



Minimum Wage Fact Sheet

Bill Number: [SB 7](#) and XX

Bill Patron: Senator Dick Saslaw, Delegate Jeion Ward

What: This bill would raise the minimum wage from the federal minimum of \$7.25 per hour to \$15 per hour by 2024 in all localities in Virginia.

Why: Everyone, black, brown, and white alike, should have the opportunity to work hard and succeed in our community. Everyone deserves to have a stable future with financial security and independence. People who work hard and play by the rules should be able to afford to live with dignity and raise a family. But conservatives and corporate special interest groups are working together to keep the minimum wage low so that no matter how hard we work, we can't get ahead. We need to come together across our differences to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour for everyone in our community.

Facts:

Data from the [Economic Policy Institute](#). More information available from The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis.

Low wage workers are supporting families.

- 6 in 10 low wage workers are women.
- One-quarter of workers who would benefit from raising the minimum wage are supporting children.
- 300,000 Virginia children live in a household that would see increased income from increasing the wage.

Low wage workers are working full time.

- 774,000 full-time workers in Virginia would be affected by raising the minimum wage.
- 61% of all Virginians who would benefit from an increased minimum wage are working full time.

Low wage workers are older:

- Most low wage workers aren't teenagers looking for spending money.
- 92% of impacted workers are 20 years old or older.
- 70% of impacted workers are 25 years old or older.

- These are adults who are building their lives and raising families on a minimum wage income.

Raising the minimum wage is good for the economy.

- Raising the wage to \$15/hour over five years would generate a total wage increase in Virginia of \$5,534,108,000.

Data from [Business for a Fair Minimum Wage](#)

Small Business owners support increasing the minimum wage.

- 67% of small business owners support increasing the federal minimum wage and adjusting it yearly to keep up with the cost of living
- 65% of small business owners agree that “increasing the minimum wage will help the economy because the people with the lowest incomes are the most likely to spend any pay increases buying necessities they could not afford before, which will boost sales at businesses
- 46% of small business owners surveyed identified themselves as Republican, 35% identified as Democrat and 11% identified as independent.

Talking points:

Raising the wage is a shot in the arm for our economy.

- When working families have more money to spend, our community businesses have more customers.
- Raising the minimum wage to \$15 would help close the wage gap and give a boost to families struggling to help their kids get ahead, lifting them out of poverty.

Growth should come from the middle out, not the top down.

- A thriving middle class is the key to economic prosperity, but when the minimum wage is only \$7.25, that becomes impossible for too many families.
- Virginia is currently the [best state for business](#), but comes [dead last for workers](#). We need to be a Commonwealth that works for everyone, businesses and workers alike.

Personal Stories and News:

[Why These Fight for \\$15 Members Are Voting This Year](#)

“When I asked Jackie what a \$15 an hour minimum wage would mean for her and her family, she replied by saying, ‘Oh my god, it would be relief. I could breathe. I could sleep at night. No more tears or thinking about how I can pay for things.’”

“For Kristina, raising the minimum wage would mean that she could be reunited with her two children. ‘I could get better housing, and I could afford to have my kids with me.’ As it is now, her kids live with her parents because she can’t afford a good home for them on just \$7.25 an hour.”

“By the time the bills are paid and there’s food on the table, there’s nothing left for anything else. More than anything, raising the wage would give Shamon the opportunity to make choices about her life, plan things out, and save money for the next step.”

[Letter to the Editor: Time To Raise Minimum Wage](#) [Julia Lewis, The Northern Virginia Daily]

“At \$7.25 an hour, if an employee works 40 hours a week, that amounts to \$290. Then, deducting federal and state income taxes and Social Security, that brings it way down. No one can live on that. How can one rent an apartment, pay utilities, purchase food, operate an automobile? They can't. They would have to live with mom and dad.”