

AFT-Oregon Testimony in Support of Raising the Minimum wage SB 1532

The American Federation of Teachers-Oregon (AFT-Oregon) represents over 15,000 members across Oregon. Our members work in the private and public sectors in elementary and high schools, child care centers, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities.

AFT-Oregon knows that thousands of workers across our state, including many of our own members, continue to earn poverty-level wages, making it impossible for them to earn enough to cover the cost of food, rent, gas and other necessities. Educational assistants, school custodians and school administrative staff should not have to worry about how to feed and clothe themselves and their families. In order for Oregonians to provide for ourselves and our families we need to raise the minimum wage. This is why AFT-Oregon supports both Raise the Wage and 15 Now and believes that we must pass a meaningful increase to the minimum wage this year to help Oregon's working families.

AFT-Oregon believes that a legislative solution that raises the minimum wage in a meaningful way, while not perfect, would provide the certainty and predictability that both workers and businesses need as we transition towards a more livable wage. Additionally, while AFT-Oregon would like to see the -2 amendment move forward in order to better recognize the higher cost of living in Portland's Urban Growth Boundary, we also recognize the meaningful progress reflected in the -1 amendment, including the 50 cent increase this July that would provide an immediate benefit for Oregon's working families.

On behalf of the 15,000 members of the American Federation of Teachers – Oregon we urge you to increase Oregon's minimum wage to support the needs of Oregon's working families.