provision, which is the best mechanism for accomplishing exactly what they SAY they want. Tying future increases in the minimum wage to the CPI means such increases would be smaller, would be implemented annually and would be PREDICTABLE. Much more predictable and MUCH more “spread out over several years, than the current approach which requires legislative intervention, often leading to legislative INACTION, which then requires a larger, more sudden, more jarring and less predictable hike in the wage than if we tied it to the CPI. Perhaps THIS year the industry lobbyists will overcome

the contradiction and agree to the CPI?

I have attached to this testimony a chart of the historical rate of the minimum wage in Hawaii. We urge you to review this chart, as it shows, quite clearly, how the reluctance of legislators to raise the wage, for MANY years at a stretch, has pushed our lowest wage workers into poverty and, sometimes, homelessness. We can see three lengthy periods where previous legislators failed to raise the minimum wage to keep up with the rising cost of living. From 1981-1987, from '93 to 2002, and from 2007 until 2014. Those are periods of 6 years, 9 years and then 8 years. Should the legislature fail to pass a hike in the minimum wage this session, this pattern will repeat itself. To the cost of our lowest wage workers.

On the chart, you will see two lines. The blue line shows the actual minimum wage for each year since 1968. The orange line shows the value of the 1968 minimum wage, in current dollars, which reflects where it would be, had the legislature raised it to keep up with the cost of living. Even with the last stepped increases to \$10.10 by 2017, the current minimum wage remains below the purchasing power of the 1968 wage, adjusted for inflation. This morning, I researched what the minimum wage would have to be were it to retain the same purchasing power as the 1968 minimum wage I earned when I first entered the world of work. It would have to be \$11.33 instead of \$10.10.

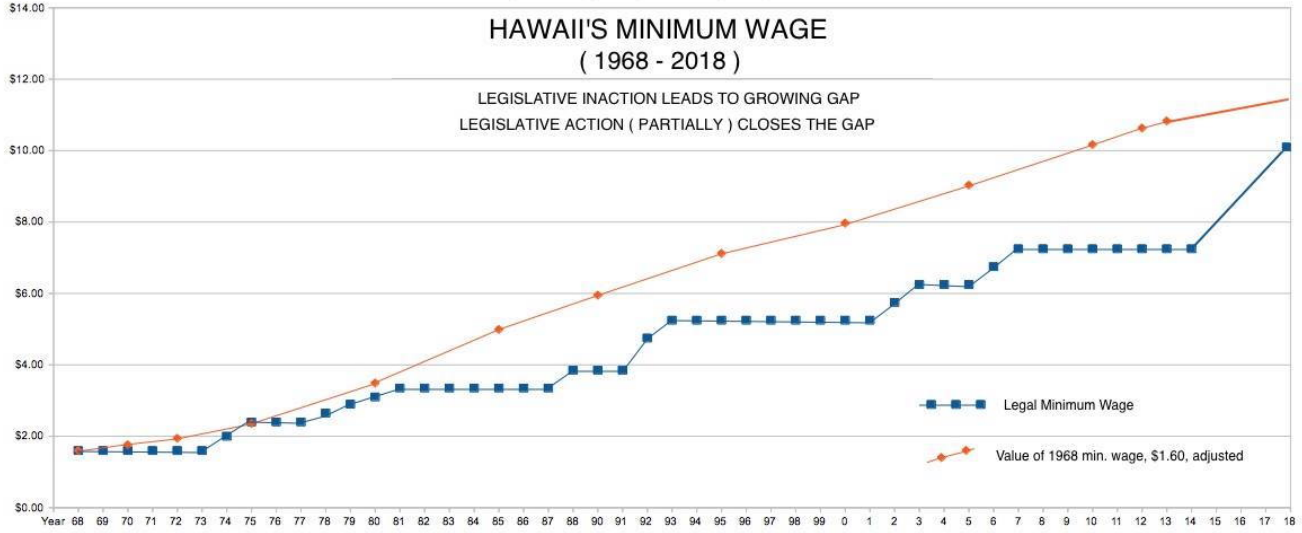
You will see a growing gap between the two lines, starting at about 1980. This gap replicates the widening of incomes which occurred across the United States, as the wages of working people stagnated. There is a myth going around that increased globalization has led to a decline of wealth in the United States and the decline of income for middle and working class people is an inevitable outcome of global competition. I disagree. Income in the United States has gone up during this period, but it has not been shared equally. The rich HAVE been getting richer, the poor HAVE been getting poorer and the middle class has been collapsing. And it is not the inevitable result of changes in the economy, but the result of conscious action –and INACTION- of legislative bodies like this at the state and federal level, lowering taxes on the wealthy, on corporations, on capital gains, weakening labor laws, cutting social services and other programs, giving away tax credits to investors and refusing to raise the minimum wage to help keep low-income workers from falling into poverty.

