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By: **Delegates Quinter, Anderson, Feldman, Gutierrez, Menes, Ramirez, and Rosenberg**

Introduced and read first time: February 10, 2006

Assigned to: Economic Matters

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Minimum Wage - Constitutional Right and Provisions**

3 FOR the purpose of proposing an addition to the Maryland Constitution to specify  
4 that there is a minimum wage rate in Maryland, as set by the General  
5 Assembly; requiring the Commissioner of Labor and Industry, or the  
6 Commissioner's successor, to annually adjust the minimum wage rate to account  
7 for inflation in a manner established by the Commissioner or the  
8 Commissioner's successor; submitting this amendment to the qualified voters of  
9 the State of Maryland for their adoption or rejection; and generally relating to a  
10 proposed addition to the Maryland Constitution to require a minimum wage  
11 rate annually adjusted for inflation.

12 BY proposing an addition to the Maryland Constitution  
13 New Article X - Employment and Labor  
14 Section 1

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
16 MARYLAND, (Three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses  
17 concurring), That it be proposed that the Maryland Constitution read as follows:

18 **ARTICLE X - EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR**

19 1.

20 (A) ALL WORKING RESIDENTS OF MARYLAND ARE ENTITLED TO BE PAID A  
21 MINIMUM WAGE THAT IS SUFFICIENT TO MAINTAIN A LEVEL CONSISTENT WITH THE  
22 NEEDS OF THE STATE'S POPULATION FOR THEIR GENERAL WELL-BEING AND  
23 HEALTH AND THAT PROTECTS STATE EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES FROM UNFAIR  
24 LOW-WAGE COMPETITION.

25 (B) THERE IS A MINIMUM WAGE RATE IN MARYLAND, AS SET BY THE  
26 GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

27 (C) THE MINIMUM WAGE RATE SHALL BE ANNUALLY ADJUSTED BY THE  
28 COMMISSIONER OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY, OR THE COMMISSIONER'S SUCCESSOR, TO

1 ACCOUNT FOR INFLATION IN A MANNER ESTABLISHED BY THE COMMISSIONER OR  
2 THE COMMISSIONER'S SUCCESSOR.

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the General Assembly  
4 determines that the amendment to the Maryland Constitution proposed by this Act  
5 affects multiple jurisdictions and that the provisions of Article XIV, § 1 of the  
6 Maryland Constitution concerning local approval of constitutional amendments do  
7 not apply.

8 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the foregoing section  
9 proposed as an amendment to the Maryland Constitution shall be submitted to the  
10 legal and qualified voters of this State at the next general election to be held in  
11 November, 2006 for their adoption or rejection in pursuance of directions contained in  
12 Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution. At that general election, the vote on this  
13 proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be by ballot, and upon each ballot  
14 there shall be printed the words "For the Constitutional Amendment" and "Against  
15 the Constitutional Amendment," as now provided by law. Immediately after the  
16 election, all returns shall be made to the Governor of the vote for and against the  
17 proposed amendment, as directed by Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution, and  
18 further proceedings had in accordance with Article XIV.