



Senator Tipping, Rep. Roeder and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing, my name is Adam Zuckerman and I am the lobbyist for the Maine People's Alliance.

I am glad to testify in favor of LD 1376, An Act to Create a Livable Wage by Increasing the Minimum Hourly Wage.

MPA is Maine's largest community action organization with over 32,000 members across the state. Our mission is to create a world where everyone has what they need, contributes what they can, and no one is left behind.

Thousands of our members have volunteered in the last several years on the statewide campaign to raise Maine's minimum wage, which was at passed at the ballot by voters by an historic margin in 2016. Many of those members understand first-hand the difference that a little extra money each month can make in their budget, their families, and their lives.

Our members also understand the impact that historic inflation has had on their purchasing power. With inflation at nearly 9% last year, many Mainers saw their purchasing power decrease. Hitting low-income families the hardest, many struggled to afford groceries, utility bills, child care, car payments, and rent. This bill ensures that inflation will never outpace wages for the lowest-income Mainers.

Before the 2016 minimum wage increase, the big business lobby said that the sky was going to fall. In fact, the opposite happened. Employment is up, unemployment rates remain at record lows. Mainers are working more hours and taking home bigger paychecks.

The minimum wage is one of the most-studied policies that exist, and macro-economic data from a multitude of states demonstrates that raising the minimum wage is one of the most sure-fire ways to improve the lives of families.

This proposal is very modest. It only raises the minimum wage by \$1.20 from its current level in the first year. According to MIT's Living Wage Calculator, a childless single adult in Maine needs to earn \$16.53 per hour to have a living wage. With one child it is \$34.84 per hour and with two children it is \$44.99 per hour. This proposal is measured and it is fair. I urge you to support it. Thank you.

Adam Zuckerman
Maine People's Alliance
LD 1376

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