

TO: House Labor Committee
SUBJECT: SUPPORT for H-7771- Living Wage

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Merrill Schmidt; I live in Cranston and work in Providence. I'm writing in support of H-7771 (Sanchez): Pay Rhode Islanders a living wage by increasing the state minimum wage to \$24/hour in 2027. If this bill doesn't move forward, I would also support H-7769 (Furtado): help people meet basic needs by increasing the state minimum wage to \$20/hour in 2027. However, I believe that the higher minimum wage would be a better option, given the extremely high cost of living in Rhode Island. The current minimum wage is not enough to cover all of the basics like rent, utilities, food and childcare. Even with two above-minimum wage salaries in my household, it is hard to cover the basics and still have money left over at the end of the month to save, so it seems nearly impossible to get by and try to save on a minimum wage job. For families making the minimum wage, this bill will make it easier to get by and stay in the state. Thanks for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Merrill Schmidt