

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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119th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1999

Legislative Document

No. 357

H.P. 253

House of Representatives, January 14, 1999

An Act Raising the Minimum Wage.

Reference to the Committee on Labor suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph W. Mayo".

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative HATCH of Skowhegan.

Cosponsored by Senator DOUGLASS of Androscoggin and

Representatives: BROOKS of Winterport, COTE of Lewiston, GERRY of Auburn, KANE of Saco, MUSE of South Portland, STEVENS of Orono, TWOMEY of Biddeford, VOLENIK of Brooklin.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §664, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1995, c. 305, §1, is amended to read:

1. **Minimum wage.** The minimum hourly wage is \$4.25 per hour. ~~If the highest federal minimum wage is increased in excess of \$4.25 per hour, the minimum wage must be increased to the same amount, effective on the same date as the increase in the federal minimum wage, but in no case may the minimum wage exceed \$5.15 per hour.~~ Starting January 1, 2000, the minimum hourly wage is \$5.50 per hour. Starting January 1, 2001, the minimum hourly wage is \$6.00 per hour. Starting January 1, 2002, and each January 1st thereafter, the director shall automatically adjust the minimum hourly wage by any percentage change in the Consumer Price Index. For the purposes of this subsection "Consumer Price Index" has the meaning set forth in Title 36, section 5402, subsection 1.

Sec. 2. **Referendum for ratification; submission at statewide election; form of question; effective date.** This Act must be submitted to the legal voters of the State of Maine at a statewide election held on the Tuesday following the first Monday of November following passage of this Act. The municipal officers of this State shall notify the inhabitants of their respective cities, towns and plantations to meet, in the manner prescribed by law for holding a statewide election, to vote on the acceptance or rejection of this Act by voting on the following question:

"Do you favor raising the minimum wage to \$5.50 per hour in 2000 and \$6.00 per hour in 2001 and thereafter adjusting it by the Consumer Price Index?"

The legal voters of each city, town and plantation shall vote by ballot on this question, and shall designate their choice by a cross or check mark placed within a corresponding square below the word "Yes" or "No." The ballots must be received, sorted, counted and declared in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the Secretary of State in the same manner as votes for members of the Legislature. The Governor shall review the returns and, if it appears that a majority of the legal votes are cast in favor of the Act, the Governor shall proclaim that fact without delay, and the Act takes effect 30 days after the date of the proclamation.

The Secretary of State shall prepare and furnish to each city, town and plantation all ballots, returns and copies of this Act necessary to carry out the purpose of this referendum.

SUMMARY

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4 This bill raises the minimum wage to \$5.50 per hour starting
6 January 1, 2000 and \$6.00 per hour starting January 1, 2001.
8 Starting January 1, 2002, and annually thereafter, the Director
 of the Bureau of Labor Standards will automatically adjust the
 minimum wage by the 12-month averaged percentage change in the
 Consumer Price Index. The bill includes a referendum provision.