

## **The CT Low Wage Employer Advisory Board Meeting**

October 19, 2016 – 3:00 P.M.

The Legislative Office Building, Hartford

Public Hearing Room 1C

### **Minutes**

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

**Members absent:** Eddie Stephens, Susan Coleman, Monica Morneau 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 Bhandary-Alexander convened the Board meeting at 3:03 P.M.

#### **Review and approval of the September 14, 2016 Board Minutes:**

Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander entertained a motion by Michael Seid to amend the minutes under the section, "Discussion by Board Members," to include the fact that his written testimony was in opposition to raising the Minimum Wage. Deborah Schwartz asked that it also be included that Eddie Stephens' email sent to the Board was in favor of raising the Minimum Wage. There being no further corrections, **the motion to amend was seconded by Deborah Schwartz and passed unanimously.**

#### **Presentation: "The State of Working Connecticut," Ray Noonan, Associate Policy Fellow,**

**Connecticut Voices for Children:** After Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander acknowledged the good work and policy initiatives of Voices for Children; he introduced Mr. Noonan and Derek Thomas. Mr. Noonan's written testimony and Power Point presentation on behalf of Connecticut Voices for Children can be found on the Board's Webpage under the October 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

#### **Subcommittee Report: Board's draft report:**

Helene Figueroa announced that the Subcommittee has held several telephone conferences to discuss the draft. In some of those conferences, Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander participated. Stan McMillen, who co-wrote the draft report with the drafting subcommittee, explained each section to the Board, and welcomed feedback. Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander acknowledged Mr. McMilen's work and excellent

summary. It was suggested that the vote taken at the April 21, 2016 Board meeting to make raising the Minimum Wage the first item of business for the December report, be included in the final draft. Stanley McMillen agreed to include the vote. Michael Seid recalled that he did not vote in favor of making the Minimum Wage the first item for consideration by the Board. Deborah Schwartz felt that the minutes will bear out the accuracy of the vote. Michael Seid also announced that he will be writing his own minority report in opposition to raising the Minimum Wage. Stanley McMillen acknowledged that he included in the draft report opposing views to raising the Minimum Wage. Paul Lavoie asked how \$15.00 per hour was chosen rather than \$19.00 or \$21.00 per hour to reflect a truly living wage. Stanley McMillen said he will include the rationale for \$15.00 as part of the report. Several Board members acknowledged that raising the Minimum Wage does not solve all issues and effects of poverty, but it's a step in the right direction to help low wage earners and their families.

**Discussion by Board Members:** Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander led discussion on the timeline for members to submit suggestions to the Subcommittee drafting the report. It was agreed that members would have 2 weeks to submit any suggestions to Deborah Schwartz and or Stanley McMillen. A final draft of the report will be voted on at the November 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

**Public Comment:**

No member of the public addressed the Board.

**Adjourn:**

After Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander thanked the Board and those members of the public who were in attendance, a motion to adjourn was made by Paul Lavoie and seconded by Helene Figueroa. **The motion passed unanimously and the Board adjourned at 4:08 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted  
Christopher Caruso  
Connecticut Department of Labor