



*Smart policies for today's families.*

April 1, 2015

Opposition to HB 3325 and Rolling Back Minimum Wage  
Submitted by Kate Newhall, Family Forward

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 2068. **Family Forward is opposed to any effort to weaken minimum wage protections for low-income Oregonians.** Allowing additional deductions from minimum wage earnings, as proposed in HB 3325, does nothing to lift these families out of poverty and only weakens their economic security.

Family Forward is an organization committed to advancing policies that support families and help them succeed, both in the workplace and at home. Our mission is to create a family-forward Oregon where all families can be economically secure and have the time it takes for work and family responsibilities. Today, too many families are forced to sacrifice one or the other. Family Forward opposes policies, like rolling back minimum wage, that make economic stability harder for working families.

Minimum wage is a far cry from a living wage. A full time worker earning minimum wage in Oregon makes just \$19,240 annually. This is nowhere near sufficient to support a family – nowhere near enough for a family to put food on the table, to keep a roof over their heads and and pay for quality child care. These are real expenses low-income working families struggle with every day. Employees earning minimum wage need every dollar in their paycheck and, even then, are often are not able to make ends meet as evidenced by the number of minimum wage earners who qualify for public assistance programs like SNAP or TANF.

Making deductions for benefits offered by an employer does nothing to help minimum wage earners get out of poverty. Functionally it makes employees responsible to pay for employer provided benefits and only serves to take dollars out of the pockets of our most vulnerable workers in Oregon.

Family Forward opposes HB 3325 and any effort to weaken Oregon's minimum wage. Minimum wage is nowhere near sufficient to support a family; the Legislature should be looking for ways to increase the minimum wage, not decrease it. We urge you to oppose HB 3325.