
Empire State Restaurant & Tavern Association

Report From The Executive Director...Scott Wexler

February 2018

Tip Credit Battle Continues - The fight to protect the tip credit continues to intensify. While the advocates for eliminating the tip credit held a rally in a fancy Manhattan office building with special guest Amy Poehler, restaurant owners and servers are working in the trenches to organize for the upcoming public hearings. Last month we reported on the major NYS hospitality industry trade associations coming together in a coalition to oppose the elimination of the tip credit. Our coalition, Save NY Tips, is a collective group of owners and employees who urge the Governor to preserve the tip credit. Our website (www.SaveNYTips.org) and newsletter will keep you informed of what you can do to protect tips as our campaign continues.

In addition to this coalition, servers have organized their own efforts to protect the tip credit and their tips. They recognize how the tip credit supports a healthy restaurant environment and provides an opportunity for tipped restaurant workers to earn a good living. They also know that eliminating the tip credit will ultimately harm them – the very people the Governor seeks to help. Their efforts include a Facebook page (*Supporters of the Tip Credit*); a Change.org online petition (Supporters of the Tip Credit in New York); and the formation of a national organization to advocate for restaurant workers, Restaurant Workers of America, dedicated to the preservation of tip income and to the well-being of employees in the full-service restaurant industry.

All of us are working towards the same goal – to demonstrate that eliminating the tip credit is not a good idea. And we can do that by getting testimony on the record of the upcoming hearings being held by the Labor Department and by turning out at the hearings in a show of support for maintaining the tip credit. The list of hearings and the information for signing up is attached. You need to register to attend the hearing, even if you do not plan to testify.

What else can you do? We've enclosed a flier you can give to your employees to help them understand why the tip credit is important and what they can do to get involved to protect their tips. The Labor Department will have a hard time eliminating the tip credit if tipped workers speak up in opposition. The first hearings are just a few weeks away. We need a good turnout at these hearings so please make plans to attend a hearing near you and encourage your employees to attend as well. Your efforts will make the difference!

Tipped Wage Public Hearings

Monday, March 12, 2018 at 10 a.m.

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
The Gateway Center, Syracuse

Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at 10 a.m.

Common Council Chamber
City Hall, Buffalo

Friday, April 20, 2018 at 10 a.m.

Roosevelt Little Theatre
SUNY Farmingdale

Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at 10 a.m.

Dulles State Office Building
317 Washington Street, Watertown

Friday, May 18, 2018 at 10 a.m.

Legislative Office Building, Albany

Week of June 25

Hostos Community College
500 Grand Concourse, Bronx

Anyone wishing to testify at one of these hearings must pre-register with the Department of Labor. You can register:

- Online: www.labor.ny.gov/subminimum
- Email: hearing@labor.ny.gov
- Phone: 518-457-5519
- Fax: 518-485-1126
- Mail: New York State Department of Labor
ATTN: Subminimum Wage Hearing
Building 12, Room 588
Harriman State Office Campus
Albany, NY 12240