



# CAN'T SURVIVE ON \$7.25

## Higher Minimum Wages for Working Wisconsin

Since 2009, Wisconsin's minimum wage has been stuck at the federal minimum level of \$7.25. Every year inflation makes it less relevant as a labor market floor or living wage. Across our borders, the wage floor is moving up – \$10.59 in Minnesota and \$13.00 in Illinois.

Wisconsin could join 28 other states and raise the minimum wage. If it did, wages would increase for hundreds of thousands of workers in the state.

### Who Wins with a Higher Wage Floor?

- Raising the minimum to \$15 by 2028 would raise wages of nearly fifteen percent of the state's workers (more than 375,000 workers).
- Raising the minimum to \$20 by 2028 would raise wages for one-third of the state's workers (nearly 900,000 workers).
- **Black and brown workers, women and teenagers stand the most to gain.** Raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour in the state would:
  - Raise wages for one of every four Black and Hispanic workers.
  - Raise wages for 18 percent of women workers.
  - Raise wages for 80 percent of teenage workers.
- **Just two sectors – restaurants and retail – employ more than half of all Wisconsin workers that gain with an increase to \$15.**
- **Ending the "tip credit" in Wisconsin wage would bring relief to the state's 50,800 tipped workers.**
  - Across every border of our state (in Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, and Illinois), tipped workers are paid higher wages.

### Minimum Wage Misunderstandings — Debunked

- **Raising the minimum wage does not kill jobs.**
  - Minimum wages are moving higher in other states. [Research](#) from California shows that higher minimum wages in localities across California had no measurable impact on jobs.
  - [Research](#) on the leisure and hospitality industry in 2021 shows that states with minimum wages higher than \$12 experienced 25 percent employment growth compared to only 7 percent growth in states with a minimum wage of \$7.25.
- **Raising the minimum wage is popular with voters across the nation and across the political spectrum.**
  - Higher minimum wages consistently win on state ballots. In 2020, both Donald Trump and a \$15 minimum wage won a majority of votes in Florida. Since the turn of the century, statewide minimum wage increases have been voted on at least 22 times. In each instance, the wage increase has passed.

This one-pager summarizes COWS' report [Can't Survive on \\$7.25: Higher Minimum Wages for Working Wisconsin](#) which takes a deep look into who wins when minimum wages go up. Look to the report for more data and details that show why workers, especially Black and Brown workers and immigrant workers, deserve a higher minimum wage.