



April 17, 2015

House Business & Labor Committee  
Senate Workforce Committee

Re: Proposals to increase statewide minimum wage

Dear House Chair Holvey and Senate Chair Dembrow,

The Bend Chamber of Commerce supports Oregon's current minimum wage law that indexes the minimum wage each year based on inflation. Oregon's minimum wage is currently \$2.00/hour more than the federal minimum wage.

However, we ask that you oppose efforts to increase Oregon's minimum wage further. An increase in minimum wage would hurt our businesses, result in fewer businesses and jobs, and would not benefit our community. There are unintended consequences inherent to an across-the-board increase.

Larger employers will be impacted, but the real pain will be felt from small business owners who operate with razor thin margins. Small business owners will not be able to absorb the cost of increased minimum wage and will be forced to cut employees to offset additional expense.

What's often lost in these discussions is that minimum wage has winners AND losers. A slight increase for one family will equate to the loss of employment for another.

Bend's local economy is largely driven by the tourism industry. Less than 15 percent of employees in Deschutes County make less than \$10 per hour, however 30 percent make between \$10-\$15 per hour. As you increase minimum wage, you increase the cost of products and services sold to compensate for that increase. Therefore, those making between \$10-\$15, as well as those earning above that amount, will now contend with the negative impact of higher costs as a result.

Sincerely,



Tim Casey  
President & CEO

Bcc: Senator Tim Knopp – District 27; Senator Ted Ferrioli – District 30  
Bcc: Rep. Whisnant – District 53; Rep. McLane – District 55; Rep. Buehler – District 54; Rep. Huffinan – District 59