

Brandywine/TB, Southern Region Neighborhood Coalition

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL SB0160

Labor and Employment – Payment of Minimum Wage – Tipped Employees
Before Senate Finance Committee, February 1, 2024

TO: Senator Pamela Beidle, Vice Chair, Senator Katherine Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Brandywine TB Southern Region Neighborhood Coalition (BTB Coalition)
POSITION: Favorable

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB 0160. The BTB Coalition is the sponsored membership of 2Bridge CDX a “community development locality nonprofit organization”, having HUBS for every county in the State of Maryland, with members and supporters who live throughout the state, and nationally.

In addition, there are dozens of affiliated locality 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 0160. We support the passage of SB 0160 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 leaves it difficult for these workers to achieve the financial security that 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.

As you know, the price of everything has risen in the last several years. we know about the expected raise given to hourly workers but the tip workers have been left off of the bill. Tip workers should be included so that workers can be given an opportunity at an economic increase like all other workers. A factor that weighs heavily on the need of increasing the wage is the major impact that technology has had on the workforce.

Specifically talking about service jobs of the forefront staff at places of employment like bars, hotels restaurants technology has allowed employers to change overall budgets because some of the jobs like the self-check at the grocery stores have allowed the private sector to replace some jobs with devices and innovations that have automated workforces. while this can be viewed any way, you like it what is does more than anything is it allows employers to save money and this should give them the opportunity to embrace an increase in wages to \$15.

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, we respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 0160. To conclude, we support the testimony of the National Women’s Law Center (NWLC), in 2023 testimony in strong support of SB 0160 (the “One Fair Wage” bill).

The ECCB– Neighborhood Leadership Council (NLC) will host a mandatory orientation to ensure newly inducted members understand their roles, expectations on how to serve the organization and community effectively.

If you have questions or concerns, you can refer this matter to ECCB– Neighborhood Leadership Council (NLC) by email at btb.eccb@gmail.com or by phone at 240.681.9070. Thank you for your considerable time and attention.

ECCB– NLC Administrative Chair


Respectfully submitted,

In solidarity, Brandywine/TB Southern Region Neighborhood Coalition; and the Executive Community Citizen’s Board (ECCB) neighborhood Leadership Council