

Hello,

My name is Jim Hulett and I own 2 small businesses in Central Oregon. To put it bluntly, the proposed changes to the minimum wage will be a huge blow to my businesses and other small businesses like mine. Our economic cycle is highly dependent on the summer tourism here, so in the summer we employ approximately 40 people and in the winter that number goes down to around 10. The additional 75% of workforce that I employ in the summer is mostly comprised of local high school and college kids. Usually this is their first job, or maybe they come in with a little experience with part time work at some other local restaurant, but in most cases we are training and teaching young, raw kids how to work and be responsible. Often, we will have the same kids back each summer as they progress through high school and college. This is something that my wife and I have enjoyed greatly over the years. It has been a joy to watch many of these kids grow into adults and to know that we have had a hand in teaching them work ethic, customer service, economics, values, how to be responsible and accountable. Moreover, how to be productive members of our community. When I see many of these kids who have finished college and moved on to whatever trade they choose to pursue a career in, I feel proud to know that I helped them along the way. You see, the jobs we provide are entry level jobs where kids can learn HOW to work and grow, these are not jobs that are meant to support a family.

Oregon already has the 8th highest minimum wage in the nation, so it's not like our minimum wage is sorely lacking compared to other states. All I keep hearing is that our minimum wage is not a "living wage". Well there's a shocker! Minimum wage jobs are not jobs that are supposed to support a family! When I was 15 years old I worked at a Thriftway store as a bottle boy and earned minimum wage, and when I was 16 I got a job at a Les Schwab Tire Center bucking tires for minimum wage. I worked my tail off for minimum wage but I learned many valuable lessons that helped to shape my working career and helped to make me the person that I am today. That's exactly what the minimum wage is there for; kids entering the job force and learning how to work.

If you are trying to support a family on a minimum wage job, that is YOUR fault based on the life choices YOU made, not the fault (nor the problem) of the rest of the state. How is it that we should make a whole state suffer consequences from the poor life choices of a few? How is it possible that our state senate thinks it is legitimate for me to pay 16 year old high school kids \$13.50 per hour to sweep the patio, take out the garbage, wipe down tables and chairs and do the dishes? In what alternate reality does this even seem optional?

I was born and raised in Oregon, educated in Oregon, paid for my own college education at Oregon State University by WORKING my way through with hard, labor intensive jobs. I have worked in Oregon for 31 years, I PAY TAXES in Oregon, and more importantly, I VOTE in Oregon. This latest bit of legislation just proves to me how out of touch our elected officials really are with their constituents! If you pass this minimum wage hike it will be to the extreme detriment of those who you purport to serve... Make the right choice for Oregon and throw this bit of legislation where it belongs, in the garbage!

Sincerely,

Jim Hulett