



Submission

Fair Workplaces Better Jobs Act

Tuesday, July 11, 2017

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

RE: Bill 148, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 and the Labour Relations Act, 1995

Presented by: Peter Chirico, President & CEO

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Throughout the consultations regarding the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, the Chambers of Commerce across Ontario have been working with the government to provide input into any changes that could potentially impact small and medium sized businesses in our regions.

An economic impact analysis is the only way that the Government of Ontario can protect jobs and workers against the unintended consequences that may come as a result of implementing these 173 recommendations to the Employment Standards Act and Labour Relations Act.

Due to the unwillingness of the Provincial Government to provide its own analysis prior to implementation, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce along with other groups that make up the Keep Ontario Working coalition has subsequently commissioned an independent economic impact study that will be due out in August.

As media tends to talk mostly of the increase to minimum wage and as such businesses have been strictly concerned about this item, this Chamber provided a survey, specifically on this item, to our membership and the response was 37%. The full report with a summary is provided at the end of this document.

Also of note, the North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce and the membership have never been against incremental increases to minimum wage, which allows for maintaining stability and planning for employers. With the announced increase of 23% in less than six months and an overall increase of 32% in 18 months, businesses are very concerned that they will not be able to meet these requirements and as such, unintended consequences such as reduction in staff hours, no new hires and increased costs to customers will result. If in fact, these solutions can't be achieved appropriately, imminent closure is expected by some owners.

According to the Premier's own 2014 Minimum Wage Advisory Panel, in analyzing Canadian research, youth employment will drop by 6 per cent for every 10 per cent increase in minimum wage. Since 2010, the minimum wage in Ontario has increased by 12 per cent in seven years. Now the government wants to increase the minimum wage by 32 per cent over just 18 months. This is completely unmanageable for Ontario businesses. Even more unmanageable is a 23 per cent increase within less than six months.

This will undoubtedly result in a cascading impact upon all compensation structures as the inflationary impact works its way through the system. There will be pressure to pay all employees more, resulting in higher statutory deductions, payroll taxes, pension and retirement program contributions. The competitive impact to the economy will not only be felt at the minimum wage level.

If the government is committed to this course, they need to learn from other jurisdictions. California is taking five years to increase their minimum wage by 50 per cent to \$15/hour with employers of less than 25 employees. Seattle has allowed for a 4-year implementation for a 36 per cent wage increase. However, even there, recent evidence has suggested that the costs of the Seattle minimum wage increases outweigh the benefits by 3:1. In that instance, low-wage workers are losing \$125 per month due to less hours of work scheduled.

In Northern Ontario, businesses already struggle with increased costs; and while the government states that they are providing offsetting credits, the majority of our small and medium sized businesses don't qualify for these programs. In our region 86% of our business members are in the range of 0 to 20 employees; the larger businesses that range 20 to 100 employees are for the most part private sector, with any above 100 plus employees in our region are from mostly public sector organizations.

Our unemployment rate is higher than the provincial average and with the extreme jump to minimum wage, we are very concerned that our unemployment rate will increase further. Youth and young adults trying to get into the workforce will be affected most.

While the substantial increase to the minimum wage is spoken about most often, there are many other items of concern within the recommendations:

Unfair for Seniors

- With our aging population, this legislation is unfair because it will mean that seniors pay more for consumer goods while their CPP, Old Age Security and guaranteed income supplement will remain the same.
- The population share of seniors in the Nipissing district is expected to rise from 18 percent in 2013 to 30 percent in 2041.¹

Public Sector Impact

- Contravening the new measures stated by the Provincial Government last fall in regards to small business growth and cutting red tape, whereas regulatory costs were to be cut by all ministries by offsetting every new dollar spent on administration costs by removing \$1.25 of old or unnecessary costs, will be hard to achieve if this legislation means that taxpayers will be on the hook for more. The burden on the provincial treasury will increase as the Ontario government will pay more for casual, part-time, and temporary employees.

Most vulnerable populations

- We know that it is often the vulnerable people that this government is trying to help that will suffer the most as a result of these reforms. An 85 country study concludes that “heavier regulation of labour is associated with lower labour force participation and higher unemployment, especially of the young”.²
- To demonstrate true fairness and compassion for workers, we must ensure Ontario has a strong economy to help create jobs and increase economic growth.

Equal Pay for Equal Work

- Equal Pay for Equal Work provisions should not apply during the first six months that assignment workers and seasonal employees are performing work similar to full-time employees.
 - The government should listen to their own advisors. As stated on page 205 of the Changing Workplaces Review Report, “we are attracted to the concept of a qualifying period, because it is an accepted practice in a jurisdiction which accepts the principle of equality, and because it broadly accords with notions of a starter or a probationary rate, which is quite common in workplaces generally”.
- New and temporary workers often require considerable training and we are concerned that these changes will prevent employers from hiring contract and seasonal employees due to the increased costs.

Scheduling

- The government should look for sector based exemptions to scheduling. One-size-fits-all solutions do not work. Factors such as weather play a large influence in business operations and scheduling for some sectors, while business processes for others make these provisions unworkable.
 - The government should listen to its own advice. As outlined in the Changing Workplaces Review report: The government should work with employers and industry associations in various sectors to develop scheduling rules. Scheduling can not be the same for all employers throughout the province and appropriate accommodations and flexibility is needed to ensure economic success.
 - One such supported sector by the government is keeping elderly in the homes longer by providing home care and PSW supports, flexibility in scheduling is imperative, especially if some employees utilize the paid emergency leave option at the last moment in their own lives, they still need to be replaced on short notice. It is noted that this does not apply if the collective agreement states otherwise; therefore, it is proving that the government is encouraging unionized employment.
- Within many sectors, flexibility in scheduling is imperative to ensuring efficient business operations.

¹ Shifting demographic trends will tell the story of Nipissing district’s future, Northern Policy Institute, April 4, 2017

² Juan C. Botero, Simeon Djankov, Rafael La Porta, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, Andrei Shleifer; The Regulation of Labor. *Q J Econ* 2004; 119 (4): 1339-1382.

- No other jurisdiction in Canada has such prescriptive scheduling provisions.
- Small business will need to minimize their staff due to the inability to afford compensating employees for days not worked.
- Seasonal operations in our region are concerned as weather plays a large part in scheduling; a good example last week, a storm come through that was expected to reach only the northern part of the region, however it did cover the whole region including torrential rain and hail, even though it was 28 degrees with the humidity of 33 degrees. It is difficult for operators to plan staffing levels, when the weather can be variable in summer or winter.

Union Certification

The proposed changes to the Labour Relations Act allow for establishing card-based certification for the temporary help agency industry, the building services sector, and home care and the community services industry.

