

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 57

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED JULY 25, 1996

By Senators LESNIAK, CASEY, Baer, Adler, O'Connor, Kenny,  
Bryant, Codey, Girgenti, Rice, Sacco, Lipman, McGreevey, Lynch,  
Zane and MacInnes

1    **A SENATE RESOLUTION** memorializing Congress to enact legislation to  
2       increase the federal minimum wage to \$5.15 per hour over two years.  
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4    **WHEREAS**, The current federal minimum wage of \$4.25 per hour has not been  
5       raised since 1991; and  
6    **WHEREAS**, Inflation has caused the purchasing power of the minimum wage  
7       to decline 11% since 1991 and 38% since 1968, when the minimum wage  
8       was at its historic high point of \$6.81 per hour in 1995 dollars; and  
9    **WHEREAS**, Most minimum wage workers depend on their wages for survival,  
10       with 69% of minimum wage workers 20 years old or older, and only 7%  
11       of minimum wage workers being teen-age students from families with  
12       above-average earnings; and  
13   **WHEREAS**, A full-time worker earning the minimum wage earns only \$8,500  
14       per year, an amount far below the \$12,190 per year poverty line for a  
15       family of three, although the minimum wage was sufficient to raise such a  
16       family out of poverty as recently as 1980; and  
17   **WHEREAS**, The inadequacy of the minimum wage has resulted in more than  
18       eight million working Americans living below the official poverty level,  
19       including almost five million who work full-time; and  
20   **WHEREAS**, The declining earnings of low wage workers have contributed to  
21       the increasing inequality of earnings and wealth which is polarizing  
22       American society and, if continued, may even have the potential to  
23       adversely impact the nation's democratic values and institutions; and  
24   **WHEREAS**, More than 80% of the American public supports an increase in  
25       the minimum wage as a way to increase the value of all work and as a  
26       matter of basic fairness in a time of record profits and skyrocketing  
27       corporate executive compensation; and  
28   **WHEREAS**, It is almost impossible for increases in the minimum wage to have  
29       a significant negative effect on international or even interstate  
30       competitiveness in most cases, because most jobs paying the minimum  
31       wage are in economic sectors which rely principally on local markets, such  
32       as food services, building services and retail trade in nondurable goods;  
33       and

6   **WHEREAS**, More than 12 million working Americans would directly benefit if  
7       the minimum wage was increased to \$5.15 per hour, as proposed in the  
8       "Working Wage Increase Act," now pending before the United States  
9       Senate as Senate Bill, No. 413 and before the House of Representatives  
10      as House Bill, No 940; now, therefore,

13  
14 1. The Congress of the United States is respectfully memorialized to enact  
15 the "Working Wage Increase Act," now pending as House Bill, No.940 and  
16 Senate Bill, No.413.

35 Memorializes Congress to increase federal minimum wage.