



## Cuomo signs state's new minimum wage bill into law

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"Today, we call on *all* those who are seeking the Presidency of the United States to honor the legacy of Dr. King and stand in solidarity with *all* people who are seeking to achieve racial and economic justice in our society", they say in an "Interfaith Call for Moral Action on the Economy", that will be publicly released on Monday (April 4).

The hundreds of low-income workers who had just carried those signs had come to downtown Los Angeles Monday morning to celebrate "it" - the passage of a \$15 an hour state minimum wage. This is curious, considering the fact that Clinton previously refused to endorse a national minimum wage of \$15, something the Democratic party leadership did in August.

"California is proving once again that it can get things done and help people get ahead", said Governor Brown when the deal was announced earlier this week.

Citing research from the right-leaning CATO Institute, Lawson wrote in a brief last month that a 10 percent increase in the minimum wage would lead to half a percentage point reduction in the employment growth rate. (Rents are only higher in Hawaii and D.C.) In Arkansas, home to the nation's cheapest rents, one need only spend \$431 to match the value of a thousand-dollar rent in California. "Today, we show we value the contribution of hard-working men and women in low-wage jobs", de Leon said.

The California legislation will raise the statewide minimum to \$10.50 on January 1 for businesses with 26 or more workers, the first of several incremental increases to \$15, with future raises tied to inflation.

Businesses with 25 or fewer employees have an extra year to comply with each step of the increase, but California's minimum will be considerably higher than in neighboring states. That would raise the minimum wage to \$10 in 2017, with a 50-cent increase in subsequent years, reaching \$12 an hour by 2021.

The New York Legislature approved the plan last week to raise the mandated minimum wage in New York City over three years, followed by suburban Westchester County, where Clinton lives, and Long Island by 2023. That stance didn't stop her from praising Cuomo and NY officials for securing the \$15 minimum wage in the 2016-17 budget.

President Obama hailed the moves, as did his potential Democratic successors, Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. It will then increase by an additional \$1 per hour every year until it reaches \$15 in 2022. "The creation of well-paying jobs is fostered through smart fiscal policies and efficient government - not simply making businesses pay more in wages".

"This new economy is not a fair economy for the middle class and the working families of this country", Cuomo said at the signing.

New York's overall minimum wage is now \$9 an hour.

In a major victory for Big Labor and the little guy, governors of California and NY each signed legislation Monday that will push the minimum wage in those states to \$15 per hour.

The 12-week paid-family leave will be funded by workers through a weekly \$1 payroll deduction, starting in 2018. And what you can do in L.A. or in NY may not work in other places. Some 6 million Californians now earn the minimum wage.