

Dear Committee,

We would urge the legislature to not increase the minimum wage. We currently have one of the highest minimum wages in the country. It is \$ 2.00 higher than the national minimum wage. As a small business we cannot keep sustaining higher wages, higher taxes, and government oversight. It takes a lot of time to stay in compliance and this is taking away from our businesses. We cannot keep creating jobs and expanding our businesses if profits keep disappearing. During harvest we hire 6 seasonal employees, but increasing the minimum wage would force us to upgrade our equipment and mechanize more, thus decreasing the need for employees. Upgrading equipment is a cost, but we will see a return on investment quicker than if the minimum wage stays the same. If we did this, then we will only need to hire 3 people. Therefore 3 people that had jobs before will no longer have a job. We are not the only farm or small business considering these options. If we all choose to increase mechanization it will decrease the number of jobs available, increase unemployment, and increase the need for more government assistance (i.e. WIC, Oregon Trail Card, housing, and financial aid for higher education). For these reasons we urge you to not increase the minimum wage.

Thank you for your consideration,

David Elam  
Debby Elam  
Dustin Elam  
Phillip Coates  
Wendy Coates

Elam Farms, Inc.