



Legislation Text

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The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

Introductory*

City of Baltimore Council Bill R (Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning **Request for State Action - Support a \$15 Minimum Wage for Maryland**

For the purpose of calling on the Maryland General Assembly to pass, and the Governor to sign, legislation establishing a statewide \$15 minimum wage, ensuring that all working Marylanders can pay for their basic needs.

Recitals

In Maryland, recent years have seen efforts to make up for the decades-long decline in the real purchasing power of our minimum wage. However, despite these efforts, hundreds of thousands of full-time Maryland workers still do not earn enough to cover basic needs such as housing, food, and transportation. This is an inequitable and unsustainable situation. In America, a full time worker simply should not need government assistance to be able to put food on the table and a roof over their family's heads.

Raising the State minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2023 and then subsequently indexing it to keep pace with increases in the cost of living will go a long way toward remedying this untenable situation. According to an analysis by the Economic Policy Institute, this increase would benefit 573,000 Maryland workers, approximately 22% of the State's workforce. 90% of all affected workers would be adults 20 years old or older, and nearly a third are parents collectively raising 273,000 Maryland children.

The consensus drawn from decades of serious research on the issue is that statewide minimum wage increases are an effective way to address inequality and poverty without increasing unemployment or harming the broader economy. As states and local jurisdictions raise their minimum wages today, this reality is being demonstrated once again by growing economies and shrinking unemployment in areas where the minimum wage has already been increased.

Maryland lawmakers should be applauded for their recent efforts to make up for years of neglecting a minimum wage that had shrunk in purchasing power over time, but their efforts haven't yet gone far enough to ensure that workers can support themselves and their families. A further increase in the state minimum wage to \$15 an hour is needed to meaningfully shrink the ranks of the working poor and let all Marylanders share in our state's increasing prosperity. Furthermore, any legislation crafted by the General Assembly should not contain any exclusions for agricultural works or youth workers as these exclusions often disproportionately and adversely affect communities that have struggled the most economically. All workers, regardless of their age or status, need to be treated with dignity and respect on the job through fair compensation.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Council calls on the Maryland General Assembly to pass, and the Governor to sign, legislation establishing a statewide \$15 minimum wage, ensuring that all working Marylanders can pay for their basic needs.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor, the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City House and Senate Delegations to the Maryland General Assembly, the President of the Maryland Senate, the Maryland House Speaker, the Mayor, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.