

The CT Low Wage Employer Advisory Board Meeting

August 10, 2016 – 3:00 P.M.

The Legislative Office Building, Hartford

Public Hearing Room 1D

Minutes

Members present: Co-Chair Jamie Mills, Co-Chair James Bhandary-Alexander, Stanley McMillen, Merrill Gay, Paul Lavoie, Helene Figueroa, Susan Coleman, Michael Seid and Merle Berkle-Schlessel. **A quorum of members present was reached.**

Members absent: Deborah Schwartz, Eddie Stephens and Kurt Westby.

Other Attendees: CT Department of Labor (DOL) staff Christopher Caruso and Marisa Morello (representing DOL Deputy Commissioner Kurt Westby).

Welcome and opening remarks: After opening remarks, Co-Chair Mills convened the meeting at 3:03 P.M.

Official swearing in of a new Board Member: Co-Chair Mills swore in Monica Morneau as a new Board Member. Her appointing authority was Governor Malloy. Ms. Morneau introduced herself to the Board.

Review and approval of the June 14, 2016 Board Minutes:

Co-Chair Mills entertained a motion by Merle Berkle-Schlessel to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2016 Board Meeting. There being no recommended changes, **the motion was seconded by Stanley McMillen and passed unanimously.**

Review and approval of the July 20, 2016 Board Public Hearing Minutes:

Co-Chair Mills entertained a motion by Helene Figueroa to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2016 Board Public Hearing in Bridgeport. There being no recommended changes, **the motion was seconded by Stanley McMillen and passed unanimously.**

Presentation: The History of the Minimum Wage in Connecticut: Co-Chair Mills introduced her fellow Board Member and Co-Chair James Bhandary-Alexander, Esq. to make the presentation. He is a practicing attorney at the New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Inc. where he represents low-wage workers and their organizations before administrative agencies, and in state and federal courts. His written testimony can be found on the Board's webpage.

Presentation: The Effects of the Minimum Wage on Low-Wage Workers, Employers, Poverty and State Revenue:

Co-Chair Mills introduced her fellow Board Members Dr. Susan Coleman and Dr. Stanley McMillen to make the presentation. Dr. Coleman is Ansley Chair of Finance, Barney School of Business at the University of Hartford. She presented the adverse effects of raising the Minimum Wage would have on Connecticut employers and the business community in general while Dr. McMillen, a visiting professor of Economics at Trinity College and the University of Connecticut, spoke on the benefits of raising the Minimum Wage. Their joint PowerPoint presentation can be found on the Board's webpage.

Open discussion for Members: Co-Chair Mills queried the Board on a number of issues concerning scheduling, future presentations and public hearings. **After discussion, the following items were agreed to by the Board:**

- At the September 14th Board Meeting, the members will have the opportunity to discuss their positions on whether or not to raise the Minimum Wage. It was also agreed, each member will have 5 minutes to answer questions proposed by the Co-Chairs. This approach will allow each member an opportunity to be heard.
- The UMASS presentation scheduled for the October 19th Board meeting will be moved to January, 2017. This will allow the Board to focus attention on its December 1, 2016 mandated report to the Legislature and Commissioners.

Michael Seid announced that he would be unable to attend the September 14th Board Meeting because of business in Washington, D.C.

Public Comment:

No member of the public addressed the Board.

Adjourn:

After Co-Chair Mills thanked the presenters and those members of the public who were in attendance, a motion to adjourn was made by Paul Lavoie and seconded by Co-Chair James Bhandary-Alexander. **The motion passed unanimously and the Board adjourned at 5:00 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted

Christopher Caruso

Connecticut Department of Labor

