

March 27, 2024

The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese  
Chairman, House Committee on Labor  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re:     *Opposition to H 7531***

Chairman Corvese and Members of the House Labor Committee,  
As a Server at Angelo's Palace Pizza located in Cumberland, Rhode Island. I write to express my opposition to H 5731, which would eliminate the tipped minimum wage.

Working as a tipped employee in the hospitality industry provides me the opportunity to maximize my earning potential through earning gratuities by providing excellent customer service. I am concerned about the negative effects this bill would have on my income, shift availability and flexibility, and the overall hospitality experience by imposing increase wage burdens on restaurants, rather than the current system supported by customer gratuities.

If implemented, I believe restaurants will be forced to implement new policies to absorb these increased costs that could harm businesses, customers, and servers. Raising menu prices poses risks to the volume and frequency that our patrons would dine out. Losing customers or seeing them less frequently would result in reduced needs for staffing, reducing staffing needs, taking away the flexibility and opportunities for me to earn a living in hospitality.

Other options like imposing a house service charge to cover the shift in wage responsibility may drastically reduce or eliminate entirely gratuities generated from customers, leaving my earnings closer to the minimum wage than they currently are. It is important to note that I make far in excess of the current \$14 minimum hourly wage, and while this bill is claimed to support raising my wages, I fear its actual impact would be to lower it.

If this bill were to pass... I am a stay at home mom of four and can only work weekend nights. Being home with my children to raise them is important to me. I need a job where I can make the most amount of money possible without taking too much time away from them. If this legislation passes, I will not make nearly as much as I do now and will be forced to find work elsewhere. It will increase the prices of food and decrease the amount of people willing to tip. If they know we are making minimum wage, why would they tip on top of that. Right now, I also have the flexibility to pick up shifts as I can. With four kids of ages 2-14, who have very different interests, we have very busy schedules with school and sports and I NEED that flexibility that the restaurant business provides. I rely on my tips to pay for bills and sports for my kids.

I respectfully ask that you oppose H 7531. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Nicole Beaudreault  
Cumberland, Rhode Island