

2ND DISTRICT
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REPLY TO:



Senate of Pennsylvania

February 12, 2021

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TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

SENATE PHILADELPHIA DELEGATION,
CHAIR

Dear Members of the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation:

The past 11 months have been an extremely challenging time for Pennsylvania and our nation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This public health crisis has impacted all of us, but we continue to persevere through the strength of our frontline workforce and through the invaluable support provided by Congress to the Commonwealth. We thank you for your leadership in this time and ask you to extend your advocacy for Pennsylvania's workers and their families by supporting the adoption of federal legislation to raise the nation's minimum wage.

There are many economic reasons to justify raising the federal minimum wage, which has been mired at just \$7.25 per hour since 2009. However, raising the minimum wage is fundamentally a moral issue. It's about ensuring that all workers receive fair pay for their hard work and that they can fulfill their families' most-basic needs. In addition, raising the minimum wage will help us to eliminate gender-based and race-based income disparities.

At the current rate, a full-time minimum wage worker earns just \$15,000 a year before deductions. That is barely \$2,000 above the poverty level for a single adult and more than \$2,000 below the poverty level for a single parent with one child. To put that into perspective, in Pennsylvania the median rent for a one-bedroom apartment is about \$938 per month. For a minimum wage worker, that leaves few dollars to pay for necessities like food, healthcare, childcare, transportation, and student debt.

It is no surprise that many low-wage earners turn to second jobs and third jobs to make ends meet. The hours they must spend on the clock deprive them of valuable time with their families, as well as opportunities to further their education and pursue advanced skills that would lead to better career opportunities.

Twenty-nine states have already recognized the inadequacy of the \$7.25 minimum wage and they have acted to rectify this injustice. Twenty states have raised their minimum wage in 2021 alone and three more are scheduled to do so later this year.

It is crucial to note that these raises have not triggered the widespread job losses as predicted by critics. On the contrary, raising the minimum wage benefits workers and employers, and it stimulates the economy. It puts more money into the pockets of consumers, money they are likely to spend in their communities. For businesses, raising the minimum wage results in increased sales, improved employee retention, and improved employee productivity.

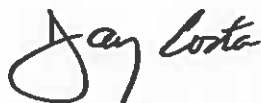
As members of the Democratic Caucus of the Pennsylvania Senate, we are working diligently in Harrisburg to raise the minimum wage for our state. All six of our neighboring states have already raised their minimum wage, including three that are on a path to \$15 per hour. The forthcoming Senate Bill 12 proposes to do the same for the Commonwealth. Unfortunately, the Pennsylvania General Assembly has not adopted a raise in the minimum wage since 2006.

Nonetheless, we continue to fight on the state level for a long-overdue raise in the minimum wage, and we respectfully urge you to do the same in the U.S. Capitol. We support the Raise the Wage Act of 2021 and ask you to adopt this legislation so that Pennsylvania's lowest-paid workers, and their counterparts throughout the nation, can rely on fair, family-sustaining, and equitable pay for the essential work they perform.

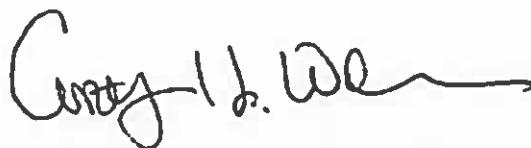
Sincerely,



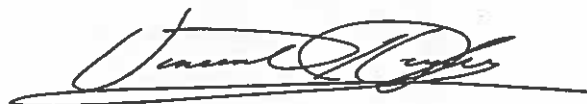
Senator Christine Tartaglione, 2nd District



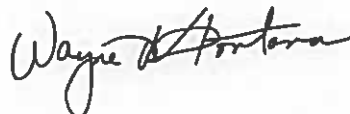
Senator Jay Costa, 43rd District



Senator Anthony H. Williams, 8th District



Senator Vincent Hughes, 7th District



Senator Wayne Fontana, 42nd District



Senator Maria Collett, 12th District



Senator Katie Muth, 44th District



Senator Judith Schwank, 11th District



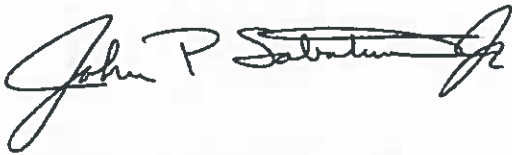
Senator Nikil Saval, 1st District



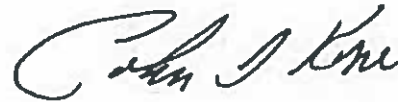
Senator Sharif Street, 3rd District



Senator Art Haywood, 4th District



Senator John Sabatina, 5th District



Senator John Kane, 9th District



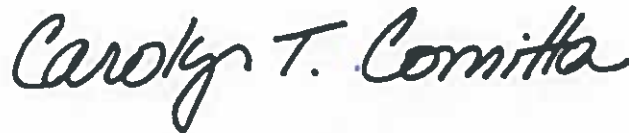
Senator Steve Santarsiero, 10th District



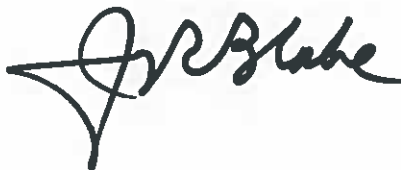
Senator Amanda M. Cappelletti, 17th District



Senator Lisa Boscola, 18th District



Senator Carolyn T. Comitta, 19th District



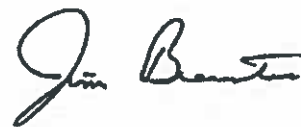
Senator John Blake, 22nd District



Senator Tim Kearney, 26th District



Senator Lindsey Williams, 38th District



Senator Jim Brewster, 45th District