Please pass this bill, retaining the CPI provisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

CHART on NEXT PAGE

THE CHANGING VALUE OF THE
HAWAII'S MINIMUM WAGE
(1968 - 2018)



This morning, I went to <http://www.usinflationcalculator.com> to calculate what the Hawaii minimum wage would have to be to have the same purchasing power as the minimum wage I earned in 1968. I do not believe current workers deserve to be paid about 10% less per hour than I earned at age 15.

Inflation Calculator

If in (enter year)

I purchased an item for \$

then in (enter year)

that same **item would cost:** **\$11.33**

Cumulative rate of inflation: **608.4%**

CALCULATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 1:25:26 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Karen Chun	many different	Support	No

Comments:

\$15 in 2020 is a pittance especially since economists are warning of increased inflation due to the GOP Tax Scam.

But I do support this bill as something that we can get passed even though too small.

And since the Trump admin says that employers can take tips, getting rid of any tip credit and requiring EVERYONE get the same minimum wage is absolutely necessary to prevent servers from being exploited.

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 3:58:03 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jan Mitchell		Support	No

Comments:

Aloha kakou.

Dear Honorable Senators,

Hawaii's high cost of living and high cost of even rental of housing has long out-stripped 'minimum wage' pay. It's high time Hawaii supported a living wage - but rather than ask for \$22 an hour (what we really need NOW) -- baby steps.

That's why I support SB2291, which raises the wage to \$15 an hour by 2020.

Mahalo,

Jan Mitchell
Kailua

From: [Ann Kishi](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 8:56:46 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Ann Kishi
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [John Webster](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 10:26:26 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: John Webster
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291. Of course it will be challenging for many small businesses to meet these increased costs but in time, it will balance out as others adjust.

Even if the costs are passed on to consumers in some measure, that is not an unreasonable outcome for the fairness of assuring that the lowest paid among us are given adequate wages to enjoy a minimum standard of living.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Patricia Bilyk](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 9:43:23 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Patricia Bilyk
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness. What does this struggling do to the children in these families!

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage. Hence many families and single mothers live with other family members to keep costs down.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less than \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Many times these are single working mothers in waitress positions.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Cade Watanabe](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 9:34:59 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Cade Watanabe
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Tyler Greenhill](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 12:36:03 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Tyler Greenhill
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Kainani Derrickson](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 2:22:52 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Kainani Derrickson
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Jessica Garlock](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 2:37:28 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Jessica Garlock
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: Yes

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

I am a Social Worker, and have been living and working in Hawai'i for 15 years. I have seen so many people impacted by not being paid anything resembling a living wage, which impacts so many other parts of their lives - health care, education, food stability and housing stability. Some of the people working to help the most vulnerable in our state are also struggling to get by.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony. I look forward to the committee doing the right thing for Hawai'i by supporting this bill.

From: [Miwa Tamanaha](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 2:53:36 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Miwa Tamanaha
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Paola Rodelas](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 3:22:46 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Paola Rodelas
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage. For two years after graduating from college, I struggled to find full-time work and had to work 2-3 part-time minimum wage jobs. I was living paycheck by paycheck, had to default on my student loans, and it took a huge toll on my physical and mental health.

If minimum wage was actually a living wage, it would help working people make ends meet, and it would make it more likely for someone to work one job instead of multiple jobs.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

Sincerely,
Paola Rodelas
Kapahulu resident

From: [Aria Castillo](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 3:23:53 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Aria Castillo
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

I am one of the lucky few people to work for a small company that has already committed to paying a living wage for all their employees. It took me 11 months of searching, working 2-3 minimum wage part-time jobs, before I was able to get the position I have now. Like so many of my classmates have already done, I was ready to move to California to pursue more opportunity than was available to me here in Hawai'i.

