

U.S. Rep. Pocan: Leads Democrats in introducing bill to raise the minimum wage

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WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Representative Mark Pocan (WI-02) today joined House and Senate leadership to introduce the [Raise the Wage Act of 2019](#). The bill would gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour in 2024, index future minimum wage increases to median wage growth, and ensure all workers are paid at least the full federal minimum wage by phasing out the subminimum wages for tipped workers, youth workers, and workers with disabilities.

Pocan joined **U.S. Representatives Bobby Scott (VA-03), Chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor, Stephanie Murphy (FL-07), and Donald Norcross (NJ-01)** in leading the introduction of the Raise the Wage Act in the House of Representatives with 181 cosponsors.

“More than a decade after Congress last voted to raise the minimum wage, no family in the United States can live on \$7.25 an hour. Raising the minimum wage is the right thing to do and long past due. While some cities and states have led on this issue, we must raise the wage everywhere – from Madison, Wisconsin, to Mobile, Alabama – to ensure that every American worker can succeed. Every Member of Congress should recognize the urgent need to raise the wage, and if they support a salary of only \$15,080 per year, they should be forced to live on it. I’m proud to co-sponsor this legislation and I look forward to working with my colleagues to advance it through the 116th Congress,” **said Congressman Mark Pocan.**

“A \$15 federal minimum wage affirms the bedrock idea of fairness in our country: that hard work deserves a decent wage. We will open up opportunities for working families and drive economic growth that lifts up all communities – because our economy works best when it works for everyone, not just the wealthy and privileged few. I commend Chairman Bobby Scott and all our House Democrats for their leadership for America’s working men and women, who are the backbone of our country,” **said Speaker Nancy Pelosi.**

“I was proud to help lead the charge to increase the minimum wage the last time Democrats held the House Majority. It has been too long since workers have received the raise they deserve. Democrats promised to improve economic opportunities for workers and their families in the 2018 election, and the introduction today of the Raise the Wage Act as one of our first bills in the Majority demonstrates our intention to keep that promise. I look forward to working with Chairman Scott and Education and Labor Committee Democrats to bring this legislation to the Floor following Committee consideration,” **said House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer.**

“No person working full-time in America should be living in poverty. The Raise the Wage Act will increase the pay and standard of living for nearly 40 million workers across this country. Raising the minimum wage is not only good for workers, it is good for businesses, and good for the economy. When we put money in the pockets of American workers, they will spend that money in their communities. This bill is a stimulus for Main Street America,” **said Chairman Bobby Scott, Committee on Education and Labor.**

“Over the last decade, most working families have seen an increase in the cost of almost everything they need, yet their wages have barely moved. No person who has the dignity of a full time job should face the indignity of not being able to provide for themselves and their loved ones. This bill will finally give hardworking families in central Florida a much-needed raise – putting more money in their pockets to spend at small businesses and helping to grow our economy for everyone,” **said Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy.**

“I’ve worked for minimum wage and I was once a young single dad raising my son and having to balance work, family life and a checkbook. Back then it was hard. Today, for far too many Americans, it’s nearly impossible. No American who works full-time should live in poverty. But that’s exactly what’s happening all around us, and Congress hasn’t even voted to raise wages in over 11 years. When people

finally receive \$15 an hour, they'll spend more, become less reliant on government assistance and give our economy a needed boost," **said Congressman Donald Norcross.**

Senator Bernie Sanders introduced a companion bill in the Senate with 31 cosponsors.

"Just a few short years ago, we were told that raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour was 'radical.' But a grassroots movement of millions of workers throughout this country refused to take 'no' for an answer. It is not a radical idea to say a job should lift you out of poverty, not keep you in it. The current \$7.25 an hour federal minimum wage is a starvation wage. It must be increased to a living wage of \$15 an hour," **said Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT).**

"For a long time, Democrats have been trying to raise the minimum wage to keep pace with the times. The harsh truth of the matter is that the minimum wage is now a poverty wage in too many parts of America. And no American with a full-time job should be living in poverty. Despite campaigning as a champion for working Americans, President Trump has abandoned working Americans while in office. He's tried to strip away workers' health care, given a massive tax cut to corporations and the wealthy, and used workers as bargaining chips in shutting the government down. If President Trump isn't going to stick up for American workers on key issues such as raising the minimum wage, Democrats will," **said Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer.**

"There are millions of women and men across the country who work a full-time job, or work multiple jobs, and are still unable to pay their bills and make ends meet. Women make up almost two-thirds of minimum wage earners and it's even worse for women of color. So I'm proud to introduce the Raise the Wage Act today as one of the many steps we can take to ensure workers, especially the millions of women supporting their families, have the economic security to build better lives," **said Senator Murray, Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.**

To read **the bill text** of the Raise the Wage Act, click [here](#).

To read **the section-by-section** of the Raise the Wage Act, click [here](#).

To read a **fact sheet** on Raise the Wage Act, click [here](#).