

To Whom It May Concern:

I know you are all extremely busy...I hope you take a minute to read this. Its the least you can do for a voting tax paying citizen of your state.

I am the owner of three different small businesses, two small tavern/bars and one restaurant in the Central Oregon area of the state and I VOTE. I currently employ nearly 50 people in Deschutes county. I am writing to implore a **NO vote** on the proposed minimum wage increase as it will be detrimental to my livelihood as well as to that of several of the people who work for me.

I moved to Oregon right out of College in 1994 with a degree and \$1000 in cash to start my life. I started at minimum wage jobs such as a dock hand at the marina in Sunriver, a yard worker at a local mill and then as a cook and bartender. I never turned down work, saved money, worked two jobs, earned the trust of my employers, learned everything I could and began to build a life. Along the way I struggled greatly and many times I felt lost and hopeless, however I never gave up and I worked my way up the ladder. I finally got an opportunity when I was 28 to purchase my first business with a loan from the very folks i had been working for. I bought my tavern from them at 13% interest and a small down payment. I worked and continue to work 60-80 hours a week in order to run my companies, support my family and put money away for my retirement. MY wages are not guaranteed and I have no benefit package, or guaranteed retirement. My phone rings all hours of the day and night...even when I do manage to take a vacation! Arguably I am living the American dream. I worked for every penny I have!! I have to deal with many government agencies who all get a piece of my hard work and have the right to tell me how to run my companies....all of whom receive health insurance, guaranteed pay and retirement....from my tax dollars. My point is that I have arguably worked much harder than most people to get where I am at in life and I don't think some bureaucrat in an office should mandate how much I pay my employees. The fact is that with the proposed hike in wages I may lose everything I have worked twenty plus years to earn. There are options to minimum wage jobs....education, training, hard work, trades etc. If you don't like where you are in life than hard work and effort can still get you places in this country.

I opened my latest venture in the Sunriver area a little over a year ago, I invested my life savings and leveraged my house in order to purchase my building and start my new restaurant. My new restaurant has made me exactly \$11,489.00 since October 2015. I think that makes my wage out to about fifty cents per hour. How can I afford to give every employee a 30% raise? You already mandated sick pay for every employee which raised my payroll burden by 4.5%. I know this because I have to do all of my own bills, books, payroll, janitorial, unemployment forms, workers comp etc. I AM A SMALL BUSINESS who has to do ALL the work myself in order to make a living!! Much like all small business owners I know....every penny counts and you folks in Salem continue to nickle and dime us to death. **YOU ARE HARMING SMALL BUSINESSES AND OUR WAY OF LIFE!** I am not a wealthy man and like many people I am living month to month, with your new wage increase there is a real chance I will not be able to continue to operate my companies. It is a **CERTAINTY** that I will cut several positions and probably my hours of operation, and I will have to raise my prices dramatically as will every company in Oregon! The poor will still be in the exact same place that they are in now! The only

people who benefit from this raise in wages will be you the politicians. Your payroll tax revenue will increase greatly as well as income tax revenue, then you can continue to have your 6 weeks of vacation, paid holidays, early retirement and health insurance while people like me kill themselves to squeak out a decent living. When can I count on one of my representatives to look after the small business person??!! When can I expect to spend more time with my family and less time trying to stay a float? Why would anyone open a business in Oregon when they could save thousands and thousands of dollars in one of our neighboring states? Why would I stay?? I love Oregon and our way of life..why do you continue to attack the hard working people and the people have assumed all the risk? The folks at the bottom have every opportunity to improve their life, just like I did. I am not from a wealthy family, my father was a mason and my mother was a school teacher...I busted my butt to get where I am at!

Minimum wage is NOT meant to be a living wage...it is an entry level wage for young people and unskilled labor. Should a dishwasher or grocery bagger or gas pumper make \$13.50/hour??!! Should servers and bartenders who are already making \$20 plus dollars and hour get more of my money?

I have a brilliant idea for Oregon.....**BRING IN MORE MIDDLE CLASS JOBS INSTEAD OF CRUSHING THE FOLKS WHO ARE ALREADY STRUGGLING TO MAKE IT IN OUR GREAT STATE!**

Thank you for your time

Greg Farfaglia