With our base minimum wage at \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work it's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling, and so many of our young adults are not returning home after college, instead, opting to stay on the mainland to build their lives.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Diliaur Tellei](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 3:37:33 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Diliaur Tellei
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Nicholas Chagnon](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 3:42:30 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Nicholas Chagnon
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Randy Gonce](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 8:53:05 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Randy Gonce
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, a you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

From: [Sheela Menon](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291: Support a \$15 Minimum Wage
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 6:44:37 AM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Sheela Menon
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2291. As someone who earned a full scholarship to UHM for my BA, I still needed the financial support of my parents and the income I earned from a student job to meet the incredibly high costs of living in Hawai'i. And this was from 2004-2008. Working my first full time job after graduating, I still had to budget very carefully and share a house with four roommates in order to manage on my new salary. As we all know, the cost of living in Hawai'i - and especially the cost of housing - has only continued to rise. So many of those working hourly jobs in Hawai'i don't have the network of financial and emotional support to supplement their income and share expenses the way I did. As a state, we owe it to our community to pay a wage that actually enables workers to live and thrive on the income they earn. I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [randy ching](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Friday, February 2, 2018 6:45:23 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: randy ching
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai‘i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Jade Frank](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Friday, February 2, 2018 9:24:14 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Jade Frank
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai‘i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Nathan Yuen](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Friday, February 2, 2018 9:57:49 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Nathan Yuen
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai‘i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Kathryn Braun](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 7:51:49 AM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Kathryn Braun
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

I am a professor of public health at the University of Hawai'i, testifying as an individual.

Currently, Hawai'i workers on minimum wage are earning only \$21,000 per year, which is too low, giving the high cost of living (and especially housing) in this state.

Research has shown again and again that health is related to wealth. Poorer people have worse health outcomes than middle class people. Poorer health in poor people leads to higher health care costs for Medicaid, a state-supported program.

Being poor also is associated with poorer health outcomes for children. Children from poor households do less well in school than children from middle class households, and they are more likely to end up in our prison system (at the expense of the state).

Being poor also is associated with houselessness, and Hawai'i has the largest percapita rate of houselessness in the country. Houselessness is not only demoralizing and dangerous for those who experience it, but also shocking to tourists who come to Hawai'i expecting paradise.

Research also shows that states (and countries) that can maintain and grow their middle class are ultimately better off than those that develop big gaps between the rich and poor.

Supporting this bill with help maintain and grow our middle class which, in turn, will support the health and productivity of people in the state of Hawai'i.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Younghee Overly](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 8:35:36 AM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Younghee Overly
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai‘i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Simone Kirstein](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 9:23:12 AM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Simone Kirstein
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai‘i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Kathryn Mykleseth](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 10:16:51 AM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Kathryn Mykleseth
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai‘i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Garrett Busch](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 12:52:55 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Garrett Busch
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai‘i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Jessalyn Hinz](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 12:54:54 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Jessalyn Hinz
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

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I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Ross Villiger](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 2:17:04 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Ross Villiger
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

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I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Danielle Beaver](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 4:00:10 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Danielle Beaver
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

I am a business owner with several employees and it would absolutely NOT hurt my business if the minimum wage was raised. Employers want their employees to have a basic living wage which would increase their happiness and standard of living. This is a basic right and we should lead the country with this progressive and humane legislation.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Roger and Jean Jester](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 5:06:39 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Roger and Jean Jester
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

My wife and I would like to express our SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

We have been annual visitors to this beautiful state for over 30 years. As retirees from a large corporation, we have a comfortable retirement income. The reason we choose to come here is that we believe that Hawaii is a good place to live for all its residents, not just the wealthy.

This is an important consideration for us and other like minded people. Consequently we were dismayed to discover that the minimum wage in Hawaii is among the lowest in the country when the cost-of-living is factored in. As visitors we frequently interact with tipped workers and want to be assured that they are being fairly remunerated for their very hard work.

A fairly paid and happy workforce are among the primary attractions of Hawaii. We urge you to take this perspective into consideration when you consider this bill.

