



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Squadron, Rozic, & Low Wage Workers Announce “Fair Wage” Act

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### **Bill Would Require Large Businesses Who Can Most Afford It To Pay Employees \$15/Hour**

NEW YORK – Today, State Senator Daniel Squadron and Assemblymember Nily Rozic, along with Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, members of New York Communities for Change, the Working Families Party, and Make the Road New York, low wage workers, and elected officials announced the “Fair Wage” Act (S6455) which would require large employers and chain stores to pay their employees a real living wage of \$15 an hour indexed to inflation.

The bill is part of a broader push to raise wages in New York to better align with the high cost of living. Higher wage minimums, focused on businesses that can most afford it, are also gaining significant momentum across the country.

“Workers deserve a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work,” said **Senator Daniel Squadron**. “New York’s minimum wage does not go far enough to keep families out of poverty. Large chains, from McDonalds to 7-Eleven, have higher profits and lower costs, yet they still pay their workers poverty wages. We should raise the wage across the board in New York -- and require those businesses that can most afford it to pay more.”

"Hardworking New Yorkers should no longer have to live in poverty. Taking a stand for the working and middle class families of New York and ensuring that workers have a decent living wage won't just better our economy, it's the right thing to do," said **Assemblywoman Nily Rozic**. "I am proud to join Senator Squadron in sponsoring The Fair Wage Act and working to get it done."

“No one who works should be poor – and New Yorkers deserve fair wages from profitable companies. I stand with State Sen. Squadron and working New Yorkers in supporting the Fair Wage Act,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer**

"No one can survive on \$8 an hour. The Fair Wages Act is a great opportunity to ensure our workers are not exploited by big box and chain stores and are paid a living wage," said **New York Communities for Change Political and Legislative Director Gabriel Gallucci**.

"If we are going to truly build up New York, we have to put money back in workers' pockets. Last year's minimum wage increase was a good first step but did not go far enough. Our city and state can do better! I applaud Senator Dan Squadron's 'Fair Wages Act' which would require big box stores to pay a living wage so that families don't have to choose between food and shelter," said **Priciliano Hernandez, member of Make the Road New York**.

"It used to be that workers making minimum wage would have enough to live above the poverty line. Now, low wage workers fall far below while big corporations like McDonalds and Walmart, who refuse to pay their workers a living wage, reap enormous profits. It's time to force these companies to take some responsibility and raise wages so our workers won't be forced to live in poverty. We commend Senator Squadron for standing up for millions of workers and their families in this important fight," said **Austin Shafran, New York State Legislative Director for the Working Families Party**.

"The promise of the American dream is if you study hard and you work hard, you will succeed. This dream is getting more and more out of reach because large companies are cheating their employees out of a fair wage. It is time we stop this wage theft in New York State and require large companies to pay a living wage to their employees. Requiring a fair wage helps not only those who work for these companies, but it also lessens the tax burden on everyone by easing the pressure on public assistance programs. It is time that New Yorkers stopped footing the bill for big business," said **Senator Toby Ann Stavisky**.

"It's 2014 -- it simply shouldn't be acceptable any longer for men and women who are working full-time to nonetheless remain in poverty. We must push back against this pernicious, race-to-the-bottom mentality on wages and recommit ourselves to building a society we can be proud of, where work is valued," said **Senator Liz Krueger**.

The Fair Wage Act (S6455), sponsored by Senator Squadron and Assemblymember Rozic, establishes a \$15 an hour living wage and ties increases to the cost of living so that workers' real earning power doesn't decline as housing and other costs rise. The legislation would apply to large businesses who have annual gross revenues of at least \$50 million a year and chain stores that have 11 or more locations throughout the United States. The legislation also covers franchisees and transportation businesses. According to the National Employment Law Project, localities across the country have passed higher minimum wages or living wages including San Francisco, SeaTac, San Jose, Washington, D.C., Montgomery County, MD, and Prince George's County, MD.