Additionally, unions will have the ability to access employee lists and contact information of employees, provided the union can demonstrate support of 20 per cent of employees involved.

- The government should listen to its own advice. As stated in page 144 of the Changing Workplaces Review Report, the secret ballot process for certification should be preserved for all sectors.
- Card based certification will diminish an employees' rights and prevent workers from having a say about whether they wish to be a part of a union or not.
- Secret ballot voting allows the removal of external pressures and ensures an employee's true opinion is represented and remains the standard to ensure expression of democratic outcomes without illegal employer conduct throughout the certification process.
- Our recommendation is that the certification process for union formation and access to employee lists should remain at 40 per cent of employees involved to ensure privacy and avoid unwarranted pressures towards unionization; moving it to 20 per cent does not make sense, especially when the majority of our small businesses only employ up to 0 to 20 employees.
- The release of employee lists creates a violation of employee privacy and their ability to make decisions.
- Unionized workplaces require sophisticated HR and Labour relations infrastructures to manage, driving costs. These are significant costs because of simply having to manage a business through the union organizing process, ranging from hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars in managerial and legal costs incurred in defending against a union drive and dealing with the resulting labour board legal processes. These amendments potentially expose employers to a perpetual cycle of union organizing activity.

Paid Emergency Leave

The legislation removes the requirement of a 50-employee threshold for paid emergency leave (PEL) and requires employers to provide 10 personal emergency days per year, 2 of which are paid.

- Our recommendation is that the government should preserve the 50-employee threshold for PEL and clarify the greater right or benefit provision in the ESA. We also think there is value in the PEL being broken down into more discrete categories, especially in the absence of an effort to consolidate PEL with the ESA's other nine leave categories.
- Existing leave provisions are reasonable and significant amendments could compromise productivity and investment and thus the economic wellbeing of both employers and employees.
- Employers value regulatory frameworks that align with compliance capacity. Considered changes to the PEL could add a level of complexity and onerousness that would be difficult for business to navigate.
- Many small businesses have limited operational flexibility, particularly as it relates human resource management. Extension of PEL to this category of employer may constrain productivity and increase cost.
- There are secondary impacts to unplanned absenteeism, in terms of how will these changes impact overall absenteeism rates, especially since employers will be stripped of their ability to manage absences by requesting reasonable evidence, and all the related impacts arising due to employees not being at work, such as reduced productivity, quality issues, and the increased cost of replacement labour to cover these rising absences.

Timelines

- Ontario's private sector is still doing its part to support workers. As the Government pointed out in Budget 2017, 98 per cent of all new jobs since the recession in Ontario have been full time, and 78 per cent in above-average wage industries. This positive economic activity by Ontario's private sector demonstrates a clear commitment to good jobs throughout our province.
- The main challenge currently facing the Canadian economy remains a lack of business investment. Without a material improvement on this front, Canada's potential economic growth will remain below 1 per cent.
- These regulations are being implemented during a period of decelerating economic growth, the adoption of Donald Trump's America First policy, lower corporate taxes and costs in the United States of America, and growing uncertainty about the future of NAFTA.
- Much of the lower end commodity type manufacturing that remains in Ontario will be extremely sensitive to the variety of higher costs associated with this legislation. The smaller commodity type products can be easily transported and shipped from lower cost jurisdictions. But once outsourced to another location, it also becomes tempting to perform the next stages of production and assembly there as well, instead of incurring the transportation cost to ship back to Ontario.
- Concern that the government may push more business out of Ontario, as seen in the southern corridor to other jurisdictions across the border to the U.S.; this affects all of us in Ontario. In Northern Ontario, we've seen businesses move to Quebec, which also has a negative impact to other subsidiary suppliers in our region.
- We support a gradual increase to the minimum wage to allow businesses to plan appropriately.

Summary from the Survey:

- 37% response rate from our membership; this is a substantial amount and therefore a 90% confidence rate in the results (with 4% error).
- Will the increase of minimum wage from the current \$11.40 per hour to \$15.00 per hour in the next year and a half have a negative impact on your business?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	72.26%
No	18.98%
Unsure	8.76%

- If YES from #1, what will you do to mitigate any negative impacts? (choose all that apply) - 198 responses

Answer Choices	Responses
Increase rates/prices to clients/consumers	68.25%
Reduce regular staff	45.50%
Keep regular staff but no new hires	30.69%
Reduce the number of seasonal/students we hire	44.44%
Close the operation	5.82%
Other (please specify)	19.58%

- You answered "no" to the first question, please tell us why the minimum wage increase won't negatively affect your business. (choose all that are appropriate) – 48 of the 52 responded

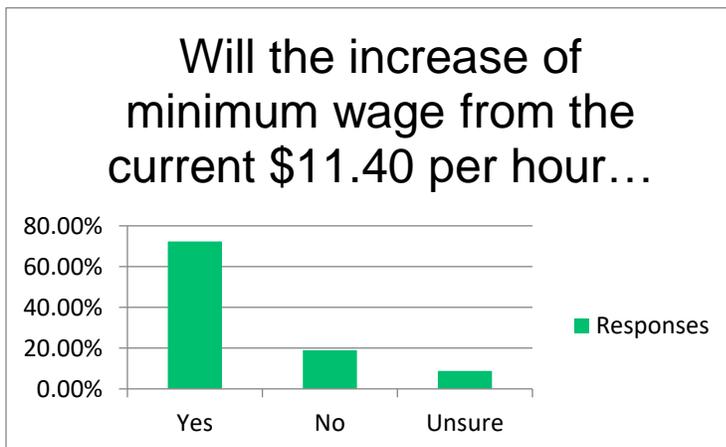
Answer Choices	Responses
I have no employees, I am the owner/operator	18.75%
All my employees currently make over \$15 per hour	66.67%
Other (please specify)	14.58%

- Numerous comments – there is an appetite for those concerned to try other ways to keep competitive ie/ increase rates, reduce staff, etc prior to determining to close operations; however, this is a gamble if customers cannot absorb the increased rates.
- Those that are “unsure” range from, they haven’t done the calculations on the impact, contracted by others, government funded – therefore they are not concerned, it will just happen for them, employees already make over the proposed minimum wage, increase their costs to customers.

Total Respondents: 274 of 732 member businesses (37% response rate).

- 1. Will the increase of minimum wage from the current \$11.40 per hour to \$15.00 per hour in the next year and a half have a negative impact on your business? – 274 responses.**

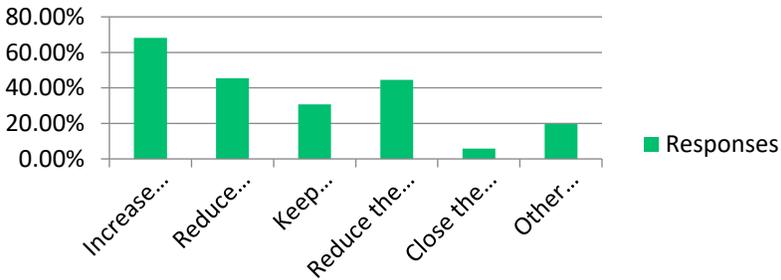
Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	72.26%
No	18.98%
Unsure	8.76%



- 2. If YES from #1, what will you do to mitigate any negative impacts? (choose all that apply) - 198 responses**

Answer Choices	Responses
Increase rates/prices to clients/consumers	68.25%
Reduce regular staff	45.50%
Keep regular staff but no new hires	30.69%
Reduce the number of seasonal/students we hire	44.44%
Close the operation	5.82%
Other (please specify)	19.58%

What will you do to mitigate any negative impacts? (choose all that apply)



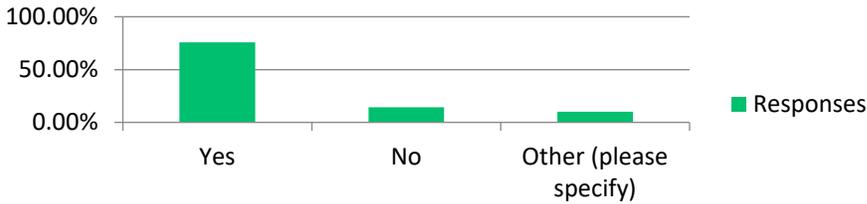
Respondents	Other (please specify)
1	Reduce staff hours and other benefits including room and board and meals. Senior staff will get smaller wage increases.
2	reduce hours for regular staff
3	Reduce costs in other areas such as benefits and other variable costs, re-negotiate contracts
4	apply for cupe to be owner and operator
5	We will have to weigh the impact and survey our clients to establish just what kind of increase in cost or decrease in service versus the possible loss to our customer base. We are always looking for ways to grow the business, and provide work for our team. This increased cost will not result in positive growth, and the best case for the short term would be status quo. Meanwhile, status quo for other expenses in the long term is not expected to be maintained, therefore in the long term increasing the minimum wage to this extent is yet another direct attack on small business.
6	Invest in Robotics and Automation.
7	No longer guarantee a minimum pay for servers. I run a catering company and already pay my staff \$15/hour as a guarantee because not all clients tip.
8	Reduce the length of the hiring period for most seasonal staff
9	unpaid smoke breaks
10	I may have to work by myself with no staff. This would be difficult and not self sustainable, because I make 95% of my products, and my business is labour intensive.
11	Our birthday party service would have to have a price increase as it is staffed by students. Our business would definitely suffer as our regular product lines are a very competitive category so any price increase would hurt us.
12	Expect more of staff
13	May become only a seasonal business as opposed to be opening year round.
14	Suffer a loss of income
15	The negative domino affect will be awful as current \$15/hr earners look for an increase after seeing new hires getting paid same! This will create a very volatile situation ...
16	Current Wages making \$15.00 will be required to go because they have more skill than a general labourer. This will have a domino effect all the way up the pay scale. Sure would be

	nice to get a \$3.00 raise for not bringing much to the table (especially for a labourer that needs to be supervised more than an average employee.
17	use more technology/robotics
18	I service businesses which will be negatively affected, I won't be affected directly, but my revenues may fall due to falling client revenues
19	increase inventory to buffer price increase
20	Decrease other benefits
21	May have to close, depending on related increase of other costs.
22	looking at feasibility of automation (artificial intelligence robots) and technology for ordering to reduce employees
23	Reduction in services provided to our consumers
24	No raises for the rest of the staff for a few years.
25	MY CUSTOMERS WILL HAVE LESS MONEY. I WORK IN THE LEISURE SIDE OF THE ECONOMY THEREFORE I MUST REDUCE MY PRICING TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO SPEND SOME OF THEIR DIMINISHED FREE INCOME ON MY SERVICE. THIS MAY REDUCE MY PROFIT LEVEL TO A POINT WHERE I CANNOT TRADE AND MAKE A PROFIT. THE BUSINESS WILL BE MADE DORMANT.
26	Only rent chairs
27	Possible closure since we can't raise rates
28	Would consider downsizing or closing
29	I don't know yet
30	Reduce number of work hours
31	May have to change our whole system around so we can run with less staff eliminate about 10 job positions,
32	increase prices or close the business
33	perhaps close the business
34	reduce number of hours worked per week
35	many of our staff are longer term employees who have worked their time to get merit increases. It will force us to pay all of our employees a higher rate as in some cases new hires will make more \$ than someone doing the job for 3-4 years.
36	Trim the luxury (non-essential) services for our customer lessening the consumer experience
37	May have to close

**3. For current employees, will you need to increase their pay in line with the increases to minimum wage?
– 198 responses**

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	75.79%
No	14.21%
Other (please specify)	10.00%

For current employees, will you need to increase their pay in line with the increases to minimum wage?



Respondents	Other (please specify)
1	Will not be obligated to but will feel it is necessary to continue to be competitive and retain top talent
2	We will, but the biggest impact on our non-minimum wage staff will be an increased workload
3	My employees currently start at \$15/hour - over \$3.50/hour above minimum wage. That is a 24% increase. In what business environment can anyone offer that kind of an increase in wages? The cost of doing business is constantly increasing and business must be more vigilant and creative to keep the wolves from the door. My clients are cost conscious and will simply not absorb an increase of that magnitude. We are constantly doing more with less, and we will require some further creative strategies to maintain our current staff levels. Creativity of this sort was never a part of the original business model.
4	Likely
5	Probably, but we haven't quite got there yet.
6	Not Applicable
7	their pay is already over the minimum wage
8	absolutely...that becomes the bigger issue. It goes all the way to the top of the pay scale.
9	Only those who are hourly
10	up to employees making 25-28/hr
11	all are above the proposed minimum but will still need to increase 2age to maintain the gap between their wage and minimum.
12	Probably. The overall total is unknown but the union will likely ask for a matching increase as a minimum.
13	They will want it to adjust but we cannot afford it.
14	I currently do not employ permanent staff and this measure means I will be a lot further in time before I can do so. Assuming my new business is able to continue.
15	Only rent chairs
16	Increase pay line by \$2 per hour to be more than minimum wage but not by the same increase as minimum wage
17	not at the same increments, but will in time since unions will fight to get their increase
18	Current Employees may expect this, but we would not be able to afford it

19 No, but we will most likely lose the manager and maintenance person as they currently make \$15 and \$16 an hour. They will not stay and take on the responsibility they do only making \$1 more than every other employee.

