

Dear Legislators,

As a small business owner I have many concerns about raising the minimum wage higher than any State in the US. A little about myself. When my husband Robert (Bob) Fordyce & I married in 1958 we planted 5 acres of Strawberries on rented ground and it took us 16 years to become full time farmers. Bob worked at the cannery, and planted fir trees for reforestation to get us through those 16 years. We raised 4 sons and now 2 of those sons are farmers. We have no control over the price we will receive for our blueberries that go to a processer as it varies with supply and demand. Some years the price for our blueberries can be lower than our expensives. We also sell picked strawberries, blueberries, blackberries and raspberries in our small farm store and hire young people to work in the store where they learn employment skills. That would have to end if we had to pay \$14.75 an hour for inexperienced workers. We would have to raise our prices for our berries but since neighboring states have lower minimum wages it would be cheaper to buy their berries at the grocery stores. People who want to buy local produce raised in Oregon might not be able to payer higher prices. It will be difficult for those in Agriculture to compete with other States and foreign countries who have cheaper labor. I am also concerned about the consumer. Many businesses will need to raise their prices so the consumer will be paying more for food, goods and services. Businesses will need to cut jobs in order to cut costs and still have a reasonable profit to stay in business. Could this be a loss in tax revenue for the State? And the Youth that could be unemployable and idle will they stay out of trouble? Thank you for letting me tell you about my concerns.

Sincerely,
Norma Jean Fordyce