

LIVE THE WAGE CHALLENGE TOOLKIT

July 24th marks 5 years since the last federal minimum wage increase and America can't wait any longer. While corporate profits and CEO salaries skyrocket, the minimum wage remains stuck at \$7.25 an hour, well below the poverty line. We need to raise the minimum wage so workers can support themselves and their families. *A higher minimum wage for workers means more customers for businesses.* More customers means more jobs and a stronger economy for everyone.

It's time for action.

The Live the Wage Challenge asks elected officials, community leaders, advocates and everyday citizens to walk in the shoes of a person who earns minimum wage by living on a minimum wage budget—**\$77**—for one week.

\$77 is not a lot of money. The truth is that you may simply run out of money and go over budget. That's OK: the Challenge is not easy, and it's not supposed to be. Workers who make the minimum wage have little, if any, leeway in how they spend their money each month. The Challenge gives a glimpse into just how little the minimum wage provides. It is not enough to live on—much less enough to invest back into the community. By taking the Challenge and sharing your experience, you'll help highlight the critical need to raise the minimum wage.

No one who works full time should live in poverty – and communities need workers to earn enough money so that they spend at local businesses. By Living the Wage, you can help show why we need to Raise the Wage to a level that supports families and boosts the economy.

What you'll find in this toolkit:

- Instructions for the Challenge
- Message Guidance
- Social Media Resources
- Key Facts
- State by State Impact of Raising the Minimum Wage
- Questions and Answers

Instructions

Thank you for joining the Live the Wage Challenge and elected leaders, community leaders, faith leaders, advocates, and workers in support of raising the minimum wage!

Here is everything you need to know to make the Challenge a success.

STEP 1: REVIEW YOUR BUDGET

Your budget for the week is **\$77**. This represents the weekly wages of a full-time worker making the federal minimum wage, minus average taxes and average housing expenses. In the days leading up to July 24th, think about how much money you can afford to spend on each type of expense.

Here are the items that count toward your budget:

- **Meals:** Please subtract all meal costs from your minimum wage budget. Try not to eat free meals at other people's houses to skirt the budget. Given the low budget, you'll probably need to make most meals at home using the groceries you buy for the week. Any cleaning supplies, toiletries, etc. should be included. Also, make sure to use coupons to save money!
- **Transportation:** Gas is expensive. Public transportation may be your best bet for making it through the week on your low-wage budget. Or, save the environment and bike to work. Whatever works best and keeps you in the black.
- **Recreation/Entertainment:** Remember that you have very limited funds and your normal routine will need to be altered. You probably won't be able to afford lattes, eating out, or a trip to the movies. Even free activities typically incur transportation costs. You should make sure that you are accounting for all costs related to any recreational activities you participate in during the week.

While we want the Challenge to be as realistic as possible, we don't want to cause you or your family financial hardship. So please **do not** count the following expenses toward your budget:

- **Loan, car, and mortgage payments.** We do not expect you to default on any of your ongoing payment obligations during the week of the Challenge.
- **Spending on kids.** Please continue to pay for daycare, children's meals, and normal activities out of your traditional budget. The exception should be going out to eat and leisure activities.
- **Spending that falls into the future.** Please exempt purchases that affect the future and not just this week, including expenses for future events or recurring bills.
- **Required work travel.** Feel free to exclude transportation and housing expenses related to required work-funded trips. This is work travel that is separate from daily commuting expenses.

STEP 2: BUY GROCERIES

Either before the Challenge starts or early on the first day (July 24), make a trip to the store to buy your groceries for the week. Keep in mind that your \$77 budget also covers transportation and recreation, so don't spend all your money at the store.

When you make meals during the week, only use groceries that you bought during this shopping trip – not other items you may already have had on hand. This will mirror the reality for low-wage families.

STEP 3: START THE CHALLENGE!

From the moment you wake up on July 24th, you are taking the Challenge! Keep track of all your spending and subtract it from your budget. (If you've already done your grocery shopping for the week, your grocery bill should already have been subtracted from your initial \$77 budget.)

Remember that the Challenge is not easy, and it's not supposed to be. Workers who make the minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour have little, if any, leeway in how they spend their money each month. You may simply run out of money and be forced to exceed your budget before the end of the week. That's OK – hopefully you will have gained an awareness of just how low the federal minimum wage is, and how important it is to raise it.

STEP 4: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES!

The more participants share their experiences with others, the bigger the impact we'll have on the national conversation around the minimum wage.

