

My name is Pearl Rose. I have worked as a tipped worker for nine years until recently, within the last month. I've worked at numerous restaurants from local sports bars all the way to James Beard nominated fine-dining establishments. From my very first job, and through the years, I have been distraught by the income instability and by employers' lack of empathy in following regulations put in place to protect workers' well-being. Woodberry Kitchen was in gross violation of OSHA regulations for bathroom use during my time there, forcing a staff of thirty-seven people to share a single, ill-kept bathroom. They have since relaxed due to pushback from employees. I experienced wage-theft there as well, some of my tip-out going right back into the pockets of its millionaire owners.

I do not feel that the income employers purport upon hiring holds up over time, leaving it difficult to account for basic living expenses. I may be told I will earn \$30 per hour, when on average, including slow nights, it's closer to \$17.

I have worked as a bartender, server and as support staff; busser and food-runner. I can say that support staff, who also depend primarily on tips, are typically paid much less. Support staff are often immigrants, people working more than one job, supporting many others. I don't believe they are being fairly represented in this hearing. I believe they are told they will lose their jobs or much of their incomes if Prop 77 moves forward. I never saw them outside with signs. They are an important part of the tipped workers of DC. They are not here today.

I have been pressured to vote no on 77. My most recent employer required us to hand out "vote no" cards with every customer's check. The Save Our Tips campaigners visited us numerous times, asking us to sign up for their cause or we may lose our incomes or jobs. I received numerous emails detailing how to email my council members and testify against Prop 77. I know of an industry colleague who was let go from her job because she wouldn't solicit customers to vote no. Many of my friends in the industry are pro Prop 77 but scared to come here today. There is misinformation and fear-mongering from the part of employers and restaurateurs.

Tipped workers, especially the lowest-earning ones, are scared for their livelihood to a degree that keeps them from feeling able to speak up. I believe this may lower the ceiling for higher paid tipped workers, such as bartenders and servers, but the median is skewed by the few highest earners. Most tipped workers can't live in the District or live with their parents, I know because they're my friends. I believe Prop 77 may lower the ceiling but raise the floor, the floor on people who support and serve this city every day, and who deserve legislation to show that the city supports them as well.