



DC for \$15: Messaging Guide for May 26 Hearing

This is a very modest proposal.

- If anything, \$15 in 2020 is too low. If the median wage in DC were set at the benchmark of 50% of median wages, it would be \$16 **today**.
 - The median wage in DC in 2015 was \$31.75.
 - MIT calculates that a living wage in DC – just the basics – for an adult today is \$14.84. Add one child and it's \$30.42.
- Taking nine years to phase out the subminimum wage for tipped workers is a very long time for working people to wait for a fair wage.

Raising the minimum wage to \$15 is pro-family and pro-business.

- Pro-Family: Here's who would be better able to meet the basics to support their families:
 - 114,000 workers would receive a pay raise.
 - The parents of more than 80,000 children in the Washington metro region.
 - People who on average earn half their family's incomes
 - Adults – More than half (56%) are at least 40 years old. Virtually all (98%) are 20 or over.
 - Half are Black (47%) and one-quarter (24%) are Hispanic.
- Pro-Business:
 - Would pump \$329 million into the local economy.
 - Breakthrough academic (not interest group) research into \$15 minimum wage increases in other localities finds that the economic boost from higher consumer spending **increases employment**. (Studies by University of California researchers.)

The Restaurant Industry is Resorting to Scare Tactics and Lies

- Independent restaurants are booming in tourist cities with higher minimum wages and no sub-minimum wage for workers who get tips.
 - San Francisco and Seattle rank #1 and #5 for restaurants per capita. DC is not on the top 10 list. Both of those cities have a higher minimum wage than DC and no sub-minimum wage for tipped workers.
 - As a Seattle business newspaper reported recently, after Seattle raised its minimum wage, "some of the chefs who are opening restaurants at a dizzying pace are the ones who had issued dire warnings of empty tables and shuttered rooms as a result of the wage law." The headline on the article was "Restaurant openings soar after wage hike."
- Wages for waiters and bartenders are higher with no sub-minimum wage.
 - In San Francisco and Seattle, hourly wages for wait-staff are higher than in DC. In fact, DC waiters and bartenders make only one-third the median wage, compared with half in those cities.

For thousands of struggling DC families – in one of the most expensive cities in the country – the Mayor's proposal is a long overdue step in the right direction.

- Waiting four years to get to \$15 and seven years get to 50% for thousands of workers who get tips is still too long to wait.

The DC Council should pass \$15/Hr for All Workers.