

December 21, 2018

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor, State of New York
Executive Chamber

VIA EMAIL

Dear Governor Cuomo,

At the beginning of this year, 2018, many of us stood together as women across sectors at the Golden Globes as part of the Time's Up initiative, issuing a call to action to end sexual harassment.

You were one of the first elected leaders to heed that call and we were thrilled that you took the lead almost a year ago, by calling on your Department of Labor to begin examining the impact of a subminimum wage on low wage workers – most of whom are women.

It has been nearly six months since hearings on the tipped minimum wage concluded in New York, and we are confident that we made a reasoned and rational policy argument for One Fair Wage.

Now at the closing of 2018, we are ready to stand with you and applaud as you announce New York State's move to One Fair Wage before the end of the year.

With the US House of Representatives poised to pass One Fair Wage early in 2019, and thirteen other states including New Jersey introducing similar legislation, your leadership in announcing One Fair Wage in New York first, as the progressive leader other states will follow, will represent one of the most important victories of an incredible year for women. It is time to celebrate the end of the subminimum wage and bring New York in line with states that prioritize workers' needs and rights more than the industry's political influence.

We continue to be grateful that your Labor Department held hearings to review whether to require the restaurant industry, among others, to pay its tipped workers a full minimum wage plus tips. As you know, the restaurant industry has the highest rates of sexual harassment of any industry in part because it forces a mostly female workforce of tipped workers to tolerate inappropriate customer behavior in exchange for tips. Research shows that tipped workers in California, and all seven states that have One Fair Wage, experience notably less sexual harassment than tipped workers in New York because when they receive a full minimum wage, women can rely more on their paychecks—and less on the whims of their customers—in order to feed their families. This is one of the reasons why New Jersey is moving toward One Fair Wage so rapidly.

We now urge you to follow through with what so many workers and experts urged in the hearings you hosted: implement One Fair Wage in New York. These workers' rights are being eroded by the Trump Administration, which just announced last week that it is eliminating protections for tipped workers and reducing enforcement capacity, creating an environment in which employers can simply pay the subminimum wage to all workers – regardless of whether or not they are performing tipped work – with far fewer consequences. We need you to stand with women in the workforce **today**. We have been patient and we appreciate the thorough review, but the time to act is now.

Again, we look forward to celebrating New York becoming a One Fair Wage state and honoring you for your commitment to women and low-wage workers.

Sincerely,

Connie Britton
Jane Fonda
Amy Schumer
Sarah Silverman
Amber Tamblyn
Lily Tomlin
Michelle Williams

Hon. Alessandra Biaggi, *NYS Senator-Elect, Bronx 34th*
Hon. Ellen Jaffee, *NYS Assembly, Rockland 97th* (Sponsor of One Fair Wage bill)
First Lady Chirlane McCray, *New York City*
Hon. Jessica Ramos, *NYS Senator-Elect, Queens 14th* (incoming Chair, Labor Comm.)
Hon. Linda Rosenthal, *NYS Assembly, New York City 67th*
Hon. Julia Salazar, *NYS Senator-Elect, Brooklyn 18th*
Hon. Rebecca Seawright, *NYS Assembly, New York City 76th*

Sherry Leiwant and Dina Bakst, *Co-Founders & Co-Presidents, A Better Balance*
Katharine Bodde, *Senior Policy Counsel, New York Civil Liberties Union*
Jennifer Buffett, *Co-President, NoVo Foundation*
Emily Chatterjee, *Senior Counsel, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights*
Connie Coopersmith, *President, Zenviba Ventureprises*
Robin Chappelle Golston, *President and CEO, Planned Parenthood Empire State Acts*
Anne Delaney, *activist and philanthropist*
Abigail Disney, *filmmaker, philanthropist, activist*
Noreen Farrell, *Executive Director, Equal Rights Advocates*
Tsedeye Gebreselassie, *Work Quality Director, National Employment Law Project*
Molly Gochman, *Founder and President, Stardust Fund*
Fatima Goss Graves, *President, National Women's Law Center*
Sarita Gupta, *Co-Executive Director, Jobs with Justice*
Donna Hall, *President and CEO, Women Donors Network*
Wanda Hammoud, *political activist and philanthropist*

Jennifer Herman-Feldman, *CEO, MKJ Communications*
Saru Jayaraman, *Co-Founder & President, Restaurant Opportunities Centers (ROC) United*
Lenora M. Lapidus, *Director, ACLU Women's Rights Project*
Thea Lee, *President, Economic Policy Institute*
Martha Maffei, *Executive Director, SEPA Mujer*
Karen Mehiel
Beverly Neufeld, *Founder & President, PowHer New York*
Karen Nussbaum, *labor leader and women's rights activist*
Ana Oliveira, *President & CEO, The New York Women's Foundation*
Sonia Ossorio, *President, National Organization of Women (NOW) New York*
Camille Rivera-Westin, *progressive leader and activist*
Gemma Rossi, *tipped restaurant worker (representing women worker members of ROC-NY)*
Deborah Sagner, *Sagner Family Foundation*
Pamela Shifman, *Executive Director, NoVo Foundation*
Mona Sinha, *Trustee Emerita, Smith College; Founder, Raising Change*
Joanne Smith, *President & CEO, Girls for Gender Equity*
Teresa C. Younger, *President and CEO, Ms. Foundation for Women*

Cc: Roberta Reardon, Commissioner, New York State Department of Labor