

## Adams Pushes for Minimum Wage Increase on House Floor



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## Adams Pushes For Minimum Wage Increase on the House Floor

*Adams wants to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 by 2025*

**Charlotte** – Last night, **Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. (NC-12)** pushed for a minimum wage increase on the House floor.

[Video of the speech is available here.](#)

“It is simply impossible to pay the rent and feed your family when you’re only making twelve hundred and fifty dollars a month. That’s not far off from the average monthly rent for an apartment in Charlotte, North Carolina,” **said Rep. Adams.** “Make no mistake, \$7.25 an hour is a poverty wage. That’s why it’s time to raise the wage to fifteen dollars an hour. A fifteen-dollar minimum wage would give 27 million low-wage workers a raise and lift nearly one million people out of poverty.”

Earlier this year, **Adams** and other Democratic leaders introduced the ***Raise the Wage Act of 2021***, which would gradually raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 by 2025. Congress has not increased the

federal minimum wage in over a decade, making this the longest stretch without an increase since the minimum wage was first established back in 1938.

The [Economic Policy Institute reports](#) that an estimated 146,000 workers would receive wage increases if a \$15 per hour minimum wage is passed by Congress and signed into law. Of those 146,000 workers, 80,000 are women and 66,000 are Black. 12th District workers benefiting from the legislation would see an average annual wage increase of 18% or approximately \$4,200 in 2020 dollars.

In 2006, as a Member of the North Carolina House of Representatives, Adams was able to successfully pass a one-dollar-an-hour increase in North Carolina's minimum wage, which lifted the wages of over 100,000 workers state-wide.

**The full text of the speech as prepared for delivery is available below:**

*Mr. Speaker,*

*I rise today/tonight to give voice to the millions of Americans who are calling on us to raise the wage.*

*Our minimum wage workers – many of whom we've come to call essential workers – have a base pay of fifteen thousand and eighty dollars a year.*

*It doesn't take a Ph.D. to know you can't survive on seven twenty-five, and yet, we expect millions of our neighbors to do it, even during a global pandemic and an economic crisis.*

*From the North Carolina General Assembly to the U.S. House of Representatives, raising the wage has been part of my life's work.*

*I know how a couple of dollars an hour can be the difference between prosperity and poverty.*

*I know because I've lived it.*

*You see, my mother was a domestic worker.*

*She cleaned other people's homes so I wouldn't have to – so I could focus on going to school and getting an education.*

*Day in and day out, I saw that no matter how hard she worked, her earnings were barely enough to get us by.*

*Colleagues, this is not because she didn't work hard enough. It's because she didn't make enough.*

*Now, decades later, that reality has only gotten starker and the need to address it more pressing.*

*The federal minimum wage has been at seven dollars and twenty-five cents for over a decade – the longest stretch in U.S. history.*

*Mr. Speaker, is simply impossible to pay the rent and feed your family when you're only making twelve hundred and fifty dollars a month. That's not far off from the average monthly rent for an apartment in Charlotte, North Carolina.*

*Make no mistake, seven twenty-five is a poverty wage.*

*That's why it's time to raise the wage to fifteen dollars an hour.*

*A fifteen-dollar minimum wage would give 27 million low-wage workers a raise and lift nearly one million people out of poverty.*

*In my district, in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, raising the wage would mean giving a raise to working eighty thousand women.*

*One hundred forty-six thousand workers in the 12th District would see an average pay increase of over four thousand dollars a year.*

*In this moment of crisis, as we grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, a fifteen-dollar minimum wage is more important than ever.*

*It's also important to note that essential and front-line workers make up a majority of those who would benefit from this wage increase.*

*I believe in essential wages for essential workers!*

*That's why we can't pay an essential worker – or any worker – a poverty wage.*

*We must take action to deliver on our nation's promise of equal opportunity for all.*

*In the strongest terms possible, I urge support for increasing the federal minimum wage to fifteen dollars an hour in our next COVID relief package.*

*Thank you and I yield back.*

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