



CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

Charlie Hales, Mayor
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
Nick Fish, Commissioner
Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
Steve Novick, Commissioner

February 2, 2016

Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair
Senate Workforce and General Government Committee
900 Court Street, NE, HR C
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Senator Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

The City of Portland supports the Legislature's efforts to raise the minimum wage for working Oregonians.

While Oregon has long been ahead of most states, the current minimum wage of \$9.25 is not enough for the average workers to support themselves and a family, let alone save for retirement or create a better future for their children. In the United States, nearly half of minimum wage earners are 35 or older. The City of Portland stands behind the belief that no one working full-time should have to live in poverty and rely on government assistance programs to meet basic needs.

In February, Portland City Council passed an ordinance raising the minimum wage for our full-time employees and contractors and we are working to do more. The cost of living in the Portland metropolitan area is higher than the rest of the state. According to a recent report by the City Club of Portland, the cost of living in Portland is 50 to 80 percent higher than in rural parts of the state. We appreciate the Legislature's attention to proposals that take into account differing economic conditions in urban and rural areas.

Thank you for addressing this critical issue for Oregon families. We stand in support of your efforts this session to push for a fair and living wage.

Charlie Hales
Mayor

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Commissioner

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