

Letter to the Editor

April 12, 2005

Raising the floor for wages helps business, labor

It was disappointing to read that some businesses take a short-sighted view and oppose a minimum wage increase ("Minimum wage rise is OK'd by Md. Senate," April 7).

This really should not be a worker vs. employer issue. We all benefit by having a stable work force that earns a decent wage for a hard day's work, just as we all benefit by having a thriving business community that provides quality jobs as well as goods and services for our residents.

Right now, a person working full-time at the minimum wage earns just over \$10,000. That's for a whole year's work. Surely no one believes that \$10,000 a year is a decent wage that can support a reasonable and safe standard of living.

And we don't have to guess what will happen if we increase the minimum wage. We already know, because 13 states have already beaten Maryland in raising their minimum wages.

Minimum wage workers will benefit from the raise. It will allow them to purchase more vital goods and services for their families, pumping more income into the economy that will benefit local businesses.

With more income, minimum wage workers will be less reliant on government to make ends meet, which will benefit all taxpayers.

For businesses, the additional cost of labor will be offset by revenue gains from increased consumer purchasing power and by the savings from improved job retention and reduced vacancy rates.

Let's save the angry words for an issue that deserves it and raise the minimum wage because it's right for workers and for business.

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