



Why Living Wages Matter

Our state's economy works best when all working people are able to meet their basic needs through access to good paying jobs. A full-time worker in Massachusetts earning the current minimum wage of \$11 an hour makes only \$22,880 a year. A minimum wage earner would have to work 94 hours every week in order to afford a two-bedroom apartment.

Many workers earning the minimum wage are forced to work three or more jobs to piece together enough money to pay for groceries, housing, heating and other basic needs. No one who works full-time should be paid so little that they cannot make ends meet.

Our Campaign to Raise the Massachusetts Minimum Wage to \$15 an Hour

Our legislation, [H.2365](#) (filed by Rep. Dan Donahue) and [S.1004](#) (filed by Sen. Ken Donnelly), would raise the state's minimum wage by \$1 each year over four years until it is \$15 an hour in 2021. The minimum wage would then be adjusted each year to rise along with increases in the cost of living.

It would also increase the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers, currently \$3.75 an hour, over 8 years until it is equal to the regular minimum wage.

Why We Need a \$15 Minimum Wage for All Workers

Making sure every working person can earn a living wage would help our state's workers, businesses, and economy. A living wage will provide stability to low-wage employees, allowing them to support themselves and their families.

Increasing the minimum wage to \$15 by 2021 would raise the wages of roughly 947,000 workers, or 29 percent of the state's workforce. 91 percent of workers who would be affected are over 20 years old, 56 percent are woman, and 57 percent work full-time. Workers who are paid low wages include highly skilled professions, like nursing assistants, childcare providers and paramedics.

The sub-minimum wage for tipped workers leaves servers at diners, pubs and pancake houses, hairdressers, car wash staff, airport wheelchair and parking attendants, valets and others facing financial uncertainty, and makes them vulnerable to harassment and discrimination. We should join the eight states, including California, Minnesota, and Maine, which have eliminated the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers, without seeing any harm to restaurants or a reduction in tipping.

For employers, higher wages mean more efficient workers and less employee turnover, helping them save money on recruiting and retaining workers. When workers have more money in their pockets, they spend it in their neighborhoods – helping local businesses grow and create more jobs. As the Massachusetts minimum wage has risen over the past three years, the state's economy has added more than 150,000 jobs, and unemployment is at its lowest rate since before the Great Recession.

To ensure continued economic growth in communities across the state, all Massachusetts workers need to earn a living wage so they can pay their bills, provide for their families, and support their local economy.

To get involved in our grassroots movement, go to www.raiseupma.org



Our Priorities

Raise Up Massachusetts is a grassroots coalition of community organizations, religious groups, and labor unions committed to building an economy that works for all of us. An economy that invests in families, gives everyone the opportunity to succeed, and creates broadly shared prosperity.

We are united to ensure Massachusetts continues to be a great place to live, work, and raise a family. Whether motivated by our democratic values or our religious faith or both, we recognize that our fates are connected, we are one community, and we all do better when we all do better. We reject efforts to divide our communities and scapegoat the most vulnerable among us.

We work to pass laws, through the Legislature or at the ballot box, that support working families with jobs that pay a living wage and policies that allow them to balance work and family. To support important investments in our people and communities, we believe everyone should be asked to pay their fair share.

Our Story

Throughout 2013 and 2014, more than 150 organizations and hundreds of grassroots volunteers formed Raise Up Massachusetts and collected more than 350,000 signatures to put minimum wage and earned sick time on the ballot.

In June 2014, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed legislation raising the minimum wage from \$8 to \$11 over three years, avoiding the need for a ballot question. Raise Up Massachusetts then led the campaign to ensure access to earned sick time for all workers in the Commonwealth by passing Question 4 in November 2014.

In 2015 and 2016, Raise Up Massachusetts passed a paid family and medical leave bill in the state Senate, fought to win a \$15 wage for working people as part of the national Fight for \$15 movement, and collected more than 157,000 signatures and won the first of two votes by the full state Legislature needed to advance our Fair Share Amendment towards the 2018 ballot.

Our Agenda

This year, Raise Up Massachusetts is focusing on winning three issues of critical importance to working families in Massachusetts:

Paid Family and Medical Leave will ensure that Massachusetts workers are not forced to choose between work and their own health needs or the well-being of their children and other family members.

A \$15 Minimum Wage will make sure that anyone who works at a job full-time earns a wage they can live on, so they can afford groceries, housing, heating and other basic needs and support their families.

The Fair Share Amendment will invest in quality public schools, affordable higher education, a transportation system that works, and high-quality early childhood education by creating an additional tax of four percentage points on annual income above one million dollars.

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