From: [Cristina Bacchilega](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 5:11:54 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Cristina Bacchilega
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I am writing to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

We all know how high our cost of living is--and while it's a privilege to live and work here, it is especially hard for young people to think of staying in Hawai'i when making ends meet is so very hard, no matter how committed they are to working and living here.

I see the lack of hope in my students--and it is sad because many of them would not want to leave their homes, but feel there is not much of a future.

How can anyone in a single-income household make it on \$21,000 per year? How many jobs at minimum wage does a couple have to hold in order to live together, that is, afford rent?

How can a single parent make do on \$21,000 here?

Furthermore, houselessness--we are all aware--is a big problem in our state. But many of our houseless were living paycheck-to-paycheck and then could not handle the next crisis--job loss, medical expenses, increased cost of living that minimum wages don't adjust to, etc. Setting the minimum wage at \$15 and providing automatic cost-of-living increases helps people be productive in their jobs and stay working.

Passing this bill is the ethical and human thing to do. It is also the sensible thing to do as other states have shown the way. I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Ambrose Matovu](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 8:14:33 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Ambrose Matovu
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai‘i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Zahava Zaidoff](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 8:46:29 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Zahava Zaidoff
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

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I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Dharm Bhawuk](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 10:27:21 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Dharm Bhawuk
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

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I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Robert H Stiver](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 7:39:00 AM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Robert H Stiver
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I take this opportunity to express my fervent SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

I'm retired and comfortable, but I see neighbors and friends scurrying around, taking on traffic woes and the daily trials of life...and they often have a second or third job that is necessitated just to make ends meet. This is not right. Raising the minimum hourly wage to \$15 is the proverbial "right thing to do," and, IMO, that standard should be met TODAY, not 2020. I'm counting on your action to catch Hawaii's labor force up to speed!

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

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I urge you to pass this important legislation. Thank you.

From: [Cleota Brown](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 9:07:47 AM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Cleota Brown
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

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I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [roger epstein](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 12:39:45 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: roger epstein
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

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I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Ruth Limtiaco](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 1:19:23 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Ruth Limtiaco
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291.

In order to survive in Hawaii's high-priced economy, people are working two and even three jobs. While some live in luxury and ease, others struggle to make ends meet, have minimal

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Anne Leake](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2018 3:21:51 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Anne Leake
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: Yes

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

I am a recently retired nurse practitioner with 25 years of experience practicing at 3 of Hawaii's community health centers. I am supporting SB 2291 because I've seen first-hand the impact that low wages have on peoples' health. The phrase "livable wage" can mean the difference between life and death. The downward spiral to poor health often starts when people making minimum wage can't afford rent and must take a second job or become homeless. So maybe now with a second job they can make rent, but now they have no time to rest and relax between jobs, no time to spend with family in recreation or exercise, no time to shop and prepare food, and possibly no time to sleep for 8 hours. Each of these consequences brings on chronic disease earlier in life and shortens life.

So what's the big difference between \$10 and \$15 per hour besides the obvious \$200 per week gross pay for a full time worker? Avoiding that second job It can make the difference between getting diabetes and preventing diabetes. It can make the difference between parents reading books to their children, going for walks, buying fruits and vegetables, and all the other things that go into having healthy families. Some may argue that employers can't afford to do this. But if we as a state truly care about Hawaii families, we can't afford to not do this.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

From: [Dawn Kubota](#)
To: [LBR Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
Date: Friday, February 2, 2018 5:10:57 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Dawn Kubota
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2291, which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2020, eliminate the lower minimum wage for tipped workers, and provide automatic cost-of-living increases.

While Hawai'i's minimum wage rose to \$10.10 on January 1, that means only \$21,000 per year for a full-time worker who takes no weekdays off all year. We all know that's not enough to get by in this state.

Hawai'i has the lowest wages in the nation after adjusting for our cost of living, which is the highest in the nation. As a result, almost half of our residents are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

One of the main drivers of our high cost of living is housing. Currently, a worker in Hawai'i needs to earn more than \$35 per hour (over \$70,000 per year) to afford a two-bedroom apartment. That means a minimum wage worker would need to work almost 3.5 jobs, or 139 hours per week, to afford that rent.

