

# County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2020 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 12

## Resolution No. 143-2020

Introduced by: Liz Walsh

A Resolution declaring policy support by the Howard County Council for the "Fight For \$15" Coalition, which successfully advocated for the passage and eventual enactment of a phased-in \$15 per hour minimum wage for Marylanders, and for maintaining the first minimum wage phase-in as enacted, effective January 1, 2021.

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Introduced and read first time on September 8, 2020.

By order

Diane Schwartz Jones  
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

Read for a second time and a public hearing held on September 21, 2020.

By order

Diane Schwartz Jones  
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted , Adopted with amendments , Failed , Withdrawn  by the County Council on October 5, 2020.

Certified by

Diane Schwartz Jones  
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing language; TEXT IN ALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing language. Strike-out indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

1 **WHEREAS**, the “Fight For \$15” Coalition successfully advocated for the passage and the  
2 eventual enactment in 2019 of a phased-in \$15 per hour minimum wage for Marylanders;  
3 and  
4

5 **WHEREAS**, during the deliberation of the Fight For \$15 legislation (HB166/SB280), the  
6 Maryland General Assembly added Section 3-413.1 to the Labor and Employment  
7 Article of the Maryland Annotated Code, which grants the Board of Public Works the  
8 discretion to delay a scheduled increase to the minimum wage if it determines that a  
9 certain economic indicator warrants such a delay; this provision became known as the  
10 “off ramp;” and  
11

12 **WHEREAS**, Board of Public Works Members Peter V.R. Franchot, Maryland Comptroller, and  
13 Nancy K. Kopp, Maryland State Treasurer, constituting a majority of the Board, have  
14 expressed support for the first phase-in of the wage increase to proceed as originally  
15 intended, for which we express our gratitude (see e.g., June 23, 2020: Maryland’s  
16 Minimum Wage Increase Likely to Go Forward, Despite Opposition from Business  
17 Groups, by Pamela Wood, Baltimore Sun); and  
18

19 **WHEREAS**, throughout the entirety of the COVID-19 pandemic, certain front-line workers  
20 deemed essential—including health and elder care support workers, childcare workers,  
21 grocery store employees, restaurant workers, commercial cleaning crews, landscape and  
22 construction labor, and delivery and transit workers—have sacrificed and placed  
23 themselves in harm’s way as other Marylanders have adhered to the Governor’s stay-at-  
24 home order; we honor their service to our communities; and  
25

26 **WHEREAS**, an increase to the minimum wage will benefit these essential workers and their  
27 families, among all of Maryland’s working families; and  
28

29 **WHEREAS**, the first phase-in is scheduled to take effect January 1, 2021, increasing  
30 Maryland’s minimum wage from \$11.00 per hour to \$11.75 per hour; and

1  
2 **WHEREAS**, while the present and near-future economic circumstances for Maryland generally  
3 may be uncertain and rather bleak, for working families the financial strain resulting from  
4 COVID-19 is certain to be much worse; and

5  
6 **WHEREAS**, the Howard County Council accordingly believes that now is not the time to delay  
7 the January 1, 2021-scheduled increase to Maryland’s minimum wage, and that the Board  
8 of Public Works should decline to exercise its discretion to do so; and

9  
10 **WHEREAS**, along with many elected officials from across the State of Maryland, the Howard  
11 County Council fully supports the goals of the Fight For \$15 Coalition to protect  
12 Maryland’s essential workers.

13  
14 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the County Council of Howard County,  
15 Maryland, that we hereby declare our full support of the goals of the Fight For \$15  
16 Coalition, and for maintaining the first scheduled increase to Maryland’s minimum wage  
17 enacted by the Maryland General Assembly in 2019, effective January 1, 2021; and

18  
19 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this Resolution shall be sent to:  
20 The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor, State of Maryland  
21 The Honorable Peter V.R. Franchot, Comptroller,  
22 The Honorable Nancy K. Kopp, Treasurer  
23 The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, House Speaker  
24 The Honorable William C. Ferguson, IV, Senate President

**Office of the County Auditor  
Auditor's Analysis**

**Council Resolution No. 143-2020**

Introduced: September 8, 2020

Auditor: Michelle R. Harrod

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Fiscal Impact:

The proposed legislation does not have a fiscal impact.

The passage of this legislation would not change the state-proposed minimum wage and therefore does not impact the revenue or expense of the County.

Purpose:

The purpose of this legislation is for the Howard County Council to express full support for the Fight For \$15 Coalition. It further supports maintaining the first scheduled minimum wage increment effective January 1, 2021.

Other Comments:

If passed, a copy of this resolution shall be sent to:

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor, State of Maryland  
The Honorable Peter V.R. Franchot, Comptroller  
The Honorable Nancy K. Kopp, Treasurer  
The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, House Speaker  
The Honorable William C. Ferguson, IV, Senate President

House Bill 166 and Senate Bill 280, passed by the Maryland General Assembly, grants the State Board of Public Works the authority to delay the scheduled increase to the minimum wage.



**Testimony: Favorable**  
**Resolution CR-143-2020**

Good evening Madam Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Howard County Council:

We cannot afford to live in a world, where others cannot even afford to live.

My name is Christopher Stevenson, and I serve as the Senior Policy Analyst with 1199SEIU- the largest healthcare workers union in the country. Our members are hospital and nursing home workers, but I'm here before you today to discuss all workers. Essential workers – including healthcare workers, sanitation workers, and grocery store workers, to name a few – are on the frontlines of the COVID19 pandemic, and most of them make under \$15/hour. These workers are facing life and death situations every day due to current COVID-19 working conditions, so it is at the very least incumbent upon us to remain steadfast to ensure, workers receive a livable wage.

An increase in minimum wage offers the opportunity to sustain a life where the concerns of today are not the concerns of tomorrow. It allows businesses to receive more consumer spending, increases the circulation of overall spending, and as history has shown, it has helped the United States recover from economic turmoil like the one we're in now. But for the worker, it allows families to keep their homes, which in nature, is the very make up to every family's security and foundation. For this reason, we support Resolution CR-143-2020,.

We must keep in mind that a increase in minimum wage is not a pre-COVID or post-COVID issue, this is a human life issue. All too often we find ourselves in situations where we're able to purchase amenities or essentials, despite if we truly need them or not. Most workers do not have that luxury. Workers deserve a raise that can bring about a life of meaning, of substance and dignity. The majority of workers who earn under \$15 an hour are women and People of Color, two categories of people that history has shown are constantly marginalized. By voting for this resolution, you are supporting a critical component needed to reduce gender and racial pay gaps.

Our healthcare heroes need a raise. The sanitation workers that pick up your trash need a raise. The teachers that guide our children's future need a raise. And the best way to thank them for their work is not to present them with an award or a proclamation, but to ensure they receive their fair share. For the sake of working families and business owners, please vote Yes on this Resolution and continue your support for the \$15/hour minimum wage. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Christopher Stevenson  
MD/DC Sr. Policy Analyst  
1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East