



★ WORKING FAMILIES POWER ★

Representative Arthur Corvese, Chair
House Labor Committee

March 5, 2025

Support for H-5029, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Minimum Wages, and H-5507, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Minimum Wages

Chair Corvese and Members of the Committee,

Rhode Island Working Families Power writes in strong support of Rep. Bennett's bill, H-5029, to raise the minimum wage to \$20 per hour by 2030 and Rep. Felix's bill to increase the tipped minimum wage. WFP advocates for policies that promote economic justice and respect for all workers. These bills help achieve those goals by allowing more Rhode Island residents to make ends meet for their hard work and allow themselves and their families to stay in the state.

With the impact of inflation over the past several years and prices slated to rise even more due to the federal administration's tariff policies, Rhode Island residents at the bottom of the wage scale are struggling to afford housing, medications, utility costs, and basic staples like eggs. For so many residents their paychecks have not kept up with the pace of rising prices.

By setting a schedule to raise the minimum wage to \$20 per hour by the end of the decade, the legislature can help make life a little bit easier for Rhode Islanders. The sub-minimum tipped wage has also gotten increasing attention over the last several years as the research on its impact on women and workers of color, who predominate in fields that depend on gratuities. The tipped minimum wage is a structural legacy of slavery and Jim Crow, and a number of states have gotten rid of it entirely. Passing this legislation to raise the tipped minimum wage over time to \$14.95 per hour is a concrete step that this committee can take to address this issue.

Thank you,

Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler

Progressive Governance Director
Rhode Island Working Families Power