

To whom it may concern:

I am a middle class citizen of the state of Oregon, and I have lived in Oregon for all 30 years of my life. I am very concerned at the possible progressive increase of minimum wage. Here is why I am concerned:

When I started working, the minimum wage was 7.15 an hour. This was 10 years ago. Since then, I have witnessed the minimum wage increase 2.10. At my first job, I went from making 7.15 an hour, to making 11.25 an hour, and at the time I was making that much, the minimum wage had increased to 8.00 an hour. I still felt as though my hard work had paid off and I had begun to make something of myself.

That job, and that hard work, led to me landing another job with a starting salary of 38,000, which worked out to about 18.75 an hour. At this job, I have progressed to a salary of 55,000 with many opportunities to make more.

Now, minimum wage is 9.25. 2.10 higher than when I first started. In my rural community if the minimum wage progresses to 12.50 an hour, that will be 1.25 more than I made at my first job, where I worked extremely hard to get to where I was. I then worked EXTREMELY hard to get to where I am today, and by handing out more free money to a majority of people who would rather sit back, do the minimum, and accept the government's free money, than go out, bust their butt and earn their wage.

I also understand that not all jobs have the ability to make a lot more money than minimum. But, this is America, the land of the free and the home of the brave. No job is binding. Employers love to hire people who are currently holding down other jobs, much more than they like to hire people who have floated between jobs and lived on the unemployment line. I also understand that there are people who have had bad luck with their employer as far as companys relocating, or being laid off because of a lack of production. But, those situations aren't the majority in Oregon.

Oregon hands out as much free money as any state in the Union. This continuous robbing of the hard working citizen, to provide for those who seek the silver spoon, has to stop. The higher you raise the bottom, the further you dissolve the middle. That hard earned wage that I have earned through hard work, dedication, to NEVER calling in sick to ANY job over a 10 year period, further gets dissolved because we feel the need to give more handouts paid for by the hard earned tax dollars that are taken out of my paycheck each week.

Furthermore, I am a father of two, with a loving wife by my side. I am the main provider in our household and to further diminish my salary does not only affect me directly, it affects my family.

If you can't see how this will affect our state, then there is no hope for our state. We will create an environment where everyone will be looking for a way they can live off the system and we will begin to go further in the opposite direction of where we should be headed.

Please be careful with what you decide,

Joe Bollig III

Route Sales Representative at Frito Lay (5 years, current)

Citizen of North Bend, Oregon for 30 years

Assistant Varsity Football Coach at North Bend High School

Assistant Manager at Coos Bay Grocery Outlet (2008-2011)

PS Here is a link to the letter to the editor I wrote to my local newspaper from 4 years ago:

http://theworldlink.com/news/opinion/mailbag/being-lazy-sure-won-t-get-you-a-job/article_934ed5ef-c0d1-5924-8a30-052c38d46d02.html