

Dear Chair Holvey and Committee Members:

I appreciate the efforts of the legislature to craft some kind of minimum wage increase which would lessen the likelihood of seeing this issue on the ballot this fall. I understand you are trying to do something, but it seems as if you are trying to do too much in too short of a time and you are creating chaos.

Your three tiered proposal is based upon the belief that there are areas of Oregon where a Portland minimum wage is not suitable. I agree with that. If your belief is true, how then do you justify extending the higher minimum wage to smaller communities in the higher wage counties? Are you just willing to write off small coastal towns or rural cities in Lane County? What is the difference between Oakridge and Burns? Both communities are struggling because they have lost timber jobs, yet you are going to make the businesses in Oakridge pay a higher wage than the businesses in Burns. How does that make sense? Don't you care about the small communities? In your effort to push forward with a bill that you think might appease the higher minimum wage supporters you seem to be willing to sacrifice smaller communities throughout the State. That is a travesty.

It doesn't stop there, however. You are willing to sacrifice seniors who won't see a raise, and who will see the cost of their care rise and the cost of their food rise; single mothers who will see their childcare costs grow out of control; school districts who will have to cut staffing positions; and non-profits who will see their wage costs rise. Your own DHS estimates that the steep increase in the minimum wage will cost Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities programs over \$20 million in the 2017-2019 biennium---I guess we can add the disabled to the list of those we can sacrifice in an effort to appease the supporters of higher minimum wages.

Why aren't you recognizing the impact of tips on workers? You pretend as if everyone identified as a minimum wage worker only earns minimum wage, but many of them earn two or three or more times that amount. I have pizza delivery drivers who make over \$18 per hour, so why aren't you acknowledging that the number of people who actually are paid only minimum wage is significantly smaller than the number you put out there as fact? That is dishonest!

If you are going to go down the path of sacrifice, maybe we should just remove preemption and let cities do the sacrificing on their own. I oppose a patchwork of minimum wages throughout the State, but at least if you let the citizens bring it upon themselves then they have no else to blame. So lift preemption and allow cities **by a vote of the people** to implement one of the three tiers you have identified. You are already doing enough to hurt businesses, so maybe this is the route you need to take now.

I truly despair for the direction this State is taking. In your effort to satisfy a finite number of progressive communities you are willing to sacrifice the rest of the State and that is just wrong. I cannot conceive of opening another business in Oregon if you continue your efforts to destroy local businesses.

Sincerely,

Mike Nesbitt

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**President
The Papa's Group, Inc.
Phone: 541-686-2237 ext.104**