

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 29, 2016

The Honorable Thomas E. Perez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Perez:

As our economy continues to recover from the Great Recession, we, as a country, need to work on ways to help our economy grow from the middle out, not the top down. But today, despite longer working hours and higher productivity, workers' wages have remained virtually unchanged. Millions of people are working harder than ever without basic overtime protections. We applaud the Department of Labor's move to update the overtime pay threshold, and we are writing to request that you quickly finalize the rule to ensure millions of workers are paid fairly for the hours they work.

Overtime protections were first passed as a way to protect workers from exploitive working hours, but these protections no longer reach many of the workers they were intended to help. In 1975, overtime protections covered nearly 62 percent of full-time salaried workers—a stark contrast from just 8 percent of full-time salaried workers eligible today. This is especially concerning as those who currently qualify for overtime pay make \$23,660 a year or less—an income beneath the federal poverty level for a family of four.

By failing to keep pace with the current economy, overtime pay protections have significantly weakened over the last several decades. Raising the overtime pay threshold to \$50,440, as proposed, could restore protections to more than five million full-time salaried workers, creating \$1.4 billion in wages in the first year alone. As the costs of education, childcare, and retirement have steadily risen, Americans need these protections so that they can build a better future for themselves and their families. We respectfully request that you issue a final rule as soon as possible.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

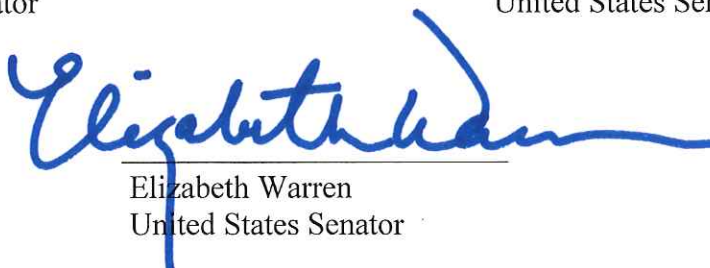
Sincerely,



Al Franken
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



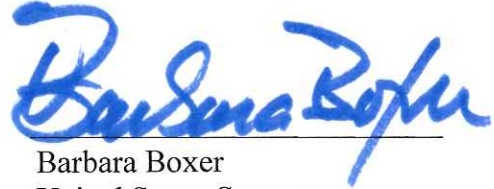
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley
United States Senator



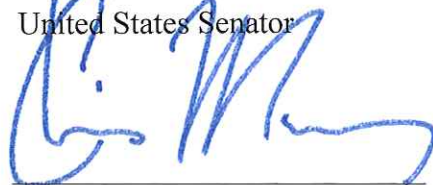
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



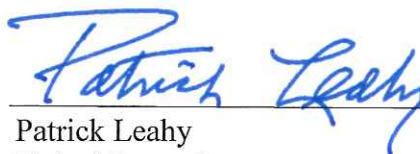
Tom Udall
United States Senator



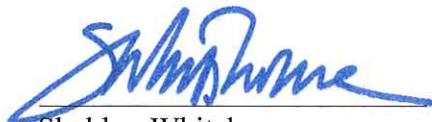
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



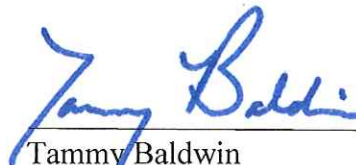
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



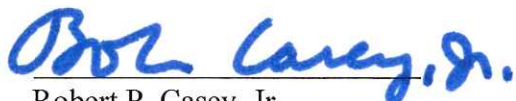
Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator