



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England

Testimony in SUPPORT of H 5130 and H 5263
Craig O'Connor, Rhode Island Director for Policy and Government Relations
Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
Rhode Island House Committee on Labor, Wednesday, February 24, 2021

Chairwoman Williams and members of the House Committee on Labor,

Planned Parenthood of Southern New England strongly supports H 5130 (Rep. Bennett) and H 5263 (Rep. Williams). Together, these bills will move Rhode Island forward on the path to wage fairness and ending discrimination against certain groups of workers.

It is far past time to raise the minimum wage in Rhode Island and across our nation. President Biden and Democratic leaders in Congress are working towards this same goal, but we can not leave it to chance.

For too long, low-wage workers, especially those from marginalized communities, have struggled as the cost of living continues to rise while wages stagnate and fall behind. The rippling impacts across their families and communities is unacceptable.

H 5130 represent a modest path towards pay fairness. Working people have been demanding a \$15 minimum wage for so long that it now feels inadequate to delay implementation and we urge the committee to consider amending the legislation to reach \$15/hour in a shorter span of time.

Additionally, racial justice demands that we end exemptions from minimum wage laws that were created in response to racism against workers in certain sectors of the economy. We strongly support passage of H 5263 to end this vestigial legal discrimination against domestic workers.

We also urge the committee to consider ending the inequity of a lower minimum wage for tipped service workers, the exemption for agricultural workers and other classes excluded from this basic worker protection.

We ask the Committee to join the Senate in acting on raising the minimum wage and to act for the well-being of domestic workers by passing H 5130 and H 5263.

Respectfully,

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