

Testimony for the Senate Finance Committee

Wednesday, January 31st, 2024

SB 160 - Labor and Employment - Payment of Minimum Wage - Tipped Employees

Favorable

Hello Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Finance committee,

I write to urge your support for Senator Ellis' bill, SB 160. As someone who has worked in the restaurant industry for multiple years I have first hand experience of the difficulties and issues that arise from being paid a sub-minimum wage.

There have been countless instances where I would receive "paychecks" from my employer with zero dollars and zero cents. Their reasoning was that I had received the minimum wage in tips. Even though I personally knew that once taxes would be accounted for I would have made less than Maryland's minimum wage at the time.

History has shown that tipped wages was created as an extension of slavery to ensure Black workers, who predominantly made up tipped workers, would remain in poverty and that their income would be almost entirely determined by the personal feelings of people who saw themselves as superior. This treatment continues to this day, where customers have sexually harassed, made disrespectful and racist comments, and antagonized tipped employees, with the knowledge that they will get away with treating the employee like this sense their income is determined by how much they choose to tip.

Studies have shown that Black women are more likely to receive lower wages than any other race or group of people. I urge you to take a stand against this form of modern-day slavery by providing a favorable report on SB 160.

Respectfully,

Carlos Childs