

February 15, 2016

RE: In Support of Senate Bill 1532A

Chair Holvey, Committee Members:

My name is Kevin Billman and I am here on behalf of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 555 to testify in support SB 1532-A to raise the minimum wage.

UFCW 555 represents over 20,000 workers in Oregon and Southwestern Washington. Our membership is comprised of workers in retail, manufacturing, healthcare, and many other industries. We are a diverse group of workers that have grown into being the largest private sector labor union in Oregon.

Most importantly, UFCW Local 555's members are mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, daughters and sons. We are people who want to be treated with respect for the work we do in our communities. We want to be able to afford our rent, and take our families to the doctor when they are sick. We want to be able to give our kids a new bike for their birthday, and ensure that they have fulfilling lives. We want what every person wants: the American Dream. But for too many Oregonian's that's not possible right now.

The Senate vote last week is recognition that no matter where you live in Oregon, you can't get by on less than \$20,000 a year. However, there are aspects of the bill that shortchange some workers, like a lower wage in rural counties.

As Oregonians, we believe in the dignity of work, and that every Oregonian should be paid a decent wage for the work they do. We urge members of the committee to raise the wage to a level where all workers can be self-sufficient, whether they're working in a restaurant, a factory, or a field, or living in Portland or Pendleton.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Billman  
Vice President, UFCW Local 555  
Director of Legislative and Community Action