

NEWS RELEASE

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Illinois Minimum Wage Proposal Draws Food Processor Opposition

The Midwest Food Products Association ([MWFPA](http://www.mwfpa.org)) today expressed their opposition to a bill before the Illinois House Labor and Commerce Committee that would raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2022.

According to MWFPA President Nick George, "Illinois already has the highest minimum wage in the Midwest. If this bill becomes law it will increase AND automatically increase in each of the next five years regardless of the economy."

Illinois' minimum wage, now \$8.25 an hour, would increase in yearly increments until it reached \$15.00 an hour in 2022 under the proposal. The first increase would push the wage to \$9 on January 1, 2018. In the past, MWFPA has opposed general increases of the minimum wage, automatic increases, and local minimum wages due to the unintended consequences of such increases, mainly higher costs to consumers, less employee hours or a loss of jobs.

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“The health of the Illinois economy should be tantamount in legislator’s minds right now,” said George. “The best way to address the budget deficit, pay off our debt and improve the lives of Illinois citizens is to have the state economy grow. Elected officials’ efforts ought to be focused on job creation, and removing the burdens that prevent new and emerging businesses from starting and growing in the state rather than forcing a payroll increase.”

George also point out that Illinois businesses on the border are at a competitive disadvantage because Illinois’ pay floor is higher than in neighboring Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky and Wisconsin, a competitive gap that he says would widen if Illinois were to raise its minimum wage.

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