

**February 10, 2025**

The Honorable C.T. Wilson  
Chair, House Economic Matters Committee  
Maryland General Assembly  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Support for House Bill 495 – Labor and Employment – Fair Wage Act of 2025**

Dear Chair Wilson and Esteemed Committee Members,

At Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU), we believe that economic justice is essential to building thriving communities. House Bill 495, the Fair Wage Act of 2025, represents a vital step toward ensuring that all Maryland workers are paid a fair and living wage. Raising the minimum wage not only helps lift families out of poverty but also strengthens our local economy and reduces inequities that disproportionately affect Latino and immigrant communities.

For too long, hardworking families have struggled to make ends meet despite holding multiple jobs. Latino workers, who are often concentrated in low-wage industries, know this struggle all too well. They are the backbone of Maryland's construction sites, hospitality businesses, and food service industries—yet their wages often fall short of what is needed to cover the basics of food, housing, and healthcare. HB495 offers these workers the dignity of fair compensation and the ability to provide a more stable future for their families.

Beyond the immediate financial relief it provides, this bill is an investment in healthier, stronger communities. Studies show that raising wages leads to improved health outcomes, higher educational attainment for children, and greater economic mobility. When families have more resources, they are better equipped to participate in their communities and invest in their futures.

At MLU, we envision a Maryland where no family has to choose between paying rent and putting food on the table. The Fair Wage Act of 2025 helps move us closer to that reality. By ensuring fair compensation, this legislation affirms the value of every worker's contribution and strengthens the foundation of equity and justice that we strive to build.

We respectfully urge the Economic Matters Committee to issue a favorable report on HB495. Passing this bill is an important step toward making Maryland a more just, equitable, and prosperous state for all.

Sincerely,  
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