

As someone born and raised in Vermont and been in the restaurant industry for a little over a decade, I can share personally how important it is to raise the tip minimum wage in Vermont. At \$5.39 an hour it is nearly impossible to pay rent, utilities, food, transportation, insurance and other basic expenses while working one job. Because of this most of us in the industry work at least two jobs, myself included. Because of the \$5.39 minimum wage and lack of tips, especially in winter, I am currently forced to work two jobs, full and part time, and seven days a week in order to afford basic expenses. I have at least three days a week where I have to work a minimum of 12 hours a day. Even with all that I am still unable to afford health/ dental insurance.

I am now considering getting another part time job, which would total three jobs and be around 80 hours a week, in an attempt to afford insurance and hopefully have the ability to apply for a mortgage, which is currently unattainable with what I make. As someone who was unable to go to university because of the cost, this industry is one of my only options to work. With a higher wage I would be less dependent on the customers to pay my bills.

Many states have already adopted a significantly higher wage, one fair wage, and its frustrating as a Vermonter to feel like I need to leave the state I was born and raised in and my family behind in order to afford basic living expenses. **Please pass One Fair Wage.**

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