

**Testimony Submitted by Todd Reichelt
Albany Marriott Hotel**

**New York State Department of Labor
2014 Wage Board Public Hearing**

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My name is Todd Reichelt, and I am the General Manager of the Albany Marriott Hotel. I would first like to thank members of the Wage Board for allowing me to testify today, specifically as my testimony relates to the minimum wage as applied to tipped employees.

Our employees are the backbone of the operations of our hotels and we take great pride in providing them with fair wages, benefits and the opportunity to learn and grow in our industry and move up towards life-long careers. The majority of our positions start at more than the minimum wage. Currently we employ 101 full-time employees, 18 of which are tip eligible. Those classified as tip eligible employees make \$6.79 for food service and \$5.00 for service workers each hour plus tips. On a daily basis, employees make an additional \$66.15 in tips when working the Bar area; \$149.92 in tips for the Banquet areas; and \$38.80 in tips when working in the restrooms. This equates to \$330.80 per week at the Bar areas; \$749.60 per week for Banquet employees; and \$194 per week for Restroom Attendants. Our banquet employees average 5.3 years of employment, and our Restroom Attendants average 9 years of employment

At our hotels, every employee is provided, one nutritious meal at no cost to them. These meals include soup and salad bar, a protein, a starch, and a vegetable. Additionally, during inclement weather we provide lodging at no cost to our employees.

With the minimum wage increase, we may be forced to raise prices in order to maintain margins. We believe that people may have to make other choices for their meals; either purchase a sandwich instead of an entrée, which is a lower price. If people are purchasing less expensive menu items they will be tipping smaller amounts as well. This would not only erode our revenue, but also the pay for tipped employees.

There will come a point when the burden is too large and the costs have to be reduced or shifted. If that happens, I am afraid it will be the employees you are trying to help that will end up bearing that burden. Not to mention the general public that will be forced to pay higher prices for our services because we will be forced to raise the prices to stay competitive in the marketplace.

I respectfully request that the Wage Board not recommend to the State that an increase in the cash wage is needed. Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank You!