

Labor and Public Employees Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6842

AN ACT CONCERNING THE MINIMUM FAIR WAGE AND PERSONS

Title: EMPLOYED AT CANNABIS ESTABLISHMENTS.

Vote Date: 3/18/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/6/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor & Public Employees Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The reason for this bill is to require that workers at cannabis establishments are paid the full minimum wage. There has been at least one case of a cannabis retailer paying the subminimum (tipped) wage to their staff without the appropriate documentation to pay such a wage. This bill seeks to clarify that cannabis retailers do not qualify for an application to pay the subminimum tipped wage to their employees.

The JFS Language: moved the language for this bill into the relevant cannabis statutes, to ensure homogeneity and clarification.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None provided.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Jason Rojas, House Majority Leader Connecticut General Assembly: Supports the bill, and states that a fair wage has served as the backbone of Connecticut's fair labor laws since it was codified in state statute in 1951, and Connecticut's Legislature has continually updated those statutes to ensure workers within our state are justly compensated for their labor. This bill guarantees alignment to these statutes and respects the work of those employed in Connecticut's cannabis industry, which saw growth in adult-use sales during 8 of its 12 months in 2024. The current process will discourage them from staying in the industry, driving customers who otherwise would buy in Connecticut to other markets. This bill serves

a dual purpose, strengthening a young cannabis industry and reinforcing a long history of protecting Connecticut's hourly workforce.

Ed Hawthorne, President, AFL-CIO: Supports the bill, states that the Department of Labor only recognizes the restaurant and hospitality industries as those in which employees regularly and customarily receive gratuities, which are permitted to pay workers a subminimum wage with the expectation that the tips they receive will bring their hourly rates to at least the full minimum wage. Mentions that a single cannabis employer cannot decide to pay its employees less than the full minimum wage and the Department of Labor can make a thorough investigation and review. This bill would clarify that cannabis employees shall be paid the full minimum wage, will not be cheated, or must file wage theft complaints with the Department of Labor.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None provided.

Reported by: Matt Domejczyk

Date: 3/26/2025