



Maine's Business Community Supports Raising Maine's Minimum Wage and Giving Maine Voters a Choice

Maine voters deserve a choice when it comes to raising Maine's minimum wage which is why Maine's leading business organizations support a meaningful increase in Maine's minimum wage to \$10.00, believing it represents a significant, yet sustainable, increase.

- Our proposed competing measure – unlike the proposal from the Maine People's Alliance (MPA) – **would not include indexing** based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and **would preserve the current "tip credit,"** which is vitally important to Maine's restaurant and tourism industry and the thousands of Maine people who work and make a living in this sector of our economy.

Maine's small businesses, especially its restaurants and retail establishments, are the pulse of every community, bringing Mainers together with friends, families, and neighbors every day.

- Restaurants and retailers **led the economic recovery and continue to create more jobs than most industries** in Maine, currently employing more than 260,000 Mainers – almost one half of this state's workforce – and **generating nearly \$3 billion** in direct tourism expenditures in 2015.
- These jobs aren't only **pillars for a strong local economy** – they're an important **training ground for our workforce.** Restaurants and retailers provide Mainers of all ages, education levels, and skill sets with the training they need to succeed.

Our coalition's competing measure preserves the current tip credit, vital to Maine's restaurant and tourism industry and the thousands of Maine people who work in this sector of our economy.

- The current ballot question would eliminate the long-standing tip credit, which would change the way Maine's restaurant and tourism industry do business, **increase their costs,** and force them to forego new hires, expansion plans, or even close entirely.
- **Legislators from both parties believe eliminating the tip credit would be bad for local businesses** – some even going so far as to say if Maine voters pass the MPA proposal they will work to reinstate the tip credit in the next legislative session, despite the "will of Maine voters." In the March 23 edition of the *Mount Desert Islander*, Rep. Brian Hubbell (D-Bar Harbor) was quoted as telling constituents, "For me, along with many local employers, the tip credit policy is problematic, and I have assured the respective retail associations and chambers of commerce that, should this referendum pass in November, I am committed to repairing that credit."¹

¹ <http://www.mdislander.com/maine-news/business-news/minimum-wage-ballot>

- After hearing testimony from numerous Maine restaurant owners who expressed support for an increase in the minimum wage and explained why eliminating the tip credit was harmful to Maine restaurants and servers, the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research, and Economic Development (LCRED) committee unanimously voted last year against LD 403, which proposed the elimination of the tip credit in 2015.

Maine's business community is content to let the people decide which solution would be best for Maine businesses and Maine people.

- This is a **sincere and real proposal** from our coalition to help Mainers, who are hard-working, proud people, and **deserving of a raise that is sustainable for the Maine economy**. Ultimately, doing so is good for the workforce, good for Maine families, and yes, good for businesses.
- Our coalition is **committed to promoting the passage of our competing measure** at the ballot box, because we know doing so will allow a **reasonable wage increase** in this state **without putting small restaurants out of business**, and will **preserve current jobs**, and **promote the hiring of new workers**.

CONTACT YOUR STATE SENATOR AND STATE REPRESENTATIVE TODAY!

Please contact your legislator today and urge them to include a competing measure on the citizen's initiated referendum to increase the minimum wage. Maine people need a more reasonable alternative!

- Tell them that if they believe the citizen's-initiated referendum proposal is bad for Maine's restaurants and retail establishments they should support the competing measure, which leaves Maine's long standing tip credit in place and proposes a meaningful increase in the minimum wage to \$10.
- Tell the legislature to give Maine voters a responsible choice to raising Maine's minimum wage.

TO FIND YOUR LEGISLATOR, please visit

<http://maineprosperity.com/lookup.asp?q=maine>

- **Contact your state Senator** by calling (207) 287-1540 or (800) 423-6900.
- **Contact your state Representative** by calling (207) 287-1400 or (800) 423-2900.

COALITION MEMBERS INCLUDE (as of March 25, 2016) *the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, the Retail Association of Maine, the Maine Restaurant Association, the Maine Innkeepers Association, the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, the Maine Energy Marketers Association, the Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association, the Maine Insurance Agents Association, the Maine Tourism Association, the Manufacturers Association of Maine, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, the SkiMaine Association, the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce, the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce, the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Maine Auto Dealers Association, and the Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau.*