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NELP APPLAUDS SPEAKER SILVER'S CALL TO RAISE NEW YORK'S MINIMUM WAGE

Statement of Christine Owens, Executive Director, National Employment Law Project:

The National Employment Law Project (NELP) applauds Speaker Sheldon Silver's call, in his response to Governor Cuomo's State of the State address, to raise New York's minimum wage.

At just \$7.25 per hour, or just \$15,080 a year for a full-time worker, New York's minimum wage is badly outdated. It is more than \$3 less than what it should have been had it kept pace with inflation these last forty years, and it lags behind 18 other states, including neighboring Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont, and lower cost of living states like Montana and Arizona, with minimum wages higher than New York.

The Speaker's statement is a welcome recognition that a strong minimum wage is key for helping to lift working families out of poverty and spurring economic recovery. In the fight to get our economy back on track, workers' buying power is the secret weapon. Raising the minimum wage will help working New Yorkers as they struggle with rising gas and food prices, while boosting the consumer spending that the state's economy needs in order to grow.

For more background on New York's minimum wage, please see the accompanying ["Key Facts on New York's Minimum Wage."](#)

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The National Employment Law Project is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts research and advocates on issues affecting low-wage and unemployed workers. For more about NELP, visit www.nelp.org.