## **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

1	WHEREAS, Casting doubt on the frequent assertion that a higher minimum
2	wage will increase unemployment is the fact that, during the last 55 years,
2	the decades in which the federal minimum wage had the greatest earning
4	power were also the decades with the lowest average rates of
5	unemployment; 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,
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12	<b>BE IT RESOLVED</b> by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:
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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.
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18	2. Duly authenticated copies of this resolution, signed by the President of
19	the Senate and attested by the Secretary thereof, shall be transmitted to the
20	President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of
21	Representatives, the majority and minority leaders of both House's of
22	Congress, and every member of Congress elected from this State.
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25	STATEMENT
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27	This resolution memorializes the Congress of the United States to enact
28	into law S.413 or H.R.940, the "Working Wage Increase Act," which would
29	increase the federal minimum hourly wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15 over two
30	years.
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35	Memorializes Congress to increase federal minimum wage.