



Testimony from Manuel Antonio Romero Lopez (917-742-6830)
Tipped Workers Deserve a Raise

My name is Manuel Antonio Romero Lopez and I am a member of Make the Road New York. I have lived in Queens for the last seven years. I came to New York City from Nicaragua because life in my country is so difficult. I have four children who depend on me back in Nicaragua.

Since arriving in this country, I have worked in several restaurants. I have worked as a waiter, busboy and cook at fast food restaurants, fine dining restaurants and bars. I started working at a restaurant in Grand Central as a prep cook and busboy. They told me I would earn the minimum wage plus tips, but it turned out I was earning \$5 an hour plus tips. They promised me that with the tips it was going to be a decent salary, but that was not the case. I worked long hours, but I didn't take home enough to support my family and myself. I felt terrible because my family depends on me and I couldn't send them any money. I wasn't earning enough to survive so I didn't have anything to send them.

We work very hard and we deserve an increase in the minimum wage just like other workers in the state of New York. It's difficult to work for tips because we have no control over how much money we'll take home and, unfortunately, many restaurant owners take advantage of their workers. We also need a raise because the cost of living in New York is so high and is always going up.

Thank you.

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