



Sowers of Justice

Catholic Legislative Network

**Action
Alert**

Ask your State Representative & Governor Pawlenty to Raise the Minimum Wage!

April 23rd, 2008

Background:

Minnesota's minimum wage, currently at \$6.15, is simply insufficient to meet the economic needs of workers and their families. Minnesotans value hard work, and we believe that no full-time worker should struggle to make ends meet.

Minimum wage facts:

- If the minimum wage had kept pace with inflation since 1968, it would be \$9.66 per hour.
- Over 300,000 Minnesota jobs pay \$8/hour or less.
- There are 31 states that have a higher minimum wage than Minnesota.

Federal legislation passed last year will move the minimum wage to \$7.25 by July 2009. This is certainly a step in the right direction, but still falls far below a *living* wage. The Minnesota legislature will be voting on **Senate file 875 on May 1st**, which would move the minimum wage to **\$6.75 for small employers and \$7.90 for large employers** by July, 2009.

Of particular concern is winning a decent raise for servers and other tipped employees. The minimum wage must be increased for all workers without exempting tipped employees. The median wage for servers in Minnesota (*including tips*) is \$7.69. The average server is not working at a high-end restaurant; they spend many hours performing non-tipped work, and are likely to share tips with other staff. We need to ensure that there is not a "tip penalty" or "tip credit" added to this legislation.

Archbishop Flynn, testifying to the House Commerce and Labor Committee on February 14th regarding the minimum wage, stated that raising the floor wage "is a matter of justice". He went on to say that "if we believe that people have a right to employment and that they have a duty to provide for their own well being and that of their family, we must also believe that workers have a right to wages and other benefits that are necessary to sustain life in dignity."

Recommended Action:

Call your State Representative and Governor Pawlenty to ask them to support the minimum wage bill (Senate File 875) on May 1st, and to oppose adding a tip penalty.

To find your House member online:

<http://geo.commissions.state.mn.us/districts/start.html>

You may also call House Public Information Services at 651-296-2146

Then, contact Governor Pawlenty to send the same message!

tim.pawlenty@state.mn.us or (651) 296-3391

For more information:

Patrick Ness at (651) 291-4484 or nessp@archspm.org

*If you would like to receive this electronically or if you no longer wish to receive information from us, please contact our office at 651-291-4477 or by email at osj@archspm.org.