



For Immediate Release
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Stronger California Advocates Network Hails Historic Raise of State Minimum Wage

[A state-wide network of California's leading civil rights and community advocates](#) applauds the move today by California Governor Jerry Brown to raise the state minimum wage rate to \$15 per hour by 2022.

Home to 12 percent of the nation's women, California has long been a progressive influencer, leading the country on issues impacting women and families. Raising the minimum wage was a key 2016 legislative priority for the Stronger California Advocates Network. Six out of ten minimum wage earners in California are women, and women of color are disproportionately represented among them. Nationwide, 23 percent of minimum wage workers are women of color, compared to 16 percent of workers overall. More than a third of minimum wage workers in California also have children to support.

"Raising the minimum wage will lead to a Stronger California. No one should have to work 2 or 3 or 4 jobs to put food on the table," said Noreen Farrell, chair of the [Stronger California Advocates Network](#) and executive director of women's rights nonprofit Equal Rights Advocates. "Many minimum wage-earning breadwinners are women, women who have been at the forefront of the #CAfor15 and #StrongerCA efforts. This victory is a game-changer for women and men, our families, and our communities."

Senate Bill 3 is a lead bill in the fair pay pillar of the [Stronger California Legislative Agenda](#), a four-pillar comprehensive women's economic security agenda first launched in 2015. The other three pillars of the agenda are: expanding access to childcare, ending poverty, and ensuring family friendly workplaces.

Today's move by the governor will make California the first state in the nation with a state minimum wage rate of \$15 per hour. Under the new law, six million Californians will receive a raise critical to supporting themselves and their families. The win for workers builds upon other fair pay wins by the Stronger California campaign last year, including passage of the California Fair Pay Act, the strongest equal law in the country.

"An increase to \$15 an hour will help tremendously. Right now workers like me have to worry check to check," said Jodi Simpson, a hotel house cleaner and member of Sacramento Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment. "We work 2 and 3 jobs, stressing out about being able to afford the basics. Today is an exciting day for all of us and a good step in the right direction, but we have lots of hard work ahead of us. "

"You can measure a state's commitment to families and everyday working people by the minimum wage. Today, California measures up," said Jean Hyams, Board Chair of the California Employment Lawyers Association. "As advocates for workers, we hope this win in California reverberates across the nation!"

"The fact that millions of full-time Californian workers have been living in poverty is not just a political failure; it is a moral outrage," said Barbara Baran of the National Council of Jewish Women-CA. "A \$15 minimum wage makes an important statement about our values as a state."

Under the terms of the new law, California's minimum wage will increase to \$10.50 in January 2017 and to \$11 in January 2018. It will then increase by an additional \$1 per hour every year until it reaches \$15 in 2022, with a few caveats: the bill provides that the Governor may slow the pace in a budget crisis and gives businesses with 25 or fewer employees an extra year to implement the increases.

The Stronger California Advocates Network is led by the state's leading advocacy organizations and coalitions with deep experience enacting change across the four pillars of the Stronger California Agenda. They are:

Steering Committee

Equal Rights Advocates (Chair)
California Domestic Workers Coalition
California Employment Lawyers Association
California Partnership
California Work and Family Coalition
Child Care Law Center
Mujeres Unidas y Activas
National Council of Jewish Women
The Opportunity Institute
Parent Voices
Western Center on Law and Poverty
Women's Foundation of California

Roundtable

9 to 5
Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE)
American Association of University Women
California Asset Building Coalition

California Hunger Action Coalition
California Child Care Resource & Referral Network
California Women's Law Center
Career Ladders Project
Center for Popular Democracy
Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center
Raising California Together
Tradeswomen, Inc.
Voices for Progress

Visit strongercalifornia.org to learn more about the bills and budget asks of the 2016 Stronger California Agenda.