

BERNARD SANDERS
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United States Senate

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July 18, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell:

As you know, by a vote of 231-199, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to increase the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$15 an hour.

I am renewing my request that you bring legislation to the floor that I have introduced to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2024 and to index it to median wage growth thereafter. This bill (S.150), the Raise the Wage Act, is co-sponsored by 31 of our Senate colleagues.

I understand that you may vote against this bill. If you would like to explain to the people of Kentucky why you believe that a federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour is acceptable to you that is your prerogative. But at a time when millions of workers are working for starvation wages, it would be absolutely unacceptable to deny the Senate the opportunity to vote for this bill which would increase the wages of nearly 40 million Americans and lift millions out of poverty.

Since 1979, whenever a state has increased the minimum wage, employment and wages, on average, have gone up, not down, according to the most recent research. Seven states and over 40 cities have already passed laws increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Much of the business community is also in agreement that increasing the wages of their employees is sound policy. Companies like Amazon and Disney have voluntarily increased worker pay to a \$15 minimum wage. Even the corporate leadership of Walmart, the largest private employer in the country, publicly acknowledged that the federal minimum wage is too low.

Workers in America have seen 40 years of wage stagnation. Roughly 40 percent of all Americans cannot afford a \$400 emergency. One in 9 workers are paid wages that can leave them in poverty even though they work full time.

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I urge you to allow the Senate to take up the Raise the Wage Act to immediately begin improving the lives of working Americans across the country.

Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator