



February 22, 2021

**Chairperson Anastasia Williams**

House Labor Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

**RE: H5130 and H5263: Relating to the Minimum Wage**

Dear Chairperson Williams:

The Rhode Island Chapter of the National Organization for Women (RI NOW) writes today in support of House Bill 5130 and in support of House Bill 5263.

We support all efforts to ensure that Rhode Islanders who work can earn a wage that will support their families. These efforts to increase the minimum wage are particularly important for gender equity in Rhode Island, where the typical minimum wage worker is a woman in her thirties with some college education, often raising children.

We also support expanding the minimum wage to domestic workers, those who care for our children, the elderly, and the disabled and help keep our homes clean. Their work is hard and they don't deserve to be paid less. Nationwide, 91.5% of domestic workers are women and domestic workers are three times more likely to be living in poverty than other workers.

The increase will help the more than 87,000 workers in Rhode Island who earn less than \$15 an hour, and whose situation has become dire as their essential work has gotten more dangerous. It will afford working parents a bit more economic security for their families. It will make Rhode Island more competitive with our neighboring states, Massachusetts and Connecticut, which will both have a minimum wage of \$15.00 in 2023.

We urge you to pass H5130 and H5263 which will help lift many Rhode Island workers and families out of a crisis situation and will lend needed support to the state's post-pandemic economic recovery.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bethany Sousa Foster  
RI Chapter, National Organization for Women

*Rhode Island National Organization for Women (RI NOW) is a membership-based advocacy organization with hundreds of members and supporters throughout the state of Rhode Island. We believe that anyone who identifies as a woman deserves equality and equity in political, social, and economic arenas.*