



**To: House Committee on Business and Labor**  
**From: Laura Rondeau, Low-Wage Worker**  
**Re: Raise the Wage**  
**Date: February 15, 2016**

Chairs Holvey, and members of the Committee,

My name is Laura Rondeau and I am here to testify in support of raising the minimum wage in Oregon.

I am one of the thousands of low-wage workers in Oregon that desperately need an increase in the minimum wage to survive.

I am a 26 years old who can't afford to go back to college and am struggling to get by working 35 hours a week at a job that pay just \$9.25 an hour. I work at Café Yum near Portland State University, and when all is said and done I bring home hardly \$1,100 a month.

That money does not last. My rent is \$575 a month—I rent a room in a house with four other people. I can't afford a car, so I use public transit, which accounts for \$100 a month. Apparently, I make too much to qualify for the Oregon Health Plan, so I currently have no health insurance.

I am about four quarters away from completing my Bachelor's degree at PSU, unfortunately I am racking up too much debt to go back to school. My hope was to work for a while and save up money to reduce the amount of money I need to borrow. However, I have not been able to get a job paying a living wage, so I am stuck.

One day I hope to finish my undergraduate degree, complete masters and doctorate degrees and become a clinical psychologist. However, the deck is stacked against me and others of my generation. We can't make enough money to save for college and we can't afford to go to college without some sort of savings.

This legislature can take an important step this session and give thousands of Oregonians a chance. Raise the minimum wage in Oregon to a living wage, and pass Senate Bill 1532. Give me an opportunity to save money and go back to college.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story.

Laura Rondeau, 8933 NE Webster, Portland, OR 97220