Testimony in Support of Bill Classifying as Employees Those Who Work in Domestic Service, Qualifying Them to be Paid the Minimum Wage: HB5263

House Committee on Labor
February 24, 2021

The Economic Progress Institute supports HB5263 which, if enacted, would end the exclusion from the legal definition, in Rhode Island statute, of an “Employee” those individuals who work as domestic workers or who work in or about the homes of other people. There is no compelling reason to maintain this distinction. Indeed, under current law, Rhode Island’s approximately 5,600 domestic workers¹, who often work long hours, can be subject to low wages and deductions for room and board from already low wages. By classifying these individuals as employees—which is what they are—these individuals would qualify for being paid the state’s minimum wage.