With our tourist-oriented service economy, a large portion of our low-wage workforce are in the tipped-worker category, which means that their employers can pay them a wage lower than the minimum. This sets up a two-tiered system, with women workers especially stuck in the lower tier. While, for example, waitstaff at a high-end restaurant can make enough in tips to more than cover this discrepancy, those at lower-prices establishments, like a Zippy's, are less able to make enough from tips to make ends meet.

And unlike in 19 other states, Hawai'i's minimum wage has never been set to automatically keep up with the cost of living. As a result, the value of our state's minimum wage has often dropped sharply due to inflation.

Other high cost-of-living states, such as California and New York, as well as dozens of cities and counties, have passed laws to increase their minimum wages to \$15. With the highest cost of living in Hawai'i, it makes sense for us to match them.

Since the minimum wage in Hawai'i started going up in 2015, our unemployment rate dropped to the lowest in the nation and businesses thrived. Higher wages provide employers

with more loyal and productive workers, saving them significant turnover and training costs. Raising the minimum wage puts dollars in the pockets of people who will almost immediately spend them, boosting local businesses and the state economy.

I urge you to pass this important legislation.

LATE

LBR Testimony

From: Tom Iwanicki <noreply@jotform.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 12:53 AM
To: LBR Testimony
Subject: SB 2291: Relating to Minimum Wage

Categories: Late

TO: Senate Committee on Labor
HEARING: Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 3:30 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 229
FROM: Tom Iwanicki
RE: SB 2291--Relating to Minimum Wage
ATTENDING HEARING: No

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee:

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass SB 2291, in order to give Hawai'i workers a livable wage.

Since we have the highest cost of living in the country, Hawai'i's minimum wage workers deserve \$15 per hour. California, New York, DC, and several cities have already decided to raise their minimum wages to \$15.

Our state's minimum wage is \$10.10 an hour, or \$21,000 a year for full-time work. It's no wonder that so many Hawai'i residents are struggling to stay out of -- or get out of -- poverty and homelessness.

Our cost of living is the highest in the country mainly because of our sky-high housing costs. To rent a market-rate two-bedroom apartment, you'd have to make over \$70,000 a year (or \$35 an hour), more than 3 times the minimum wage.

Our minimum wage doesn't automatically adjust for inflation, causing its value to fall far behind the cost of living. 19 other states' minimum wages have automatic inflation adjustments, and we should join them.

And some hard-working people in Hawai'i are paid even less \$10.10 an hour, because they get tips. Seven other states, including Nevada and all of the West Coast, pay all of their workers the same minimum wage, and we should join them, too.

Research shows that higher wages are good for business, too. Worker morale, productivity and loyalty go up, which saves employers money because they don't have to constantly hire and train new people. And any extra money paid to minimum wage workers tends to be plowed right back into local businesses, leading to positive ripple effects in the economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony about this important bill.

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 1:29:30 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann S Freed	Hawaii Women's Coalition	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair and members,

The Women's Coalition is support of this measure as we are well aware that the current minimum wage is far from a living wage. In fact the taxpayers of Hawaii are subsidizing megaliths like Walmart since their minimum wage employees need food stamps in order to survive.

We also note that this measure will be of particular help to working women as there is still a pay gap that adversely effects women and their families trying to survive in our high-cost state on substandard wages.

Mahalo,

Ann S. Freed, Co-Chair, Hawaii Women's Coalition

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/5/2018 9:23:10 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kevin Chang		Support	No

Comments:

Please pass this bill. Lets raise the tide on this issue.

Mahalo

Kevin

LATE



Before the Senate Committee on Labor

DATE: February 6, 2018

TIME: 3:30 p.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 229

Re: SB2291 Relating to Minimum Wage

Testimony of Melissa Pavlicek for NFIB Hawaii

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English and members of the committee:

We are testifying on behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) in opposition to Senate Bill 2291, which increases the minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour in 2019 and \$15 per hour in 2020. It repeals language allowing the hourly wage of a tipped employee to be increased on account of tips and requires the department of labor and industrial relations to annually calculate the adjusted minimum wage rate to the nearest five cents using the Honolulu region CPI-W.

Small businesses implemented the \$10.10 minimum wage increase this year and struggle to meet the demands of increased costs. Please defer this bill.

The National Federation of Independent Business is the largest advocacy organization representing small and independent businesses in Washington, D.C., and all 50 state capitals. In Hawaii, NFIB represents more than 750 members. NFIB's purpose is to impact public policy at the state and federal level and be a key business resource for small and independent business in America. NFIB also provides timely information designed to help small businesses succeed.



LATE

WAIKIKI BREWING COMPANY

Joe P. Lorenzen, Partner/Brewmaster
831 Queen St.
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-591-0387
brewmaster@waikikibrewing.com

SB 2291 Relating to Minimum Wage

Position: **Oppose**

Chair Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair Senator J. Kalani English, and members of the Senate Committee on Labor.

My name is Joe Lorenzen. I live in Honolulu, on the island of Oahu, and I am a partner in and Brewmaster of Waikiki Brewing Company with business locations in Waikiki and in Kaka'ako.

We oppose SB 2291 because of the following:

The restaurant and service industry is one which has always operated on very low margins. Increasing the minimum wage will add further difficulty for us in our continued operation. In many localities that have raised the minimum wage up to \$15/hr, such as San Francisco, we have seen an alarming number of restaurant closures. This causes joblessness and reduced revenues for the state.

The restaurant and service industry is often a first job for unskilled job seekers. We provide the opportunity to learn new skills and advance to higher paid positions. I myself started off as a minimum wage busser when I first moved to Oahu, and have advanced to the position of GM and Brewmaster through my hard work. Furthermore, those in minimum wage service positions generally make in excess of \$15 to \$30 per hour once gratuities are factored in.

Elimination of the Tip Credit for employers magnifies the negative impact of this bill on the operators restaurants.

Mahalo for your consideration. We urge you NOT to pass this bill out of committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2291.

Sincerely,

Joe P. Lorenzen

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 5:08:58 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Josephine McGarry CURRAN	MOJO LLC / CBRE	Oppose	No

Comments:

While we all agree that everyone deserves to earn a living wage - this is NOT the same as Minimum Wage. Minimum Wage was never intended to replace a living wage where workers start in a position and work their way through a company or corporation as they grow . An increase to minimum wage for restaurant workers will have DEVASTATING effects on our restaurant industry and hurt the very people we are trying to protect. The restaurant industry is one of the few places a person can enter with no college degree and make themselves a good living. Owners PROVIDE this place to work, provide the opportunity for staff to make money , and provide training and support throughout the course of an employees term - often their entire working life. With an increase in minimum wage to \$15 by 2020 MANY restaurants will close as the cost of doing business is simply too high. We respectfully ask that you listen to testimony against this bill and take seriously the fact that MANY of our most respected and best loved restaurants will close - leaving employess without any wage at all.

Restaurants are penalized too often and too harshly by legislation - as a tourist destination with a tremendous reliance of the hospitality industry we urge legislators to halt this targeting of restaurants and to vote against the increase in the minimum wage.

As someone who has worked closely in the restaurant industry in HAawaii for more than 20 years, my concerns as to how our industry will survive this massive increase to the cost of doing business are very real.

Thank you for your time

Jo McGarry Curran

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 11:00:46 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Cadiz		Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii has become so expensive that we must honor the needs of our entry level workers by paying a respectable wage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 10:28:08 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Allan Raikes	Condominium Rentals Hawaii	Oppose	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 10:50:48 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anela Sanchez	Aloha International Employment, Inc.	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I'd like to submit this testimony in opposition of SB2291.

Although, I would love to have the lowest paid person in the state of Hawaii making at least \$15.00 per hour, I also understand that the cost to do business in our state is already tremendously costly.

Forcing companies to pay their employees a minimum wage rate of \$15.00 per hour will increase costs to consumers, possibly create job losses because these companies can't afford to employ their entire staff any longer, and simply put some companies out of business due to the high cost of paying their staff and offer them health insurance.

Please take into consideration what this would mean for the companies who are already struggling to just stay afloat under our current circumstances.

Sincerely,

Anela Sanchez

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 11:03:51 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
roger simonot		Oppose	No

Comments:

Too much too quick. Small businesses will suffer. HAawaii is already one of the least friendly business environments, please do not make it worse.

Oppose SB2291

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 11:07:30 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gregg Nelson	Napili Kai Beach Resort	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Tokuda and Committee Members,

I am very opposed to Bill SB2291, which outlines an increase in the minimum wage in 2019 and 2020. There are many other important issues before the State Legislature that need your attention and this is not one of them. The minimum wage should not be legislated in this manner.

