

Dear Committee Chairman and Committee Members-

I am Jim Kingston and I reside in Providence. I am writing in FULL SUPPORT of Senate bills 2166, 2408, 2620 and 2622.

Regarding Senate bill 2620, a minimum wage of \$20/hour means for a 40-hour per week, a full time employee would earn \$41,600 per year. As the RI Kids Count Facebook published today states, a worker or family needs to earn \$94,303 per year, or \$45.34 per hour, to afford the average rent for a 2-bedroom apartment without a cost burden. The "Very low family income" level as defined by HUD is \$51,450. So what this all means is that a single parent family cannot remotely afford to live in RI and a 2-parent family also would not be able to afford the average RI 2-bedroom apartment, much less all of the other costs associated with not just surviving, but thriving in RI.

But, \$20 per hour is much better than the current rate! and we need to increase our minimum wage so that our neighbors most in need have at least a better chance at a better life, one where they can thrive, not just survive.

I ask that in particular you vote bill 2620 out of Committee to a full vote of the Senate, as well as these other bills which would go a long way to improve the lives of our neighbors most in need. Thank you for your consideration.