



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

JFK Airport Rally To Raise The Minimum Wage

JAMES SANDERS JR. November 19, 2014

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On Tuesday afternoon, Unite Here Local 100, Senator James Sanders, Jr., Senator-elect Leroy Comrie, Assemblyman David Weprin, Assemblyman Victor M. Pichardo, Speaker of the New York City Council **Melissa Mark-Viverito** and Councilman **Rory Lancman** joined community organizations to support Airport Workers in their quest to receive a living wage. In July, Governors Andrew Cuomo, Chris Christie and the Port Authority of New York and New

Jersey announced an agreement which enabled employees of contractors and subcontractors at JFK and LaGuardia airports earning minimum wage to receive pay increases from \$9 to \$10.10, linked to increases in the consumer price index, went into effect July 31, 2014.

While many airport workers benefitted from last year's agreement, a significant void was left amongst airport food service workers. Recognizing the needs of the more than 7,500 employees who were left out of the deal, Senator Sanders, elected officials and Community groups partnered with Unite Here Local 100 to help advocate for increased wages for not only airport workers, but all New Yorkers.

Over the past several years, New Yorkers have seen their wages diminish with high rates of inflation. Despite hard-working New Yorkers' best efforts to provide a quality life for their families, they often find themselves struggling to make ends meet. Supporters at the rally advocated for the passage of Sen. Sanders Fair Wage Act, which will raise the minimum wage for all New Yorkers to \$10.10 linked to the consumer price index and also authorizes local municipalities to set their own minimum wage up to 30% higher than the state minimum wage.

"Families are hurting under the pressures of mounting debt and seeing the value of their dollar diminished year after year," said Sen. James Sanders, Jr. "New Yorkers need to see real change through the passage of legislation that grants them not only a temporary reprieve from financial pressures, but a living wage that is linked to the consumer price index to ensure inflation does not wash away any gains they make."

Sen. Sanders' colleagues in the legislature also expressed their support for wage increases. "Despite the small gains in the minimum wage we have made, we must keep fighting for a living wage, one that would allow working families to carry themselves out of poverty and

ascend into the middle class,” said Assemblyman David Weprin. “To restore our economy, we must expand our robust middle class, and increase the spending power of working families in New York. I wholeheartedly support the movement to raise the wage for airport food and retail workers to \$10.10 per hour, and beyond. I will work with my colleagues in government to press the issue on behalf of working men and women in our great State of New York.”

“At JFK, Newark and LaGuardia, our catering and concession workers are here around-the-clock making sure that these airports are ready to send you on your journey with a hot meal, or to welcome you home from your travels. Excluded from the Port Authority’s \$10.10 minimum wage policy, these hardworking New Yorkers are currently denied the fair compensation they deserve. We demand that the Port Authority expand its minimum wage policy and commit to respect, recognition, and justice for these workers,” said Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

The tone of the rally was clear, airport workers and many New Yorkers just like them who depend on the minimum wage need the Governor and the legislature to support a living wage linked to the consumer price index.

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