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Premier Kathleen Wynne
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Wynne:

Nutritious food on the table. A decent roof over their heads. More and better school supplies for their children. Maybe a little something extra to build a better life with for them and their families.

For families struggling on minimum wage, or just above it, this is what an increase in the minimum wage is all about. It's not about net gains in this or net losses in that, or any other measure economists like to talk about. The demographics of the working poor are not numbers and statistics. It's their neighbours. It's their families.

The measures they make, the numbers that matter the most, are the ones they see every time they go to the grocery store and make the hard decisions about what they can afford to buy. Or the even harder decisions about what they cannot afford. It's the look in the children's eyes about the decisions they've been forced to make.

Ms. Premier, you have an opportunity here to put smiles on those faces, at least once in a while. A \$15 minimum wage will not solve every problem faced by Ontario's working poor, but it will help in very real ways for every one of the 1.6 million workers who will be helped directly, and the thousands more helped indirectly.

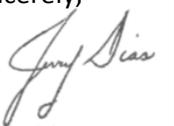
As you face increasing pressure from business lobbies or the province's own Financial Accountability Office about the impact of an increase in the minimum wage, do not limit yourself to a debate about full-time equivalency or other measures of jobs and the impact of raising the living standard of the working poor. We all know that raising the minimum wage will improve people's lives and is the right thing to do.

The only equivalency a worker on minimum wage worries about is the one offered by a wage increase, and a decent life for their family.

I urge you to keep in mind the very real and positive impact an increase in the minimum wage will have for this province's most struggling families, disproportionately led by women and racialized workers. More money in their pockets will directly address fundamental equity issues in Ontario.

Stay the course. Many thousands are counting on you.

Sincerely,



Jerry Dias
National President
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