

Brennan Center Praises Florida Supreme Court for Approving Minimum Wage Initiative for November Ballot

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Initiative Highlights Failure of Federal Government to Raise Minimum Wage

New York, NY -- The Supreme Court of Florida today voted 6-to-1 to approve the text of a proposed ballot initiative asking voters at the November election to raise the state minimum wage. The proposed initiative, sponsored by a statewide grassroots coalition, Floridians for All, would create a state minimum wage in Florida of \$6.15 per hour — \$1.00 above the federal minimum wage — and then index it to inflation. The campaign has submitted over one million signed petitions to local supervisors of elections and expects final certification for the ballot by the Secretary of State in time for the November election.

Nathan Newman, associate counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, drafted the ballot initiative and coordinated the pro bono legal team, led by lawyers at White & Case in Miami who argued the case before the court, and assisted by lawyers at Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler in New York.

Commenting on today's court decision, Mr. Newman said: "With this decision, Floridians will soon have the opportunity in November to give an estimated 300,000 low-wage workers a raise — one that is long overdue because of inaction at the federal level." The federal minimum wage, which has been stuck at \$5.15 per hour since 1997, would be \$8.50 today if it had kept pace with inflation over the past 30 years. "The Florida initiative is a first step," continued Mr. Newman, "in restoring the value of the minimum wage and helping working families escape poverty."

Other lawyers involved in the legal effort before the Florida Supreme Court included Paul Sonn of the Brennan Center, Faith E. Gay, Brian H. Koch, and Rima Y. Mullins of White & Case, and Michael D. Sant'Ambrogio and John D. Winter of Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler.

For additional information on the Living Wage movement, please visit the Center's [Living Wage page](#).

The Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, founded in 1995, unites thinkers and advocates in pursuit of a vision of inclusive and effective democracy. Its mission is to develop and implement an innovative, nonpartisan agenda of scholarship, public education, and legal action that promotes equality and human dignity, while safeguarding fundamental freedoms. Please visit www.brennancenter.org.