

**2016 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**  
**NYS Catholic Conference**  
**Council of Catholic Charities Directors**



## **FAIR WAGES**

### ***Summary***

The Gospel and our social teaching require special concern and attention toward people who are struggling to lift themselves out of poverty. Every day, our neighbors show courage, resourcefulness and determination to fulfill the potential of their lives, often against great odds.

While some are economically able to thrive in our state's economy, many others remain challenged. Many individuals and families are being left behind because they lack education and job skills. Despite their hard work in agriculture, restaurants, healthcare and other sectors, the working poor and middle class are often unable to support their families and obtain adequate housing.

We must ensure that those trying to lift themselves out of poverty are not forgotten. It is the obligation of New York State to ensure appropriate supports, and the strains upon the safety net and its community providers require renewed commitment in the budgeting process.

One area to assist the low-wage worker is to offer a better hourly wage. This can be attained through a higher minimum wage and an across-the-board COLA.

### ***Conference Position***

The Council of Catholic Charities Directors supports an increase in the minimum wage, if additional resources are added to our state contracts/state-authorized payments/state payment rates to pay our lowest paid employees a more livable wage and to provide increases to the remaining more experienced member of our workforce who haven't seen adequate increases in their pay in the past several years.

### ***Rationale***

Using nonprofit organizations to provide services results in a cost-effective delivery system that helps meet the needs of New Yorkers, including many of the state's most vulnerable populations. Many of the services that nonprofits provide on behalf of the state result in long-term cost avoidance and savings by intervening to help avoid crisis situations.