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As the state's largest restaurant worker center, it is the Restaurant Opportunities Center of Pittsburgh's mission to improve the wages and lives of Pennsylvania's 500,000+ hospitality industry workforce. We strongly support the state's efforts to raise the overtime salary threshold for salaried employees. We are long overdue for an increase to the threshold, that currently sits at a meager \$23,660. For the past 40 years, overtime protections have been increasingly weakened. More than 60 percent of salaried workers qualified for overtime in 1975 based on their salaries, but less than 10% today do. Business owners have been getting away with underpaying their salaried staff for decades.

In our industry, we routinely hear nightmare stories about management working 70 hours a week – working doubles and weekends – only to make a salary in the mid \$30,000's. It's not uncommon for managers to work "clopenings" several days a week – working the final shift of the night only to open the restaurant up the next day. Employers in Pennsylvania have been able to use this salary loophole to work people longer hours while paying them less. Raising the overtime salary threshold would do wonders in addressing the widespread abuse of underpaying and overworking salaried staff in restaurants.

We applaud Governor Wolf for introducing this job-improving initiative and encourage the Department of Labor & Industry to do the right thing and adopt a higher overtime salary threshold.

Jordan Romanus

Restaurant Opportunities Center of Pittsburgh

504 Peables Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15221

