
**For Immediate Release:
ATNJ Supports a Clean \$15 Minimum Wage Bill**

MADISON, NJ, DECEMBER 17, 2018 – Last week, New Jersey Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin introduced a bill that would increase the state’s minimum wage rate to \$15/hour, gradually. Although we, Action Together New Jersey (ATNJ), advocated alongside Governor Murphy, labor groups, and activists throughout the state for this increase, the proposed legislation falls woefully short of our well-documented demands. The bill contains certain provisions that would adversely affect a few key groups within the state. More specifically, the Speaker’s bill forces teens under the age of 18, agricultural workers, seasonal workers, and those at businesses with fewer than ten employees to wait until January of 2029 to reach the \$15/hour rate, a full 5 years after the rest of the state.

Since the earliest stages of the “fight for \$15”, we have asked for clean legislation that would be inclusive of all New Jersey residents. We fought for an initiative that placed an emphasis on a fairer and more prosperous economy. However, this bill, while seemingly progressive, rejects those ideas and will disproportionately affect female workers and communities of color, as they make up a large part of the tipped and agricultural segments of the economy. **Once again, we ask for a clean \$15/hour minimum wage bill, inclusive of all workers within the state, gradually phased in and completed by 2024.** [New Jersey Policy Perspective](#) has definitive facts and figures that show a minimum wage covering as many workers as possible is crucial to growing New Jersey’s economy. This is what we need.

New Jersey’s Democrats control the legislative and the executive branch. This initiative, which was previously vetoed by the Republican Christie Administration, has its best chances at success in this current environment. Governor Murphy has come out in support of this increase to a \$15 minimum wage, with a clean bill, so that no one working a full-time job should live in poverty. We need to capitalize on the political make up of our government and deliver on the promises made to New Jersey’s workers and often overlooked groups such as teen, agricultural, and tipped workers in the state of New Jersey. We strongly urge the New Jersey state Legislature to act boldly on this legislation with confidence of support from New Jersey’s grassroots movement that resulted in the Democratic Party flipping four of the five congressional districts in the midterm elections.

John George
Economic Policy Director
Action Together New Jersey

About Action Together New Jersey

ATNJ, a non-profit progressive group, is the largest grassroots organization in New Jersey. ATNJ has chapters in every county, because change is local. Functioning as a central command for statewide initiatives and legislative actions, ATNJ’s teams work with coalitions of like-minded groups to serve the public by educating the electorate, providing a platform for progressive candidates, advancing legislative proposals with elected officials, and working in concert with advocacy groups for human rights. ATNJ seeks to promote equality and progressive ideals and to secure a more inclusive, fair and equitable future for New Jersey and the nation. For more information, visit www.ATNJ.org.

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