

There's Oregon Precedent for a Big Minimum Wage Increase

Blog Post

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If the Oregon legislature [raises the minimum wage to \\$15 per hour by 2018 in three steps, as proposed by HB 2009](#), it would not be the first time lawmakers enact a substantial minimum wage increase.

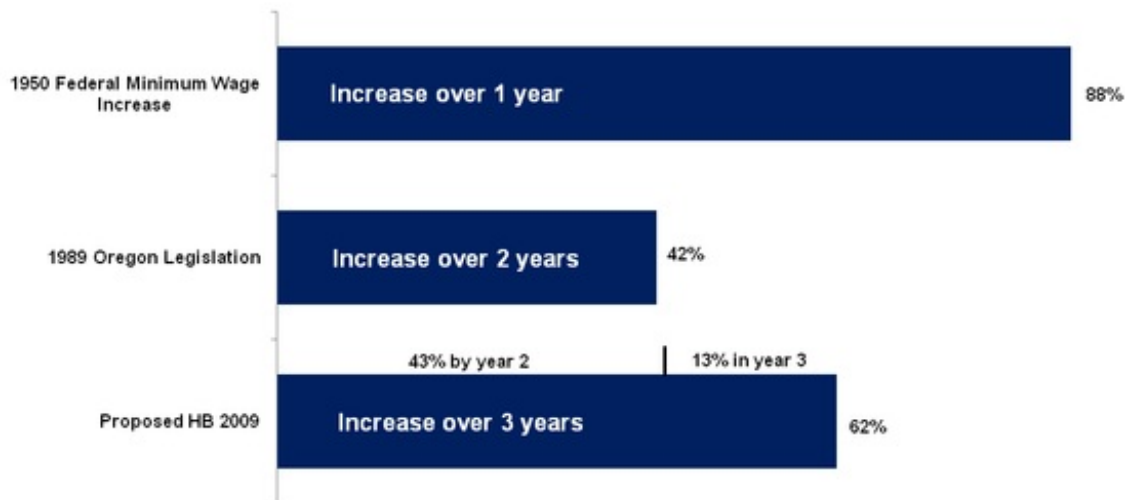
In 1989, Oregon lawmakers raised the minimum wage, which then stood at \$3.35. The result: By January 1, 1991, Oregon's minimum wage was \$4.75. That's a 42 percent increase over two years. Oregon's economy did well following the increase. That's not to suggest causality, but rather to note that a substantial minimum wage increase can go hand-in-hand with solid economic growth.

In 1950, the federal minimum wage — which set the floor in Oregon at the time — jumped 88 percent, thanks to congressional action.

How do these historical increases from Congress and the Oregon legislature compare to the increase proposed in House Bill 2009?

A Substantial Minimum Wage Increase Is Nothing New in Oregon

(Percent change in Oregon minimum wage by increase)



Source: OCPP analysis of Department of Labor data and HB 2009 proposal. Data for 1950 is from Economic Policy Institute analysis of Fair Labor Standards Act.

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Over the first two years of implementing HB 2009's phased increase, the minimum wage would rise 43 percent. When fully implemented on January 1, 2018, Oregon's minimum wage would be 62 percent higher than it is today.

Too many working Oregonians are struggling to make ends meet. There's precedent to raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2018.

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