



March 4, 2025

Testimony in Support of H 5029 - Minimum Wage Increase to \$20 by 2030

Chair Corvese, Honorable Members of the House Labor Committee,

SEIU 1199NE represents approximately 5,000 frontline workers across Rhode Island, including hospital workers, nursing home workers, family child care providers, and other service sector workers who provide essential care to our most vulnerable residents. We submit this testimony in strong support of H 5029, introduced by Representative Bennett, which would gradually increase the state's minimum wage to \$20 per hour by 2030.

While most SEIU 1199NE members already earn above the proposed minimum wage, we strongly support this bill because it will benefit the thousands of non-union workers across Rhode Island who currently earn less than a livable wage. Many of these workers, particularly in retail, food service, and other low-wage industries, lack the protections and bargaining power that come with union representation. Raising the minimum wage will ensure that they can meet basic needs like housing, food, and healthcare.

H 5029 will also benefit the broader economy by increasing the purchasing power of working families. When workers have more disposable income, they spend it locally, supporting small businesses and strengthening communities. Additionally, raising wages will help reduce staff turnover in critical sectors, improving stability and service quality across the state.

This bill reflects Rhode Island's commitment to valuing its workforce and ensuring that all residents can earn a dignified living. We urge the committee to support H 5029 and help build a more equitable future for working families across the state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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