



**Connecticut Conference
United Church of Christ**

125 Sherman Street
Hartford, CT 06105-6004

**Testimony in Support of S.B. 13: An Act Concerning the Minimum Fair Wage and House Bill 6208:
An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage
Submitted by Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate
Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ
February 9, 2017**

Senator Gomes, Representative Porter, Senator Miner, and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

I am Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate for the Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ, and I am writing today in support of Senate Bill 13: An Act Concerning the Minimum Fair Wage to provide more economic security to Connecticut families by increasing the minimum fair wage. I am also writing to support House Bill 6208: An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage which would increase the minimum wage to fifteen dollars an hour over a five-year period.

I am writing on behalf of the 237 congregations and more than 67,500 people in our state's churches. In fact, the United Church of Christ (UCC) is the largest Protestant denomination in Connecticut. Nationally, the UCC has more than 5,700 congregations with nearly 1 million members. In 2016 the assembled delegates and ministers of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ met and voted on a Resolution that calls upon the Connecticut Conference to support the implementation of a minimum wage of \$15 per hour.

The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ works to make the world a place where all people may live in the fullness of life. But still today, poverty stunts lives. Rising economic inequality inhibits opportunity and creates insecurity.¹ The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ is in support of Economic Justice for all and increasing the minimum wage helps foster Economic Justice.

In Connecticut today, many full-time minimum wage workers earn wages which do not exceed the federal poverty standard. No one should be working full-time and living in poverty. Raising the minimum wage will be beneficial for families and for the state's economy. Workers with a little extra income spend their money in their local communities, improving the overall economic outlook.

Over 30% of all workers in Connecticut earn less than \$15 per hour and these workers are disproportionately female, Black, Latino and nearly one-third of them have children. Ninety percent of workers who would benefit from a \$15 minimum wage are adults, over the age of twenty.² Everyone who works should be able to afford their basic needs.

All of God's children deserve to earn a living wage so that they can support their families. The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ therefore urges the Labor and Public Employees Committee to support Senate Bill 13 and House Bill 6208, which would raise the minimum wage incrementally to fifteen dollars per hour.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to supply written testimony.

Blessings,
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¹ United Church of Christ Economic Justice Movement

² Connecticut Low Wage Employer Advisory Board

God is still speaking,

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