4. If you have calculated, please tell us your expected cost increases and number of employees – 100 of the 198 responded.

Respondents	Calculated increase in costs (please indicate monthly or yearly)	Number of Employees (f/t and p/t)
1	A labor cost increase of 27%	300
2	\$6912 per month	55 FT 12 PT
3	yearly \$ 12,640.	4 F/T & 2 P/T
4	Between \$8,500 and \$10,000 including additional EI, CPP and WSIB premiums. Almost a 15% increase in our payroll.	4 f/t seasonal
5	2900/month	9 full time
6	Minimum \$1,000,000 annually and upwards of \$2,000,000	100 full-time (year-round) and 100 seasonal (May to Sept)
7	22000 yf	2 ft 2pt
8	1840 per month	5pt
9	31%	
10	\$70000	11
11	10,000	25
12	approx. \$20,000.00	2ft -1pt
13	cost of every thing	2
14	Calculations have not been attempted	6 full-time
15	15 K yearly	4 effected
16	\$350 to \$550/month	1 p/t
17	829.00 per month	2
18	\$57,000 per year	16
19	20000	1 f/t 4 p/t
20	24000 annual	20
21	\$22000 per year	8 f/t 2 p/t
22	24,000 / year	3 p/t
23	17,500/year	10 seasonal
24	10% increase yearly	10
25	3000 per month	11/12
26	current payroll is 10,000/month it will increase by 23%	5 full time and 9 part time
27	\$108,000.00	35
28	15000	2ft 4pt
29	1500. monthly	6
30	\$7000.00	8 full time and 9 part time
31	21640	6
32	\$22,000 per year	2 full time and 1 part time

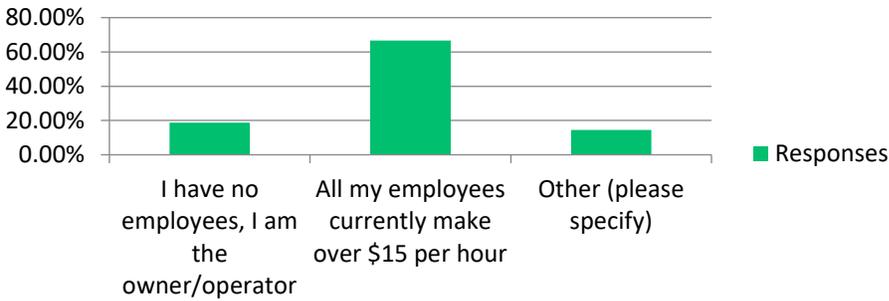
33	\$5000/year increase	1
34	1500.00/year	1 f/t
35	\$500,000 annually	32FT / 3 P/T
36	\$1300 monthly	10 p/t
37	10 to 12%	26
38	\$30,000 /yearly	3 f/t
39	It will cost me \$6,000.00 a year more	4
40	\$1250.00 monthly	3
41	135,000 annual	20
42	\$5000.00/yr	4 ft
43	120,000 plus increase in operating costs	12
44	\$5,000	2 Full time
45	\$ 2500.	1 pt
46	\$4800.00 YEAR	4
47	\$8 000/Month	assuming I only increase 1/2 my work force of say 25 people by \$2.00
48	10,000 per month	60
49	80000 /year	15ft/3pt
50	5%	6
51	About \$80,000	18 seasonal p/t
52	2020 monthly in extra wages	three F/T and four P/T
53	Seasonal \$4819.50 (4.5. months)	p/t
54	15 to 20 %	6 f/t
55	6,000 annually	2 full time
56	7000	2
57	\$50000.00	18 part time
58	Without any growth in the company, \$4200 per year.	2
59	\$150,000 per year	35
60	500/mon	2 pt
61	12 - 15,000 per month	30/35
62	\$207,057 increase in salaries and benefits if match amount of wage increase	Loss of 4 f/t employees to compensate if match wage increase
63	47000 yr	11
64	\$20,000/year	4
65	200 000 yearly	37
66	16300 per year	3
67	approximately \$2200 for season	1 fulltime seasonal employee.
68	6000.00 MONTH	10
69	approximately 3-4 thousand per year	3 full time employees
70	\$194,174 per year	48
71	15,000 yearly	6 ft, 1 pt
72	no clue but we are already operating in deficit	

73	7500 per year	6
74	reduce hours	200+
75	1200	5
76	\$4680.00 annual this doesn't included added EI costs	1 ft
77	4000-6000/y	2 f/t
78	\$900.00	one F/T
79	approx. \$1500.00 per month	7
80	\$6000 per employee	21 FT
81	\$8000	5 / 2
82	Estimated approximately \$33000-40000 by 2019	12
83	132,000	23
84	about \$4000.00 for the year	f/t -1 p/t -1
85	7000.00	5 ft
86	\$ 2600.00 monthly	7
87	115,000 yearly minimum depending on what the rate goes up to.	25
88	\$100,000 yearly	62 part-time
89	approx 75,000 a year	36 employess
90	Payroll will increase \$2178 per month	1 ft 3 pt
91	400 per week	5
92	\$15,000 PER YEAR	7
93	8500 per employee (20% increase in labour cost) annually	4ft - 4 pt (most PT employees will be reduced or eliminated.)
94	\$15000 per month	25
95	\$55,000 a year	6 full time 9 pt
96	16016.00 in wages alone let alone taxes	2
97	\$30000.00 per annum not including spill over	36
98	6,143.80	5 part time
99	\$320.00 monthly	4
100	7,000.00-10,000.00 annually	3 ft. 2 pt

5. You answered "no" to the first question, please tell us why the minimum wage increase won't negatively affect your business. (choose all that are appropriate) – 48 of the 52 responded

Answer Choices	Responses
I have no employees, I am the owner/operator	18.75%
All my employees currently make over \$15 per hour	66.67%
Other (please specify)	14.58%

You answered "no" to the first question, please tell us why the minimum wage increase won't negatively affect your business. (choose all that are appropriate)



6. Please provide comments or reasons of why you are “unsure” – 18 of the 24 responded.

Respondents	Responses
1	We contract our work with other businesses. The effects on our business (and staff) will depend on market attitudes.
2	Will have to increase my current employees wage to make it fair to him. Otherwise he is not making much more than minimum by next year. This cost will reflect on my company’s hourly rate
3	NOHFC may increase maximum for wage subsidy (Northern Internship). In order to be competitive and attract the best candidates, we offer the maximum under this program. If it increases, our contribution portion and MERC costs increases as well.
4	I currently do not employ anyone at minimum wage.
5	I don't know what everyone is paid
6	It will depend if our customers can afford the increase in wage and if our material supplies will spike because of it.
7	Our employees already make more than the proposed increase but would also receive some increase - this would require us to raise our service rates for our customers.
8	We are funded by the NE LHIN and the two staff are paid within their funding.
9	Staff already receive more than minimum wage. Most are already at the top of their pay scale and receive cost of living increases only.
10	We will need to inflate prices to compensate, however people will have more money. I am not sure if this will aid or hurt at this time.
11	expect to raise prices so do not know the effect of that raise yet
12	This is a significant increase and while we do not have any positions that start at minimum wage, we do have some that will be once the change takes effect. This will certainly result in pressure on the low end wage earners to increase proportionally above where there are now from minimum wage.
13	Any staff we hire, we apply for a grant or funding from the province or the feds. The increase in wages may reduce the number of grants handed out or approved.
14	Most of our employees currently make over \$14/hour.

