



National Employment
Law Project

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State Advisory Commission Calls on New Jersey to Raise the Minimum Wage

Lawmakers urged to adopt recommendations made by NELP and allies

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Trenton, New Jersey – New Jersey’s Minimum Wage Advisory Commission this week issued its [2008 Annual Report](#) to the state legislature. The report calls on lawmakers to help low-wage workers weather the recession by raising the state minimum wage to \$8.50 and guaranteeing annual cost-of-living increases – a key reform that more states are adopting to prevent the minimum wage from falling each year. The report recommends strengthening minimum wage protections for low-wage tipped employees such as waitresses and car wash workers, whose minimum wage has not increased since 1991.

The National Employment Law Project (NELP) hailed the Advisory Commission’s recommendations, which followed policy reforms outlined by NELP and its allies in their report [Lost Time, Lost Pay](#), submitted to the Commission earlier in the year. “The Advisory Commission recognized that making sure that the minimum wage increases every year is the best way to help low-income families weather the recession,” said Raj Nayak, staff attorney at NELP. “It is also key for stimulating the state economy since low-wage workers spend their paychecks at local businesses.” A recent study by Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago economists found that minimum wage increases boost consumer spending substantially more than tax cuts do.

New Jersey’s Minimum Wage Advisory Commission is an independent body established by state law to advise lawmakers “on the adequacy of the minimum wage.” Governor Jon Corzine’s Labor Commissioner, David Socolow, chairs the Advisory Commission, which includes equal numbers of business and labor community representatives.

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