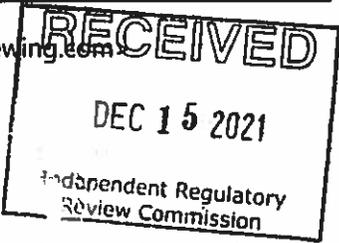


3322

Kathy Cooper

From: digger northcountrybrewing.com <digger@northcountrybrewing.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2021 4:05 PM
To: Smolock, Bryan
Subject: [External] Comments on Minimum Wage Act regulations



ATTENTION: This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.

Hello Director Smolock,

This is Bob McCafferty, founder of North Country Brewing Co. in Slippery Rock. I just wanted to briefly offer comment on the proposed new rules that are suggested with regards to tipped wage and minimum wage that is currently being discussed.

Specifically:

- That the 80/20 rule may get further into what constitutes appropriate side work and is acceptable to being related to earning the tipped wage. Disinfecting salt and pepper shakers, sweeping sections, etc...this could become arbitrary to any investigating agents. On a typical 6-hour shift, 80/20 would allow 1.2 hours of side work unrelated to tipped work. We are under that with what we request, yet we also allow our staff to freely catch up with team members and work at their own pace. I feel this would become more regimented for them.
- \$135/month vs \$30/month. We allow a flexible schedule for our staff, so that they can attend college, raise their family or just come in once a week as that is what they wanted scheduled. We do have a few that work two Sundays per month, for instance. With subsequent occasional call offs, I think most would not offer such reduced hours for folks who want to work part time. We offer 25% off our merchandise and table bills to employees, and their friends/family that they bring in during off time. We do have one employee that comes to mind that keeps her job for the perks offered and does call off. I feel this would also tighten up the flexibility offered.
- I do want to point out from our end, we do pay the cc fee already, but I don't think it's fair that the credit card companies don't pay for their own tax on their own fee...we pay their tax in my opinion.
- With being short staffed this past year as we all reopened back up, we did start a service fee on our larger, 20+ tables. This was to ensure that the server gets a 20% tip on the table and we give that immediately over to them. In the past, large groups that reserve may say 30 people, with only 15 showing, and the two servers waiting on them lost those tables in their section and sometimes did not get tipped appropriately. So now we ensure that they do. The servers appreciate that more than the \$10 banquet wage we had tried for a bit. My business then pays the tax on that 20% as it is added to the bill and so considered a tax.
- I have seen some really smooth, smaller tip pool restaurant concepts while traveling that really did work for the employees and the apparently the business. They did rotate who bartended, who cooked and seemed like they all chipped in on oyster shucking or dish washing as needed. I was impressed with their team work as well as how happy they were to work there. Not sure what hourly they all were at-but if you get the chance-Lazy Flamingo on Sanibel/Captiva Island is that spot.
- I do feel that rules and regulations that become laws need to go through an elected legislature, that said, I would also love to be part of any panel or conversation towards a proactive approach for staff or to offer insight. I see the panels that were chosen for the studies within this proposal, and think that PRLA would offer suggestions as well and would be a good addition to that existing panel. I feel their membership which includes mostly small businesses would have a collective voice, and possibly help with the business impact stats.

Free market has really come around to offer better wages and treatment. Good operators have always done the most that they can and have been creative on ways to treat their staffs better, as well as draw in folks with talent to the

team. It is a shame that there has been a negative light shown on restaurants, business in general, as most that I have met really are passionate about doing the right thing.

Thank you and have a Happy Holiday Season,
Bob