



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Statement from Senate Democratic Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins on the Minimum Wage

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS December 31, 2014

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"Minimum wage earners throughout New York State continue to struggle to make ends meet and lift themselves and their families out of poverty. Though our lowest paid workers will get a small wage increase today they will not reach a scheduled \$9.00 per hour until New Year's Day 2016. New York could and should do better. The Senate Democratic Conference will continue to fight for a real minimum wage increase. "

### **Background:**

- The minimum wage in New York State before any action was taken by state government in the 2013 budget was \$7.25 an hour. This meant that a minimum wage earner's yearly salary was \$15,080.
- The first increase to the minimum wage took place on December 31, 2013 and only provided a \$0.75 increase bringing the minimum wage to \$8.00 an hour. This means that a minimum wage earner's yearly salary rose to only \$16,640.
- The increase to the state's minimum wage that will take effect today will bring the minimum wage to \$8.75 an hour, which will only result in an annual salary of \$18,200.
- The final increase under the half-measure minimum wage increase passed by the State Senate will take effect on December 31, 2015 and will only provide an additional \$0.25 per hour to minimum wage earners, bringing their compensation up to \$9.00 an hour.

- This will mean that minimum wage earners final yearly salaries, if State government does not act to increase the minimum wage, will be \$18,720.