

Minimum Wage

WRA Position: Washington state's minimum wage should be indexed to reflect the health of the state's overall economy.

Suggested Talking Points

- In January 2009, Washington's minimum wage increased to \$8.55 per hour—the highest in the nation—and 24 percent higher than the federal minimum wage of \$6.55 per hour. This hike coincided with the steepest decline in our economy since the Great Depression.

Background: In 1998, voters overwhelmingly approved an initiative that automatically ties hikes in the minimum wage to changes in the federal Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners (CPI-W). Accordingly, the minimum wage automatically increases when the price of goods in larger urban areas increases. The CPI-W index ignores differences in our regional economy and fails to recognize labor markets in competing states.