



**TO: House Committee on Business and Labor**  
**FR: Nikki Fisher, Executive Director Oregon Bus Project**  
**DA: February 15, 2016**  
**Re: Support for SB 1532A**

Chair Holvey and members of the committee,

My name is Nikki Fisher and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Bus Project. The Oregon Bus Project is Oregon's leading organization focused completely on millennial outreach, voter engagement, voter education, and building strong and impactful leadership development programs for our future leaders. Our unique advocacy is organized by young people for young people. We amplify the voice of millennial generation. We are an organization focused on engaging young people in the democratic process by making it fun and accessible. The Bus drives votes, it drives leaders and it drives change.

The Bus Project knows that our democracy is at its healthiest and most robust when citizens have their basic needs met.

As an organization that works across the state and with many constituents who work minimum wage or low wage jobs we know how critical it is for Oregon to raise the minimum wage. Oregon's current minimum wage is not enough for an individual or a family to live on. The Senate vote last week is recognition that no matter where you live in Oregon, you can't get by on just \$19,240 a year. No matter where you live, that's not nearly enough to afford the basics like housing, food, and childcare.

Our democracy is strongest when citizens can participate with ease and voice their opinions and views through voting. That is a hard thing to do when you are concerned about whether or not you can pay the rent, or afford enough gas to get to work. Our generation faces unprecedented and never imagined levels of student loan debt. Faced with that debt we are overwhelmed at the rising cost of housing and not being able to afford the chance to build a future of home ownership, retirement, and contributing to the economy with any purchasing power.

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.

The bottom line is that we know that working Oregonians and their families need a raise—and they need it now.

Thank you for your time and consideration.