

## NC Justice Center Study Details Benefits Of Raising Minimum Wage

By Administrator

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Raising the minimum wage in North Carolina will provide families with bigger paychecks, create more good jobs, and build thriving communities, all without hurting employment, according to a new report from the NC Justice Center. North Carolina's current wage floor is identical to the nation's at \$7.25 an hour, but legislators have introduced a plan that would raise the state's minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2024. A new report from the NC Justice Center <finds that this bold effort to improve wages will benefit working people, businesses, and communities. Specific findings include:

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Raising the minimum wage is necessary because median wages in North Carolina have actually dropped by 10 cents an hour over the past 10 years, from \$1,681 an hour in 2008 to \$1,781 in 2018.

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This plan would boost paychecks for almost 1.6 million working people, giving each of them a raise of \$4,422 per year and a combined \$7 billion for all workers across the state.

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It doesn't just affect teenagers—it helps adult workers and parents who rely on minimum wage jobs to support their families. More than 93 percent of people who will receive the raise are older than 20, and more than 765,000 children have parents who will benefit. Half of all single parents and a quarter of all married parents will see a raise.

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Raising the minimum wage will create thousands of good jobs by transforming low-wage jobs into good-paying, family supporting jobs. For example, more than 260,000 retail workers would see their paychecks grow by \$4,100 and 160,000 people working in the food services industry would receive almost \$6,000 more every year.

"Now is the time to raise the state's minimum wage. Wages aren't going up on their own, and thousands of working people don't earn enough to afford the basics, like putting food on the table, paying the rent, putting gas in their car and their kids in daycare," said Allan Freyer, director of Workers' Rights at the Center and author of the report. "Working people have waited more than a decade to get a raise, only to find out that wages have only gone down. If the market can't raise wages, then state government should."

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### Additional findings include:

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Raising the minimum wage will not increase joblessness or unemployment. Looking just at the 18 states that raised their minimum wage to take effect January 1, 2018, those states had identical employment growth and unemployment over 2018 when compared to states that did not raise their wage floor. This finding is similar to rigorous academic studies by professional economists.

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The plan creates an unparalleled opportunity for bringing historically marginalized communities into the mainstream economy. Almost half a million African American workers and a quarter million Latinx workers would benefit—largely because of the plan's elimination of discriminatory provisions that exclude domestic workers, agricultural workers, and tipped employees from full minimum wage protections. Historically, these types of discriminatory barriers have held back overall economic performance, so including these marginalized working people will help boost economic growth.

“Raising minimum creates good jobs, it doesn't kill them. More than 30 states have raised their minimum wages in the last decade, yet mass job loss and unemployment have never occurred. Job growth and unemployment are the same in the states that raised their wages for 2018 compared to those that that didn't,” Freyer said. “That's one big why raising the minimum wage is good for the economy.”