



Partners *for a*
Hunger-Free Oregon

Ending hunger before it begins.

To: Senate Committee on Workforce and House Committee on Business and Labor
From: Matt Newell-Ching, Public Affairs Director, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon
Subject: Statement in Support of an Increase in Oregon's Minimum Wage
Date: April 13, 2015

Everyone is better off when Oregonians have access to family-wage jobs that boost our economy and help families, kids, and communities thrive.

It's time to advance economic opportunity for working families by increasing Oregon's minimum wage.

By increasing economic opportunity, we strengthen family economic stability, which creates a strong foundation for prosperous, stable communities, where everyone has a chance to build a brighter future for themselves and their families.

When workers have access to family-wage jobs, everybody wins. When low-wage working family gets a raise, that family spends the extra money on groceries and other necessities. This adds fuel to the economy, which translates to new hiring in the labor market. This is good for families, for businesses, and all Oregonians.

More family-wage jobs also means that more Oregonians will have sufficient purchasing power so that they have less need to turn to safety net programs to make ends meet.

Families engaged in full time work shouldn't be in poverty. Yet a full-time worker at minimum wage earns just \$19,240 per month – that's just 79% of the poverty line for a family of four.

So it's no wonder that in 2014, one in seven Oregonians reported that there had been times in the past 12 months when they did not have enough money to buy food for themselves or their families.

As Oregon's unemployment rate continues to decline, we want to make sure that the jobs that are added to the economy pay wages that increase family economic stability.

A higher minimum wage helps make that a reality. It's good for workers, their families, and for businesses that need customers with cash in their pockets.

Let's raise the minimum wage. Together, we'll create a stronger Oregon for everyone.