

# MINIMUM WAGE

## 10 Reasons Raising the Minimum Wage to \$10.10 Is a Women's Issue

### Today's reality:

1. About two-thirds of minimum wage workers are women. The federal minimum wage is just \$7.25 per hour.
2. \$2.13 per hour is the minimum cash wage for tipped workers. Over 70 percent of restaurant servers are women – and their poverty rate is nearly 3 times higher than the rate for the workforce as a whole.
3. Nearly 4 in 10 female minimum wage workers are women of color (compared to just over one-third of working women overall).
4. More than 3 out of 4 women earning the minimum wage are age 20 or older, and most do not have a spouse's income to rely on.
5. Women working full time, year round are typically paid only 77 cents for every dollar paid to their male counterparts – a 23 cent wage gap.

### If the Fair Minimum Wage Act were implemented:

6. More than 15 million women would get a raise, including more than 1 in 5 working mothers.
7. A mother with two children working full time at the minimum wage would earn enough to pull her family out of poverty, instead of falling more than \$4,000 below the poverty line.
8. The wage gap could shrink. The average wage gap in states with a minimum wage at or above \$8.00 (18.1 cents) is 22 percent smaller than the average wage gap in states with a \$7.25 minimum wage (23.3 cents).
9. Workers in tipped occupations, two-thirds of whom are women, would have a more adequate and stable base income.
10. The higher wage floor would improve job quality in the low-wage jobs that are disproportionately filled by women, which have been – and are expected to continue – driving the economic recovery. It would also spur new job growth by adding billions of dollars to the economy.

The Fair Minimum Wage Act (H.R. 1010/S. 460) and the Minimum Wage Fairness Act (S. 1737) would raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour by 2016, gradually increase the tipped minimum cash wage to 70 percent of the minimum wage, and index both wages to keep up with inflation.

For more information, visit [www.nwlc.org/minimumwage](http://www.nwlc.org/minimumwage).

**Sources:**

1. NWLC calculations based on Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Characteristics of Minimum Wage Workers, 2012, *available at* <http://www.bls.gov/cps/minwage2012tbls.htm> [hereinafter BLS Min. Wage Characteristics] (Table 1) (last visited Feb. 3, 2014). This is true for both those 16 and older (64 percent) and 25 and older (66 percent). The term "minimum wage workers" refers to workers making the federal minimum wage or less.
2. Restaurant Opportunities Ctr. United, Tipped Over the Edge, at 1 (Feb. 2012), *available at* <http://rocunited.org/tipped-over-the-edge-gender-inequity-in-the-restaurant-industry/>.
3. Women of color are 38.7 percent of all female minimum wage workers. NWLC calculations based on BLS Min. Wage Characteristics (Table 1), *supra* note 1. This figure assumes 88.2 percent of Hispanics are white. See U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Population Estimates, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Single Year of Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2012 (for people of Hispanic origin in July 2012), [http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=PEP\\_2012\\_PEPALL6N&prodType=table](http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=PEP_2012_PEPALL6N&prodType=table) (last visited Dec. 19, 2013). Women of color are 33.8 percent of all working women. NWLC calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, CPS, 2013 Annual Social and Economic Supplement [hereinafter, CPS, Annual Social and Economic Supplement] (Table PINC-05), [http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032013/perinc/pinc05\\_000.htm](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032013/perinc/pinc05_000.htm) (last visited Dec. 19, 2013).
4. NWLC calculations based on BLS Min. Wage Characteristics (Tables 7 & 8), *supra* note 1. More than three-quarters of women 16 and older and 59 percent of women over 25 earning the minimum wage do not have household income from a spouse.
5. NWLC calculations based on CPS, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Table PINC-05), *supra* note 3.
6. David Cooper, Econ. Policy Inst. (EPI), Supplementary Data: State-by-State Characteristics of Workers Who Would Be Affected by Increasing the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10.10 by July 2016, at 2 (Dec. 2013), *available at* <http://s2.epi.org/files/2013/minimum-wage-state-tables.pdf>, and unpublished EPI estimates.
7. NWLC calculation assuming 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year at \$7.25 per hour. U.S. Census Bureau, Poverty Thresholds for 2013 <https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/index.html> (last visited Feb. 4, 2014).
8. NWLC, Higher State Minimum Wages Promote Fair Pay for Women (Feb. 2014), *available at* <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/higher-state-minimum-wages-promote-fair-pay-women>.
9. NWLC calculations based on BLS, Current Population Survey (CPS), 2012, Table 11, *available at* <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.pdf>.
10. See NWLC, Jobs with Largest Projected Growth 2012-2022: Almost Half are Low-Wage, Nearly Two-Thirds are Female-Dominated (Dec. 2013), *available at* <http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/projectionemploymentfactsheetfinal.pdf>. See also David Cooper, EPI, Raising the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10.10 Would Lift Wages for Millions and Provide a Modest Economic Boost, at 11-13 (Dec. 2013), *available at* <http://s2.epi.org/files/2013/RAISING-THE-FEDERAL-MINIMUM-WAGE-TO-1010-WOULD-LIFT-WAGES-FOR-MILLIONS-AND-PROVIDE-MODEST-ECONOMIC-BOOST.pdf>.