



**To:** Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2016-2017 Executive Budget Proposal, Topic "Workforce Development"

**From:** Ajax Greene, CEO and Founder, On Belay Business Advisors Inc., Gardiner, New York

**What:** Written testimony submitted to joint public hearing examining the overall impact increasing the statewide minimum wage to \$15/hour would have on workers, employers, and the state as a whole

**Position:** SUPPORT

**Date:** February 3, 2016

On Belay Business Advisors Inc. supports a \$15 New York State minimum wage. From retail to manufacturing, from the food industry to e-commerce, we've spent decades helping businesses improve and grow. We think it vital that everyone who works is compensated fairly. This is especially true at the bottom end of the economic spectrum where the minimum wage falls far short of New York's cost of living.

As a founding NYS Benefit Corporation, we are keenly aware that sharply growing income inequality is one of the primary crises of our time that deserves the New York State Legislature's attention. Raising the minimum wage is one of the best ways to begin addressing this crisis because we can't have a strong, thriving, sustainable economy if workers don't make enough to live on.

Raising the minimum wage puts more money in the pockets of customers who spend it to buy food at the grocer, keep up with their rent and pay for car repairs, day care and other expenses. This increased consumer demand will help grow our local businesses and our state economy. Paying fair wages also motivates employees to be more engaged, productive and successful, which helps businesses prosper and create more jobs.

Raising the New York State minimum wage to \$15 is a win-win-win for employees, business and our economy.

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