



In Nebraska, we want an economy that works for all of us. To sustain a strong Nebraska economy, jobs must pay enough for workers to meet their basic needs – putting food on the table, paying for childcare, visiting the doctor, and putting gas in the car. Raising the minimum wage is one important way to make work pay. Increasing the minimum wage will help workers support themselves, their families, their communities and our economy. We are all in this economy together, so let's ensure our economy works for everyone.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. I signed the petition- isn't that enough to Raise the Wage?

Over 135,000 Nebraskans signed the petition to put a reasonable increase in the minimum wage on the ballot, but now we need your vote on or before November 4 to raise the wage. In 2014 minimum wage earnings will lose about 2% of their paycheck's value to inflation. That is real money for real families- about \$250.00 per year- which is about 1 month of groceries or utilities.ⁱ Working families are counting on your vote to Raise the Wage.

2. I am not registered to vote so I cannot help.

There is plenty of time to register. The best way to register and to make sure your vote counts is to send in a vote by mail request form. Election officials will mail you a voter registration form and a ballot.

3. Why is your proposal a gradual increase to only \$9 per hour?

Our proposal is reasonable for Nebraska and in line with history. We wanted to strike a balance between making work pay and gradually increasing the wage floor to give employers time to plan and adjust. It has been over five years since the minimum wage was last increased to the current rate of \$7.25 per hour, which equates to an annual income of about \$15,000.00. Hard work should lift families out of poverty, not keep them in it.

4. How will this affect jobs and the Nebraska economy?

Raising the minimum wage puts more money in the pockets of working families. A study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago found that every \$1 increase in the minimum wage results in \$2,800 in new spending by the minimum wage household over the next year.ⁱⁱ Increasing the minimum wage will lead to greater spending by the workers who get the raise, thereby boosting the economy.

States that raised their minimum wage at the beginning of this year are adding jobs at a faster pace than those that did not.ⁱⁱⁱ The state with the highest minimum wage is leading the nation in small business job growth.^{iv} States with higher wages report increased employee productivity and retention.

5. How will this affect businesses?

Increasing the minimum wage will help businesses by putting more money in the hands of consumers, thus boosting demand for goods and services. Higher wages will also increase worker productivity,^v reduce turnover^{vi} and create savings on recruitment and training costs for employers. Contrary to assertions by opponents of increasing the minimum wage, the weight of the economic research points to little to no job loss in response to modest increases in the minimum wage.^{vii}

6. Who really makes minimum wage?

In Nebraska, about 70% of minimum wage earners are women.^{viii} Nationally statistics show that the average minimum wage worker is 35 years old, 88% are at least 20 years old, 54% work full time, about 27% are parents, and they typically earn about half of their family's total income.^{ix} 29,000 Nebraskans rely on wages that are at or below minimum wage to support themselves and their families.^x

7. How will this affect the price of things we buy?

Even opponents of increasing the minimum wage acknowledge that the effects on price are likely to be small - both because of the relatively small share of production costs accounted for by minimum wage labor and because of the limited spillovers from a minimum wage increase.^{xi}

8. I don't make minimum wage, so what's in it for me?

Economy boosting jobs ensure our economy works for everyone. Raising the wage ensures the private sector does its part and lessens reliance on public benefits-that saves all taxpayers money.

9. Aren't there other solutions like job training and increasing the EITC?

Raising the wage is not the only solution to improve the economy and combat poverty. However, raising the wage is one of the most effective tools for lifting families above the poverty line and it is one of the only tools that ensures the private sector is doing its part so that Nebraska taxpayers are not left to pick up the tab.

10. I do not think government should set a minimum wage.

Our country settled this matter over 75 years ago when it set a minimum wage to ensure basic fairness. Over 60% of Nebraskans support raising the wage because it is the right thing to do, and it ensures our economy works for everyone.

Paid for by Nebraskans For Better Wages, 1700 Farnam Street #1200 Omaha NE 68102

ⁱ The White House, Fact Sheet, The Economic Case for Increasing the Minimum Wage: State by State Impact, March 19, 2014 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/03/19/fact-sheet-economic-case-increasing-minimum-wage-state-state-impact>

ⁱⁱ Daniel Aaronson, Sumit Agarwal, and Eric French, "The Spending and Debt Response to Minimum Wage Hikes," Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, WP 2007-23, Revised February 8, 2011, http://www.chicagofed.org/digital_assets/publications/working_papers/2007/wp2007_23.pdf.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Job Growth Picks Up in States that Raised Minimum Wage," FoxNews.com, July 19, 2014, <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2014/07/19/job-growth-picks-up-in-states-that-raised-minimum-wage/>.

^{iv} Paychex & IHS, "Small Business Jobs Index," July 2014, <http://www.paychex.com/jobs-index/index.aspx>.

^v Citing studies of wage increases at the San Francisco airport and in the City of Boston, National Employment Law Project, "A Strong Minimum Wage Can Help Working Families, Businesses, and Our Economy Recover," Briefing Paper, January 2011.

^{vi} Arindrajit Dube, T. William Lester, and Michael Reich. (2013). "Minimum Wage Shocks, Employment Flows and Labor Market Frictions." IRLE Working Paper No. 149-13. <http://irle.berkeley.edu/workingpapers/149-13.pdf>.

^{vii} John Schmitt, "Why Does the Minimum Wage Have No Discernible Effect on Employment?" *Center for Economic and Policy Research*, February 2013, <http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/min-wage-2013-02.pdf>.

^{viii} National Women's Law Center, Women and the Minimum Wage -State by State, April 22, 2014 <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/women-and-minimum-wage-state-state>

^{ix} The New York Times, The Upshot, Minimum Wage: Who Makes It?, June 9, 2014 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/10/upshot/minimum-wage.html?abt=0002&abg=0>

^x US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Characteristics of Minimum Wage Workers 2013" March 2014 <http://www.bls.gov/cps/minwage2013.pdf>

^{xi} Neumark and Wascher. Minimum Wages. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. (2008), p. 248, as cited in John Schmitt, "Why Does the Minimum Wage Have No Discernible Effect on Employment?" *Center for Economic and Policy Research*, February 2013, <http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/min-wage-2013-02.pdf>.