15	we are small and an association, it may affect our membership which would in turn affect the office staffing levels
16	not sure if we will have employees then
17	Not sure what spin off affect it will have on other sectors that are not directly impacted
18	None of our employees are paid minimum wage. Most employees will remain at their current wage, while some will get raises to the new minimum wage.

7. Do you have any other comments you would like us to relay to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs? - 131 of 274 responded.

Respondents	Responses
1	subsidize the increases which they want business to pick up, by taking from other areas of finance that are non essential, but do have earmarked funds in surplus.
2	Not at this time
3	Too much, too quick with no transition plan for companies such as ours. There are unintended consequences to the Ontario minimum wage hike. Consequences which were not considered as there was very little by way of a cost-benefit analysis. Companies and industries where labor makes up the vast majority of cost will be significantly impacted, forcing major business decisions in North Bay and across Ontario.
4	Small business is going to be driven out of small communities. A 32% wage increase over a year and a half will have negative effects on our local economy. Prices will increase to cover the increase costs which will result in not only putting those making minimum wage currently, in the exact same position as they are now but it will also put those currently making \$15 per hour or a bit more in a worse position as their wages won't increase but their household expenses will increase.
5	In order to pay for the increase in payroll costs we would have to increase the cost of our Goods and Services. Due to the nature of our business (service industry) increasing the prices would cause us to lose customers thereby forcing us to reduce staffing. All consumer goods and services will increase to accommodate these wage increases and consequently we will have really gained nothing except more expense.
6	this is my problem an employee who has been with a company 15 to 20 years its only right their wages go up why can't every employee get a 4 dollar raise not just new hires
7	This is too much too fast for small seasonal businesses to bear and will hurt tourism in general. Net result will be fewer employees with less hours, poorer customer service, higher costs for goods and services and a weaker, less competitive tourism industry for Ontario. Has the Committee taken into account that service staff also benefit from tips that can as much as double their earnings? Or, as in many instances free meals and lodging and utilities provided as part of their total compensation? These are all real costs that many tourism operators already bear in attracting and retaining seasonal staff. This dramatic increase will also make it difficult or impossible for employers to reward senior staff thus putting businesses at risk of losing their best employees. Tourism operators cannot raise rates so dramatically over 18 months to offset these wage increases. Costs will go up across the board and any perceived employee gain will be rendered mute in effective buying power.
8	All people will end up paying for this. It won't matter that their wage will increase because so will all products they purchase to off set costs to businesses, so people will not end up gaining anything.
9	The main concern is whether there will be push back from employees / union members who already make more than minimum wage. They are going to expect the wage differential to be maintained. If minimum wage is going up 31.6% so then the expectation will be that their hourly

wage rate / salary should also go up 31.6%. I agree that there is a disconnect between the cost of living and minimum wage and so something needs to be done just not sure if a 31.6% hike is less than two years is the solution to the problem. Furthermore if wages for middle class earners are not updated then this combined with already sky rocketing cost of post secondary schooling may de-motivate students even considering going to college or university. After January 2019 was it next? Will minimum wage be at \$20 per hour by 2020? I think this is a bigger issue than just a minimum wage issue. So what other initiatives is the province looking at to resolve sky-rocketing tuition costs and high costs of living and what else is being done to reduce unemployment rates and get people back to work sooner instead of just relying on the guaranteed money they receive by being on unemployment. Thank you for the opportunity to complete this survey and allowing me a platform to provide my opinion.

10 Small business operating cost continue to rise but the economy remains sluggish in our area. Increasing minimum wage will decrease our ability to remain competitive and provide a valuable service to our community. More needs to be done to stimulate economic production before wages should be raised.

11 I don't believe that increasing the minimum wage will help small businesses in any way other than making it harder for us to make ends meet and stay in business.

12 We are not opposed to an increase, it just needs to be gradual so as not to shock business enterprises.

13 This wasn't very well thought through. The only way small retailers can even consider surviving is to open later and close earlier. Basically be open during peak selling hours because money isn't made during off peak hours.

14 rules on chatting to staff will need to be enforced no speaking to the public unless its about a purchase, its too costly to pay people to talk about the weather or family and work is no place to talk about these matter (gag the chat)

15 Increase the personal deduction on the income tax charged allowing current minimum wage earners to retain more of their earnings.

16 If the Government of Ontario were truly concerned about the welfare and poverty of its citizens, it would look into the cost of living issues of EVERY citizen, from Pelee Island to Moose Factory and beyond! We once were a "have" province, and have been reduced to a mere shadow of our former self. There are many issues affecting the citizens of Ontario, whether they are employed, unemployed, small business owners, medium business owners, executives who manage and operate large businesses, who would benefit from assistance and good governance of a form which did not take an increase in the minimum wage. I would suggest a hard look at some of the problematic issues of housing, utilities, transportation, etc. instead of the illusion of a quick fix such as proposed.

17 A living wage is vital for all, I have no problems with this as an employer. It will help workers raise their standards of living. It all goes back into the general economy in the end.

18 Paying 14.00-15.00\$ an hour minimum will affect me on a larger scale as a small business owner. Costs will be shifted, unfortunately to the customers. Between business insurance, office expenses, WSIB, and the fact that I will be paying more than minimum wage for the profession, will be far too much for my business expenses. If someone deserves a high wage, I don't have any issues but not brand new employees at that rate.

19 Be sure they have checked the overall outcome of this as will lead to increase in cost of products for consumers.

20 The wage increase will cause a natural, and huge, inflation and more than likely shut down small businesses. Where are the subsidy programs from the government to help with this wage increase? where are the economic impact studies? while I agree with an increase, I don't agree with a 30% jump that will cost businesses profits and reduce new hires. If our job market is bad now, imagine how it will be when no one can afford to hire anyone new unless their product cost goes up 30%?!

