



Hearing Testimony March 30, 2023  
House Economic Matters Committee  
Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC

## Senate Bill 555 – Fair Wage Act of 2023

### Support with Amendments

Dear Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and members of the House Economic Matters Committee. SEIU Local 500 represents over 20,000 working people in Maryland, Washington D.C., and Virginia. Our union represents the support staff at the Montgomery County Public School system, Family Child Care Providers, Faculty and Staff at several Maryland colleges and universities, staff at non-profits and many other working people across the region. SEIU Local 500 supports with amendments Senate Bill 555 the Fair Wage Act of 2023. We thank Governor Moore for making this one of his legislative priorities during his first term as Governor. While all our members at SEIU Local 500 that are paid hourly are already making \$15 an hour we, like the Governor, believe a rising tide lifts all boats.

For months, Maryland's workers have been contending with inflation, rising costs, and stagnant wages that make it difficult to meet basic needs such as housing, groceries, and child care. Even before today's economic volatility, however, the fact is that nowhere in Maryland can a single adult who works full time achieve a basic standard of living on less than \$15 per hour. Families with children face even bigger challenges, and today 1 in 10 kids in Maryland has a parent earning less than \$15 per hour.

Amendment: Just as important is Governor Moore's proposal to index wages to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to make sure that pay keeps pace with the cost of living here on out. Without indexing low-income families will experience a pay cut every year that Maryland experiences inflation. This provision of the bill was taken out of by the Senate, and we respectfully request that the house reinstate indexing with a minimum cap of 5%.

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**Pia Morrison, President**



With so many of Maryland’s workers facing economic insecurity, we are counting on our legislators to alleviate the growing financial burdens on our communities. Today, we join the chorus of calls urging Maryland’s legislators to help Maryland’s working families put food on the table, to make sure they can pay for housing, and to assist parents in providing their children with the toys, books, clothes, and tools needed to succeed in school. We call on the legislature to support Maryland’s working families, we can help Maryland’s families do more than survive—together, we can move one step closer to securing a fair wage for our workers and help ensure our state thrives.

**We ask for your support for SB 555 and urge a favorable with amendments committee report.**

Thank you each for your dedication to our state and for considering our testimony.

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