

## **E-Brief Reader Feedback on the Minimum Wage**

“At first glance it is a substantial increase—more than 30 percent that needs to be considered for all staff that have been in our employ from one to 20 years to be fair. As we step back we will have to evaluate this mandate not just for the present but future, as it is tied to the Consumer Price Index and supposedly increases each January. We are a cottage industry dependent on a healthy local economy—our concern is that businesses will again leave Ohio as they did during high worker compensation rates. Ohio will again lose...as will its people. Will have to wait and see.”

**--Justin Marotta, AAF**  
Possum Run Greenhouse & Gifts  
Bellville, Ohio

---

“The minimum wage hike will impact our business. Although most of our staff is well above the minimum wage, the bar is now set higher. Employees who are closer to the new minimum may feel a need for an adjustment. We already struggle to compete in a tight employment market. We will have to monitor our labor closely and determine how we will fill open positions.

We also have entry level positions for students. We offer these positions for "after school" hours. These kids help us clean up, take out trash, sweep, sterilize buckets and learn about having a job. These "first jobs" are important in supporting our schools and community. These kids are able to obtain a first job with no experience and on their free time. We will have to cut back on these positions.

There are several small businesses in our area who work on small margins. I worry that this amendment will put them out of business and leave their employees without a job.”

**--Lori Wheat**  
Lafayette Florist  
Lafayette, Colo.

---

“Here in New Jersey our minimum wage is always \$2 higher than the federal minimum. You cannot find anyone to work for minimum. We always pay considerably above minimum. However, every time the minimum goes up everyone expects an increase to keep them on par above the minimum. Very inflationary. The two little secrets the government doesn't tell everyone about the minimum are: 1. It is an automatic increase in revenue to government thru Social Security and withholding increases, due to higher wages and 2. Some union contracts are written as a multiple of the minimum wage. So the poor person on the bottom who gets a \$1 or \$2 per hour increase is eclipsed by the union worker who gets a \$3, \$4 or \$5 per hour increase. Making the products he/she makes even more expensive for the bottom tier to purchase.

“About a dozen or so year ago, I saw a program proposing a guaranteed annual income to replace minimum wage rates. As long as you worked full-time during the year, no matter what your pay rate was, at the end of the year the government would make up the difference between your pay and the minimum guarantee. Of course any food stamps, welfare payments etc. would be included in the calculation. The economists that presented the program estimated productivity would increase and workers would have a higher sense of well being and the cost to the government would be less than the current system of welfare, entitlements and unemployment. This is just a brief synopsis of a very complicated topic, but someone in the government should at least look at it.”

**-- Tony Thonnerieux, AAF**  
Ward's Flowers & Gifts,  
Newton, N.J.