

April 13, 2015

Dear Chair Chief Sponsor, Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maria D. Hernandez and as a student I am here to speak on behalf of my siblings and myself.

My parents always tell me “Mija continue to obtain a higher education, this way you have time to spent with your future family” When I hear this it does two things: one it makes me sad to know that my parents feel to some extent guilty for the multiple times that have not been with me and my siblings physically in school events for the fact that they are always working. And two it encourages me to continue to work harder so one day I can be able to give back to them for the multiple sacrifices they have gone through in order for their children to obtain a higher education. Ever since high school both of my parents have been working in the same company. My father works during the night shift and my mom works during the day. Ever since then my two older siblings and I have become the parents to our four smaller siblings, not because my parents wanted us to take this responsibility but because they have no time since they are always at work to make ends meet. They work seven days a week, and often times we do not get to see them.

My parents have work very hard to always put food on the table, give us a shelter, cloth us and pay for the necessities needed for a warm home. The joint income they bring home is not enough, raising minimum wage will allow my parents to have time to enjoy the little things with their children. Have time to go to the park, go to the beach, help with homework. Every child deserves to have time with their parents, my younger siblings deserve to come home and see both of my parents. Raising the minimum wage is common sense, it will benefit Oregon. Most importantly it will make the faces of thousands of childrens a happy one. I know for me and my siblings it will mean more time with my parents, it will mean my parents be able to miss a day of work for my graduation and not have to worry about how this day could have contributed it to their income.

Please raise the minimum wage, it will change lives and bring happiness our Oregon children!