You have already legislated changes to the minimum wage which eventually call for increases to be based on CPI. Isn't that good enough? Additionally, the unemployment rate for our State is half the national average. The lack of available workers here will naturally force businesses to pay more to attract employees. Let's have government out of the business of business and just let the free enterprise system work on its own as it was intended.

Respectfully request you vote no on bill SB2291. Enough already.

Mahalo

Gregg Nelson

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 11:58:42 AM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
William Marsh		Oppose	No

Comments:

A minimum wage increase of this amount Hurts anyone on a fixed income such as retirees. It will increase the base expense of anyone living in the State of Hawaii because businesses will have to increase prices making the cost of living here even greater. That amount of wage increase needs to be warranted by good hard work, not just mandated to be given out. A minimum wage increase to that extent does not make economic sense for our State.

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 12:01:42 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brad Sundin	kahului Ale House	Oppose	No

Comments:

The restaurant industry in Hawaii is already a difficult business then add to this out of control monopolized health care costs, extremely high food cost, non value added insurance and you already have a formula for failure. This type of measure has been tried in many places on the mainland and has proven unsuccessful. My staff already makes well above minimum with tips. This measure would jeopardize many businesses and ultimately cause a tax deficit for the state because of businesses failing. My business is in a local area and I can't charge what businesses in the tourist areas charge.

I have followed this issue closely on the mainland and what has happened on the mainland is that employers have been using less employees to do the same amount of work resulting in more unemployment claims and less people paying taxes. If this passes the same will happen here.

Please oppose this bill.

Sincerely,

Brad Sundin

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 12:24:05 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James Rainey	Cheeseburger Restaurants, Inc.	Oppose	No

Comments:

This will only causes a domino effect by forcing the business to increase menu prices to offset the wage increase. I feel any additional minimum wage increases will be detrimental to the independent restaurant industry in Hawaii. This does not hurt the Union Employers because their wages are already higher. Say Aloha to the Small Business.

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 1:10:00 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ryan Beenken		Support	No

Comments:

The cost of living in Hawaii is the highest in the nation. Housing, food, and every day expenses are out of control.

The minimum wage was established so that someone working a 40 hour work week would be able to live a modest but affordable lifestyle. Since it was established it has not kept up with inflation and cost of living increases.

While it is understandable that small business owners will have a more difficult time being able to pay a higher minimum wage, it has been shown that in the long run employers save money in turnover.

I strongly support SB2291.

LATE

SB-2291

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 1:19:14 PM

Testimony for LBR on 2/6/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Albert Murashige		Oppose	No

Comments:

To the Honorable Jill n Tokuda, Chair

The Honorable J Kalani English, Vice Chair and

Members of the Labor Committee

Re: SB2291 Relating to Minimum Wage

This is to voice my opposition to the proposed bill before you to increase the minimum wage to \$12.25 in 2019 and to \$15.00 in 2020. Just months ago, the minimum wage was increased to \$10.10 and to even consider an increase to \$15.00 without even considering the impact of the recent increase is unreasonable. The minimum wage is usually reserved for entry level type of employment with very little to no skill level. The recent increase as well as the projected increase is a lot for small businesses to consider. The already high and increasing cost of employer paid medical benefits is already impacting small business. I believe the increased cost of medical benefits is something the legislature needs to look into as it affects every single small business in this state. To be paying between \$600 - \$900.00/month for each employee. There is no solution in site for this issue and now we are being faced with increased payroll? The cost of doing business in Hawaii will reach a tipping point where if we cannot pass the increased cost to the consumer, you will see more businesses closing up shop. This is especially so on the neighbor islands, where we bear the burden of increased shipping costs that is not felt in Honolulu..

Please consider what approval of this bill will do to the small business in Hawaii. It is understandable that employees would like to see an increase in pay, as employees across the board will want to receive some additional compensation as a result. There is a lot more that I wish I could expand on, but I am hopeful you will understand the importance of deferring this bill based on just looking at the unintended impact this will place on small business.

Thank you for your consideration.

Albert Murashige Kahului Carpet & Drapery Products, Inc (808) 871-1033

Michele Fraser Maui Style Market (808) 877-3308