

Issue: Minimum wage

Inequity Waits in Virginia

Background

- Do you know anyone who works 8-10-hour days and earns \$2.13/hour, without overtime or benefits? Yes, you do. You typically patronize their establishments every week.
- In Virginia, \$2.13/hour is the mandatory wage a restaurant must pay a waiter or waitress who gets tips.
- Your tips, intended to reward good service, are actually a main part of their salary —often the bulk of the money contributing to the workers' minimum wage.
- In seven other states, food-service employers pay full minimum wage themselves; tips are extra and their businesses thrive.
- The workforce locked into this system totals 367,800 people in Virginia — 9% of the state's employees.
- Nationally, nearly half of the families of full-service restaurant workers are enrolled in one or more public assistance programs. So not only do your tips help Virginia restaurants avoid paying the minimum wage, your taxes are needed so these workers can make a subsistence living.

Democratic Position

Eleven times since 2014, Virginia's Democratic legislators have tried to raise the \$7.25 minimum wage. Eleven times, the bills died in the Republican-controlled Commerce & Labor committee.

Republican Position

Republicans don't care if their decisions ensure that taxpayers "pay the freight" for food service workers. Democrats do.