

Dear Representatives and Senators,

I'm writing to voice my concern about the slew of bills addressing Oregon's minimum wage: SB 327, SB 597, SB 610 & SB 682 and HB 2009, HB 2008 & HB 2012.

In brief, one of the many responsibilities I address each day is economic development. For larger communities this often entails attracting multi-million dollar manufacturers and big business to land in your city. For a city our size (under 5,000 people) that is right next to a larger city (Corvallis), however, economic development means retaining our small, service-sector businesses such as restaurants, mechanic repair shops, corner markets, gas stations, etc. Increasing the minimum wage will not hurt these businesses, it will force them to close all together or relocate to the bigger cities where they can try to make up for smaller profit margins with greater sales volume. Raising the minimum wage will kill all economic development efforts in smaller communities and dramatically change the makeup of our traditional, small-town American lifestyle that we have enjoyed all these years.

In my opinion, if the legislature really wants to improve the quality of life of people currently making minimum wage than members of the House and Senate should not make the *minimum wage* equal to a *living wage*: these are two very different things.

Minimum wage is not a social service; it is not meant to support a family, it never has. It is meant to allow a high school kid someone just entering the job market, with no experience, to be able to get job and gain experience. The pay itself need only be enough to pay for his own bus pass or to put gas in the family car so he can take it out on Saturday. It is not meant to pay for food for a single mom's children or for their rent –**there are already social services and nonprofit organizations that provide for these needs**. By making minimum wage a living wage you will be making it more comfortable for people to settle and stay at minimum wage for their entire lives rather than encouraging them to improve their skill set, become more valuable to employers and get a better paying job.

Last I checked we are still a market-driven society. This creates completion and incentive for innovation and hard work.

Oregon already has the nation's second-highest minimum wage at \$9.25 an hour, \$2 higher than the federal minimum. Please **vote no** on these bills and help keep small businesses open in Oregon's small communities.

Thank you,

Chris Workman