

DONALD NORCROSS

1ST DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON

TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON

SEAPOWERS AND PROJECTION FORCES

EDUCATION AND LABOR COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON

HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT, LABOR AND PENSIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON

HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

2437 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-6501

10 MELROSE AVENUE, SUITE 210
CHERRY HILL, NEW JERSEY 08003
(856) 427-7000

www.norcross.house.gov
NJCD1@mail.house.gov

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New Jersey State House
125 W State St
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Senate President Sweeney, Senate Minority Leader Kean, Assembly Speaker Coughlin, and Assembly Minority Leader Bramnick,

I am writing to express my alarm and dismay regarding media reports that the State Legislature intends to consider a bill to delay our state's commitment to responsibly raise the minimum wage if the economy slows. This is an irresponsible proposal that will harm both workers and businesses. I hope that the idea to even consider this bill is revisited, and if the hearing does go forward, that the legislation is voted down in unanimity.

This year the movement to raise the minimum wage saw its greatest successes to date, with New Jersey enacting its current law, followed by the House of Representatives passing legislation I sponsored along with Senator Bernie Sanders to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Now is the time to capitalize on this momentum, not go backward.

The premise of this new proposal is illogical. If our economy were to slow for any reason, the first thing we should do is ensure that people at the lower end of the economic scale have family-sustaining wages that they can spend in their community. That's exactly what our current wage law does. Consumer spending will help grow us out of a downturn – as it always has – whereas limiting wages would make many families more reliant of government assistance and most likely worsen the situation.

A pause in the schedule of increases would be as bad for businesses as for workers. A key rationale for the minimum wage increase has always been that it will provide certainty for businesses because the path to \$15 an hour will occur gradually on a set schedule. Again and again, business leaders tell policy makers that what they crave most is predictability. It's what allows them to plan and make investments. Yet this is exactly what the new proposal would eliminate.

New Jersey Policy Perspective, a nonpartisan think tank, reports that the bill slated for a hearing "uses broad and arbitrary metrics to pause increases in the minimum wage, cheating workers and families already struggling to make ends meet." Agreed. Worse yet, it ties their future to factors outside their control, including the economic management decisions of the inept, corrupt Trump Administration. If Trump puts our economy in a hole, I want New Jersey's workers to have a ladder up and out, not a law that digs the ditch deeper.

This proposal should be rejected by the Senate Labor Committee on Thursday and I'm calling on all New Jerseyans to make their voices heard today. It's good for the economy, it's right for workers, people support it and you promised to do it: Raise the Wage.

Sincerely,



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress

Cc: Members of the New Jersey Legislature