21 No thank you.

22	North Bay and surrounding area is a very depressed economy. With most larger businesses closing and widespread layoffs, small businesses are becoming the backbone of our area. With the minimum wage being increased by such a large percentage, more small businesses will be forced to close if the minimum wage is increased to the full \$15 per hour. This issue is a large one, incorporating many other issues such as economic development by region and education of workers. Such an increase is feasible in larger thriving cities but in small towns and cities, it is impractical.
23	Our company is involved in robotic development. Since the Government announced the increase our sales have tripled. They need to realize that when we replace a wage earner with a robot, that job is gone forever.
24	Yet another decision that Ontario is forcing businesses to accept. Well done government, cramming mediocrity down our throats. Another reason not to invest in Ontario.
25	This does not help anyone!!!!!!!! increasing this just makes it hard for everyone to afford day to day items. cost of goods goes up, but 80% of people with careers don't see an increase. this will collapse the economy. This needs to be shut down!!!
26	No
27	Personally I think increasing the minimum wage will be a benefit. There are too many people struggling to make ends meet which has a negative impact on society.
28	This will shift the economy. We have to get the money somewhere. Unfortunately this will not help the poor families as everything else must raise their costs in order to compensate the wage. This will start wiping the middle class. Their will be more poor people that the government will need to support.
29	We call on Canadians to support local and small businesses, so that movements to ensure a living wage for workers are not perceived as a threat to business.
30	30% increase in costs to labour over 2 years is ridiculous!
31	help small business in incentives to hire new staff in training period (larger amount) and students well
32	Everyone deserves a living wage, it is the cost of a fair society.
33	Support \$15 per hour to help people lead a good life.
34	It has been proven that increasing minimum wage does not increase standard of living.
35	I support this raise in minimum wage, our business is strong enough to be equitable, thank you.
36	Businesses are already closing it seems on a regular basis, we don't plan on being another statistic but the liberal government is certainly not doing anything to help the situation.
37	this will be self leveling, but will take time
38	I will be selling some businesses do to this
39	People will not be much further ahead with retailers increasing everything by 20 to 30 % to cover extra costs. And what will civil servants raise their salaries by?
40	This looks like nothing more than to throw Ontario under the bus so that Kathleen Wynn can get re-elected. It makes no financial sense to increase minimum wage at such an alarming rate, it will cause unemployment, and inflation and hurt the people who it is "supposed" to help. The young people I have spoken to understand this, it seems the only one who does not get this is our Government!! It is never a good idea to put such a shock into the financial system that is not required, it causes uncertainty in the economy, why a Government would want to do this to their own economy is baffling! There is no economic sense to this so it must be political!
41	I am a new, small business owner. I was planning on hiring an employee for some badly needed help, as my business has grown beyond the point of that I can handle alone. This legislation is crippling for me, as I will not be able to hire anyone now. I guess I am very glad they announced it when they did, because I was literally about to hire someone, and if I did sooner, I don't know if the business would have survived past the effective date of the increase. No one is saying workers and citizens don't deserve livable conditions, but the government

	needs to be the change for the citizens with programs like universal basic income. This legislation will make everything more expensive, almost neutralizing the increase anyways, and will be the dagger to heart of small business.
42	Please consider those of us that do not get a paycheck but must make enough to pay the paychecks. This will increase inflation because prices will go up in businesses that have already trimmed expenses just to stay in business and continue to employ loyal employees.
43	Increase the Minimum Wage about step by step about 50 cent every year not like \$11.40 to \$15.00 just like that this is impact very bad to all small Business.
44	With Canada' s higher all-in labour costs, how does the lower dollar help Ontario's manufacturing sector, when all incoming commodities are priced in US dollars (Metals, lumber, chemicals, glass, oil etc.) We see the mines doing better with the higher exchange, but not the down stream producers. Secondly as a consumer our overall food costs have risen do to the exchange. For the average down stream manufacturer, our input costs have risen do to the exchange and our take home pay has been eroded due to higher cost of living. How exactly dose the lower dollar help if all our inputs are US dollar based?
45	THIS GOVERNMENT HAS PROVEN THAT IT IS NOT CONCERNED WITH THE WELL BEING OF BUSINESSES IN ONTARIO. THE INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE IS ONLY ONE EXAMPLE. THE LARGE INCREASES IN HYDRO RATES AND THE MANY CHANGES TO EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS WHICH CONTINUE TO RAISE SALARY AND BENEFIT COSTS ARE ALSO EXAMPLES. ALWAYS REMEMBER, GOVERNMENT CANNOT CREATE JOBS, BUT IT CAN CERTAINLY CAUSE THE LOSS OF JOBS THROUGH ITS ACTIONS!!!! THIS GOVERNMENT IS THE BEST ADVOCATE FOR MOVING JOBS OUT OF ONTARIO. WHO WILL BE LEFT TO PAY???????
46	To go from \$11.40 to \$15/hour, even \$14/hour by 2018 is a HUGE jump that would potentially force businesses to close their doors. It's irresponsible for government to believe that businesses, no matter large or small, would be able to afford such a huge increase. Over 30% in just a year and a half? Yes, minimum wage should be increased to a reasonable amount like \$12.50 or \$13/hour but it sounds like this huge jump is considering ONLY the employees and not the employers. Where is the compromise in this? There will be a lot more layoffs, less new hires, more small businesses closing their doors plus inflation- how will our economy possibly support that in the tough economic times that we are already facing? I don't think that this has been well thought through and it seems as though there have not been enough economic impact studies done to support and justify such a drastic increase.
47	Obviously the not-so-hidden advantage for the government is that employees will be paying more income tax. The result of course is more money into the provincial budget. But I believe that it will in many cases, mean the end of retail! The world/society is changing rapidly and with growing costs to small business, competition from very large companies that offer free delivery, and unrealistic return policies, I don't know how I'll keep up. I can't stay open for hours on end just to entertain browsers. We need sales in order to pay bills and expenses, and traffic has been deeply affected in our downtown area. The city charges customers for parking but major commercial areas are free, and we cannot compete. We also can't stay open 7 days/week and 12 hours/day. Soon our customers will have no choice except big box or on-line. It will be very difficult to get any type of service, thus increasing disposable products and forcing customers to buy new. This of course will have long term effects on waste. We have already lost over 100,000 in gross sales. I have made a commitment to Downtown by purchasing a commercial building and have been in business over 30 years. If the government wishes us to pay our employees more up north, then they must consider increasing jobs/services to the north to give our economy a leg up. We have all the resources to help our hungry neighbors to the south. We have houses and land to purchase, and if we could get more jobs and keep our youth here, some of the larger centres could/would have much less demand for their resources. We have a much better quality of life here.

