

I am an owner of a restaurant in NYS. I am very concerned and annoyed to read that Governor Cuomo is considering raising the minimum wage for wait staff. If you truly cared about NY businesses you would not continue to listen to the radical liberals who do not understand economics. To my knowledge and yes I worked as a waitress for many years, I always made more than \$20 an hour once tips were factored in.) Since I still do waitress when needed at my own business, I would vote against this. The radical liberals do not realize that they will in fact hurt service workers more than helping them with this ridiculous proposal. I am sure if you surveyed them, most would tell you that they make more than \$8 an hour, even on bad days.

Now I do agree that there are some establishments that do not treat their workers fairly but it is a free world so employees have the right to leave a place of employment if they are being taken advantage of. And I do understand the importance of paying service people minimum wage when they are not making enough tips. But I do not think a overall change like the one proposed is the best way to go. As I said, the radical liberals do not stop to think of the consequences. For example, you make this change and require restaurants and others to start paying minimum wage. The following could happen: people stop tipping. So now you had a person making \$15 to \$20 or \$25 per hour once you factor in tips to now making \$8 an hour. Our waitresses are worried that this will happen. \$2 – small businesses like ours may not be able to afford to pay the additional monies per hour. So people lose their jobs.

In NYS, small businesses are already burdened with so many other taxes, licenses, fees, etc that every day we contemplate closing. NYS does not help small businesses like restaurants as they advertise on TV. NYS only helps businesses that do not need help. Perhaps you should get out of Albany and really talk to people.

If you are so worried about helping people, why don't you do something about hostile work environments, bullying and targeting. I experienced this when I worked for a non profit in Ithaca, NY. I went to the Worker's Center in Tompkins County (the one supporting this lunacy) and there wasn't one thing that they could do for me. How ridiculous is that? I had proof and everything. I reported the business to the Labor Dept and they did nothing as well. Then I had another experience where I worked for an economic development agency and yes my boss sits on Cuomo's economic development group where the Lieutenant Governor participates. This boss is actually fraudulently using funds (grant funds) and she is bullying, targeting and harassing employees. I suffered at that place as well because of this hostile environment. Then the boss recently fired two other employees because they did not go along with her fraudulent ways. She is stealing from the organization and authorizing bad vouchers, false expense reports, etc. And yes this is part of Cuomo's economic development group. How sad is that? So my point is: there are a number of things that could be done to help workers, but NYS does not care about any of those things. They only look at ways of hurting hardworking people. If I was a minority or an immigrant, I would have it a lot easier than I do now. I was told that it was too bad that I was a white woman because they could not do anything to help me! (quote from the Human Rights Commission when I complained about the horrible treatment that I suffered. Yes it was health threatening.)

As far as the restaurant: We opened almost 10 years ago. We started out paying our wait staff \$6 an hour and we continue to do so today. Of course with all of the increases, our pay doesn't look so good now. We always pay the staff minimum wage on slow nights even if they still make enough in tips to get them over the minimum amount. We do not take advantage of our staff. We are small but we do our best to help them out. So yes I am offended by this new legislation!!

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