



May 15, 2017

Senator Patty Murray, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Bobby Scott, Ranking Member
House Committee on Education and the
Workforce
1201 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Bernie Sanders
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Keith Ellison
House Financial Services Committee
2263 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20151

Dear Senator Murray, Senator Sanders, Rep. Scott, and Rep. Ellison,

On behalf of the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE), I write to applaud you for introducing the *Raise the Wage Act of 2017*. We commend you for your bold leadership in championing this important legislation, and look forward to working with you to support its enactment.

As EPI reports, the minimum wage is a mechanism for combating inequality. As increased productivity has translated into higher wages for high-wage workers, a rising minimum wage ensures that the lowest-paid jobs also benefit from these improvements. This is the essence of the “fairness” implied in the name of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the act that established the minimum wage.

APSE advances employment and self-sufficiency for all people with disabilities. As such, the use of special wage certificates that are legal under Section 14c of the FLSA have allowed employers who hold them to pay people with disabilities less (sometimes substantially so) than the federal minimum wage. This discriminatory practice has made it impossible for those paid under these certificates to earn their way out of poverty and to set themselves on a path to economic self-sufficiency. APSE has advocated for an end to the subminimum wages since 2009. Again, we are grateful for your leadership on this issue and look forward to working with you to support this critical legislation in the 115th Congress.

Sincerely,

Allison H. Wohl
Executive Director, APSE National