48	This increase is another hidden tax hike by the provincial government. Raising the minimum wage brings all those workers to a new tax bracket, which only gives the government more tax revenue. At the end of the year, the worker making \$15/hour has a net income equal to the income at \$11.40/hour.
49	Big mistake!
50	\$15/hr wage is fine, but this is too drastic of a change. It needs to be weened in. The cost increase will make our services more expensive, and likely too expensive, for clients that need it!
51	It will definitely affect other businesses and I am not in favour of this increase
52	None that are polite enough to write. I do not believe that a government should try to buy an election this way. Everyone will lay off or cut back hours as the economy may be ok in the GTA but not anywhere else in the province. But as usual the province does not care about anyone outside of Toronto.
53	The increase in wages will not benefit anyone but the government it self. The worker that will now be making an extra \$3.60 an hour will be putting all that back due to everything (food, gas, rent etc.) increasing in costs, So I don't believe that this will benefit them in anyway aside from having a bigger pay cheque. With regards to my business, increasing the price is not going to improve our bottom line, if we are lucky at all, that would do is keep our sales at par with what they are now by increasing our average check however reducing the actual amount of people coming in (that's only if we are lucky). Also reducing the hours of the staff will not be an option but in our case mandatory, the profit margins are already slim and this increase is only eating away at whatever small amount we are able to take home. So now we cut staff hours but in return we as the owners have to work those hours ourselves in order to keep the business running, keeping in mind that small business owners are generally putting in well over 60-70 hours a week, now in order to actually be able to take money home and not just be able to pay the staff and bills, we have to work 80-90 hours plus a week. I cant talk for anyone else but myself, I am not afraid of working as many hours as I have too in order to provide for my family, however if I add all my hours up at the end of the week and divide that by the \$ amount I am walking away with, its pretty disheartening to see that in actuality a 16 year old kid still in school working as a dishwasher is getting a higher hourly rate as a grown man, who busted his butt to go to school, get an education and start a business in order to provide for his/her family. So as much as it kills me to even think of having to close my business, in reality it might be our only option seeing that I could go work at McDonalds or Tim Horton's and make the same amount of money working half the amount of hours.
54	Businesses will also have to budget for the emergency leave and add staff to cross train even more. Making it easier for unions to form is an absolute kick in the gut to businesses that are facing ever increasing costs of doing business in Ontario. Allowing unions access to employee contact information goes against PIPEDA regulations.
55	Not at this point.
56	For the retail/service industry this is a horrible idea. If the minimum wage is increased, all employee wages above that pay grade will also have to be increased to maintain parity and to small business owners, that could be the coffin nail. Simply put, it's a terrible idea and one that should be scrapped. If you want to help employees, stop increasing provincially regulated utilities. You are looking to increase wages on the backs of employers, while taking away family income on the backs of employees.
57	I think you are going to see a lot of small businesses suffer or close because of these changes!!!!'
58	The individuals who are paid minimum wage will not realize a net gain as they will have hours cut and the severe impact on inflation will eat up their increase in wages
59	It will have a negative impact on small business and lead to higher prices for goods and services.
60	ANOTHER SMALL BUSINESS MAY CLOSE

80	This is an unreasonable and unjustified increase of 20%. Provide a graduated increase over 4 years or LET MARKET FORCES DICTATE THE RATES.
81	The increase will reduce entry level and part time employment. In Hospitality one of the robots we are looking at for the kitchen is \$39,000 and we can likely use 3-4 that will eliminate 2 full time and 4-5 part time positions. The annual cost to operate and maintain is estimated at \$4,000 per robot
82	We feel that an increase like this will increase the cost of basic living (milk, bread etc.) especially in those area that employ minimum wage employees (grocery stores, gas stations etc.). The increase in costs will negate the wage increase leaving minimum wage earners no better off as well as decrease the how far the dollar will go for those who are still barely making ends meet and even the middle class. The increase to wages will also increase employment costs that are based on wages (cpp, wsib etc.). We feel a decrease to taxes for lower income earners would be much more effective. We are concerned that an increase to the consumer of our services will decrease the demand which could lead to layoffs.
83	With a unionized workplace, it makes sense that the union will ask for at least a match to the increase given to the minimum wage. This would create a financial hardship for my agency and would result in job loss in order to afford the increases. I believe a more gradual approach to increasing minimum wage is needed to allow businesses time to adjust to small increases. The current plan is too severe an increase and will have a direct impact on employers.
84	no
85	Increasing the min wage will force employers to increase the wages of workers who are currently making over the new min wage (currently earning around the \$15 - \$17 dollar range)
86	What was wrong with the incremental increases that were previously planned?
87	Hope the government uses the new found taxes properly
88	Please explain to us how raising minimum wage moves people out of poverty, when the corresponding increase in the cost of living will quickly balance things back to 'neutral'.
89	Moving min wage is a good idea but needs to be done over 5 years or longer to allow everybody to adjust.
90	Have Kathleen Wynne fired. She is making the province unaffordable to live in.
91	Good luck with that. Enjoy the decline!
92	As a small seasonal business owner (ma & pop type business), a \$3.60 per hour increase in minimum wage is a huge burden. Students will be making more per hour than the business owner - between regulation for training students and paper work burdens - what incentive is there for seasonal small businesses (tourism, golf courses, etc) to hire students.
93	MAYBE THEY SHOULD ASK BEFORE IMPLEMENTING THESE HEAVY COST. NO WONDER PEOPLE ARE CLOSING
94	Expect the price of fast foods to increase dramatically. All in al, I it will be good for the low income families
95	raising the minimum wage will not solve problems for people that will receive the increase,,,the problem is taxes, lower the taxes that are taken off the paycheques. As a result if the wages are increased, then our services will have to be substantially increased, our business is not a business of necessity, therefore, people that are looking to save monies will not use our services. As a result if I increase our service prices, people will choose to not utilize this ' extra service' because it is more of a luxury than that of a necessity. We have to be very careful with any increase in our service prices, we could very easily price ourselves right out of business. Paying these wages will put us in a very difficult business position
96	This is a tax grab and is not going to help lower income people. If you truly want to help low income, raise basic tax exemption to \$25,000 for incomes \$30K and less.

