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NELP Applauds New Jersey Assembly Committee Vote to Raise Minimum Wage for Tipped Workers

Long Overdue Step to Plug Hole in State's Wage Laws

Trenton, NJ - Today the New Jersey Assembly's Labor Committee voted 6-to-2 to establish a state tipped minimum wage for tipped workers such as waitresses, carwash attendants and nail salon workers. Under existing state law, New Jersey is one of just a handful of states that allow employees to work entirely for tips without being paid any wages by their employers. The bill approved today would require employers to pay tipped workers at least 69% of the minimum wage – the same rate that New York and Connecticut use.

"We applaud the New Jersey Assembly Labor Committee's leadership in moving to fix this unfair loophole, which is a big part of the reason tipped workers have triple the poverty rate of the workforce as a whole," said Christine Owens, Executive Director of the National Employment Law Project. "More than 70% of tipped workers are women. So fixing the tipped minimum wage is also a key step for gender equity and helping working women in this tough economy."

NELP staff attorney Tsedeye Gebreselassie testified today in Trenton in support of the tipped worker bill, A-2708. That testimony, which provides key facts on minimum wages for tipped workers, is available [here](#).

Unlike New Jersey, forty two other states provide a minimum wage for tipped workers. Seven of these states require that tipped workers be paid the full minimum wage, with any tips received being in addition to, not instead of, the wage paid by their employer. Federal law also provides a minimum wage for tipped workers, but it has been frozen at a paltry \$2.13 per hour for more than 20 years. New Jersey workers that are covered by the federal law receive this \$2.13 minimum wage.

The tipped workers minimum wage bill is a companion to a [bill to raise New Jersey's minimum wage to \\$8.50](#). That measure was approved last week by the full New Jersey Assembly. If approved by the New Jersey Senate, both measures would end up on the desk of Governor Chris Christie.

For more information, please visit <http://RaiseTheMinimumWage.org/> or contact Tsedeye Gebreselassie at Tsedeye@nelp.org or (917) 297-7622.

The National Employment Law Project is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts research and advocates on issues affecting low-wage and unemployed workers.

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