



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

P.O. Box 6988 Largo, MD 20792
www.ProgressiveMaryland.org
Contact@ProgressiveMaryland.org
Facebook.com/ProgressiveMaryland
@Progressive_MD

Testimony on Maryland Senate Bill 803 Labor and Employment - Payment of Minimum Wage - Tipped Employees

TO: Senator Arthur Ellis, and members of the Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Jennifer Mendes Dwyer, Deputy Executive Director of Progressive Maryland

DATE: March 1, 2023

POSITION: Favorable

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB 803. Progressive Maryland is a grassroots nonprofit organization with regional chapters from Frederick to the Lower Shore and more than 100,000 members and supporters who live in nearly every legislative district in the state. In addition, there are dozens of affiliated community, faith, and labor organizations across the state that stand behind our work. Our mission is to improve the lives of working families in Maryland. Please note our **strong support for SB 803**.

I support the passage of SB0803 to phase out the tipped minimum wage in Maryland. This bill is essential for ensuring economic equity for all workers, particularly low-income and women workers who traditionally rely heavily on tips to make a living wage. Gratuities should be a bonus for a good service, not a customer subsidy to employers for their wage bills.

Currently, these workers receive a subminimum wage of only \$3.63 per hour, which isn't even enough to buy a single gallon of milk let alone much else, and does not reflect the value of their time. This can leave tipped workers mired in poverty despite full time hours and makes it difficult for them to achieve the financial security all full-time workers deserve. Additionally, this bias can lead to pay disparities between men and women in industries historically dominated by women such as hospitality and food service where tips often determine wages. And because tips make up such a large percentage of their income, women who rely on tips are often forced to put up with mistreatment from customers, including sexual harassment, just to ensure that they get a decent paycheck at the end of their work day.

This legislation is thus critical for creating a fairer economy where no worker ever has to worry about being unable to afford basic necessities again and will make an incredible difference in the lives of thousands across Maryland. For these reasons, **I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 803**.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Mendes Dwyer