97	If they stop raising the prices and taxes of everything else you can stop raising minimum wage.
98	Small businesses can not afford full time and that is why there is so many part time jobs. With increased minimum wage there will be even fewer and fewer full time jobs.
99	This was not thought out very well for any small business
100	The Government should reduce income tax rather than force companies to pay more. The only things I can see is, Number 1 cost increase will be passed on to the consumer, and Number 2 the Government will collect more taxes. Reduce taxes so the lower income wage earners will have more money to save or spend.
101	It will drive inflation so it will have a significant impact on the economy.
102	no
103	phase in the increase over 5 years
104	Our increase in total wages will not be substantial since we will change who we hire (no more students) and work on efficiencies (cottager bring garbage to garbage shed) to reduce hours worked
105	We are small in size and are able to a just. But having problems meeting the demands of cap and trade and major effect of fuel prices. All of these increases at one time has created a prefect storm.
106	While our staff all make over \$15 per hour and I don't think this will affect our business, I do think that it will negatively affect the staff in their personal lives. I do think that the cost of goods will increase and my staff will feel this impact their daily lives.
107	This is a huge hit to small business owners and will lead to more layoffs!
108	As a small business owner, I would rather see incentives geared to small business owners to provide a higher wage for skilled jobs in place of raising minimum wage. eg: I used to pay a junior web programmer starting wage 15/h (3 month probation) and once full time grow to 20-25/h, now that will be minimum wage you will get with no skills working at MacDonald's. I would rather see a junior programmer start with 19/h (though some kind of subsidy if skill is not present and learn on the job) as it takes schooling and skill to do the job. We seem to be promoting unskilled jobs and not providing any kind of incentive to better ones skills.
109	our employees currently make \$3.50 over minimum wage because they are worth it - with this increase in minimum wage they will most likely never get a merit increase in pay because we cannot afford it = the items we source from Ontario manufacturers will increase so our own wages plus cost of materials will increase - we will become a minimum wage employer which is something that we have strived in the past not to become
110	this large increase will only bring the cost of living up; such as groceries, restaurants, retail. In turn unions will request an increase to cover those costs and we find ourselves in a circle. In no time doing business here will be to expensive sending all factories out of business.
111	The impact this will have on small business is nothing short of negative. It will not be feasible to add additional staff when needed. It will not be feasible to hire younger staff whose lower starting wage makes it more attractive to hire inexperience. It will not be feasible to offer a medical/dental plan to staff. It will not be feasible to continue a regular wage increase program. It will create a negative atmosphere for staff at or above the new wage due to gap being closed between new hires and experienced staff. It will have an impact on how many hours will be made available to each staff member...more hours to be put in by ownership. It will have an impact on business hours depending on affordability to keep extend hours. Based on the economic conditions, the competitive market and general costs rising from Hydro and other expenses, it is very difficult to forecast how long of a future the business has. And it just so happens that the extra tax the government is going to receive as well as putting extra benefits on the back of small business (where it should be paid by the government) will eventually show in the shrinking of the workforce, the inability for some businesses to survive and the fear it will create in the mind of new entrepreneurs.

112	This change adds more pressure to all businesses. Those that compete globally, will be less competitive than they were before this announcement. As cost of labour goes up (inputs), cost to the consumer also go up (sale price) - so really there is no benefit to do so. Bad decision by the government in a bid to solicit votes in the upcoming election.
113	This is a very large mistake all around - the impact on employers and customers will be devastating.
114	This will force the reduction in staff, loss of revenue due to increasing prices and it may result in me moving my North Bay office back to Nova Scotia. It is no longer cost effective with these new hourly rates to be located in Ontario.
115	I think this is a great thing for the economy. Minimum wage rates have been below a livable wage for too long. It will obviously take away from our profits and make our budget a little bit tighter. Government subsidies would be nice to see for local, privately owned companies to help them get by.
116	We believe it is vital for a healthy community that all employees make a living wage that truly allows them to support themselves and their family with dignity.
117	This is killing small business. Also less \$\$\$ to go around to more people.
118	The increase affects other related costs paid by the employer such as EI, CPP, Workers Comp, Legal holiday pay, Vacation pay, Sick days. Owners have already had to reduce their income to pay staff in these poor economic times. Does no one want small businesses to succeed?
119	I just believe this will hurt most of the small and middle size businesses which can not cope with a big increase like this
120	This proposal will result in layoffs of at least 10 employees and will cause a significant financial burden to the company and to our senior clients who will have to see prices for services delivered to them as a result in the higher minimum wage. Many of our senior home care clients are on a budget and they will simply cancel services which may have a negative impact on their health and independent living situation.
121	Why student wage has to increase as well, and all this is going to do is increase the cost of everything so in the end no one is a head. tax bracket is increase I believe in the people are going to have less money and it will put us all back in a recession which we are just starting to feel we are getting out of the last one the last couple years.
122	Significant impact on part-time earnings for students and negative impact on level of customer service with reduced part-time staff
123	Cost of purchases will also go up. Other companies will raise their prices. Our prices will increase. The number of sales will go down as our prices will discourage customers from purchasing.
124	where are my employees going to find jobs along with all the other small Business that will have to close
125	We will have to increase our product prices, no doubt about that. Some programs, with students involved, we will have to cancel. The nature of our business, we lose money 8 months out of the year. In those 8 months, we likely would have to cut hours or staff. A 22% increase from the present to \$14 per hour Jan. 1/18 is significant. A 31% increase from the present to Jan. 1/19 is difficult to absorb. This also means our CPP, EI, WSIB and EHT (payroll burden) increases significantly.
126	Don't think the money makes, better employee at the start, it is training for workplace specific jobs, to make them a better asset to there employer, to help them move forward in their job faster
127	fix the issue of part time work offered by big employers. People need steady jobs and benefits and will do much more for their employee versus a part time job. This increase is completely wrong. We pay our employees at least 2 dollars per hour above minimum wage to start and offer increases based on performance. Now a multi year committed employee could potentially make less than someone being hired off the street...therefore every single employee will need

massive increases in pay to offset this bad decision. Get people working full time and force employers to stop contract work beyond 1 year. I know many people that have no security and are on contract for 5-10 years. They don't contribute to the economy because they are always in fear of losing their job. They don't have benefits or pensions. If a business can't offer full time work and benefits to at least 90% of their work force, they are not contributing to society and are not viable operations....or their shareholders are just so greedy they don't care. Either way....this needs to change.

128 Increasing the minimum wage, and so quickly is an awful idea and will have negative impacts all around. Even my staff who will see a substantial wage increase are very upset because they will now be making the same as brand new hires...even though they have worked here for 10+ years. As for myself as the manager...my salary equates to \$16.32 an hour (based on a 40-hour work week, I work a lot more than that). I have been told by the owners I will not be making any more money, they cannot afford it considering the massive jump in minimum wage. As a manager and someone who has been working for this company for almost 10 years I cannot stay here and take on the responsibility that comes with my position making just over a dollar more than new hires. On top of that prices are going to increase for everything.... So, I will be worse off in the end. This whole thing makes me sick to my stomach and is very upsetting.

129 1965 minimum wage was \$0.90, bread was \$0.31
2017 minimum wage is \$15.00, bread is \$6.99
Who do you think is going to pay?
Why give companies another reason to leave the province?

130 If we can't abolish this initiative, how do we start compensating our loyal hourly staff that have worked long and hard to get to \$15.00/hr?

131 small businesses are vulnerable to the higher rates, many will close