Here are sample posts to help you catalogue your experience on Facebook, Twitter and through other social media:

- I'm taking the #LiveTheWage challenge. My food, transportation and entertainment budget for the week is \$77.
- Just spent \$X.XX on groceries. I learned you can't afford to buy milk or vegetables on a minimum wage. #LiveTheWage
- Daily update: With 5 days to go, I only have \$X.XX left in my budget. #LiveTheWage
- I'm now over my #LiveTheWage budget by \$X.XX and I still have X days to go.
- I'm taking the #LiveTheWage challenge. Sen./Rep. XXX, will you take it with me?

Here are other ways you can draw attention to your actions:

- Ask your elected representatives to join you in living the wage and report back at #LiveTheWage
- Start a conversation with neighbors and friends about what it's like to live on the minimum wage
- Visit a small business that supports raising the minimum wage
- Spend a day with a minimum wage worker
- Write an op-ed, letter to the editor or blog post about your experience

Messaging Guidance

How to Talk About Raising the Minimum Wage

Step One: Offer Context, Define the Problem

Right now the economy isn't working for everyone – hardworking families are struggling to keep up with rising costs and are living paycheck to paycheck, while corporate CEOs are making more than ever. In 1983, CEOs made less than 50 times more than the average worker; today it's 331 times more. Meanwhile, CEOs are making [774 times](#) what minimum wage workers earn. This is throwing our entire economy off balance and hurting our economic growth. When everyday consumers don't have money to spend, businesses and our entire economy suffer.

Step Two: Focus on the Broad Goals of Economic Opportunity

Americans who work hard and play by the rules should be able to get ahead. Every American deserves the opportunity to succeed through hard work, but right now the deck is stacked against working and middle class families. While the rich continue to get richer, hardworking families are being left behind.

Step Three: Give the Solution; Provide Sense of Urgency

It has been nearly 5 years since the last minimum wage raise, and we're long overdue for another. Raising the minimum wage would boost [the wages of 28 million workers by \\$35 billion](#). It is a crucial step toward building an economy that works for everyone, not just the wealthy few. Economic prosperity comes when we invest and grow the economy from the middle out, not from the top down. A higher minimum wage means workers spend more at local businesses, giving business the ability to hire more workers and grow the economy.

Words that Work

- Cares about working people
- Understands the struggles of average people
- Sides with working people, not just big corporations
- Income not keeping up with cost of living
- Opportunity for success through hard work
- Unaffordable cost

What to Know

Families are Stressed About the Rising Cost of Living.

Although the economy has improved, jobs and the economy are still at the top of American's concerns. Families are increasingly worried that they are losing ground economically and that their incomes are falling behind the ever rising cost of living. They are stressed about the unaffordable costs they confront on a daily basis and have to make tougher and tougher decisions around their kitchen tables.

Workers Want Leaders Who Understand Their Economic Struggles.

As Americans strive to provide for their families, they want leaders who care and understand the struggles of average people. They want leaders who will take the side of working people, not just the wealthy.

Americans Support Raising the Minimum Wage.

By a wide margin, Americans support raising the minimum wage. Poll after poll shows that over 70% of Americans support raising the minimum wage. This strong support includes over [70% of Independents, and nearly half of Republicans](#). It's time that Congress listens to the American people and raise the minimum wage.

Discussing the Challenge

Here are a few ways you can transition to discussing the challenge following your message about the minimum wage:

- “That is why I am taking the minimum wage challenge, to experience what it’s like for working families every day and to bring attention to the need to make sure everyone is paid an honest wage for an honest day’s work. We need to have an economy that works for everyone, not just the wealthy few, and we can start by raising the minimum wage.”
- “I’m taking the minimum wage challenge to better understand the struggles some people face every day living on a minimum wage salary, and the difficult choices they have to make. I want to be able to urge my legislators how important it is to our communities and economy for workers to earn a living wage. For instance, I [insert story of challenge you faced.]”
- “I’m definitely finding it difficult to successfully live on just 77 dollars for a week. But the Challenge is not easy, and it’s not supposed to be. It gives a glimpse into how the minimum wage is not enough to live on—much less enough to invest back into the community. By taking the Challenge and talking about my experience, I am helping to highlight the critical need to raise the minimum wage.”

Social Media Resources

The more participants share their experiences with others, the bigger the impact we'll have on the national conversation around the minimum wage. The Raise the Wage Coalition will be working with the media, partners, and advocates to lift up and showcase the Live the Wage Challenge and its participants. This social media toolkit provides resources for you as you take embark on the challenge.

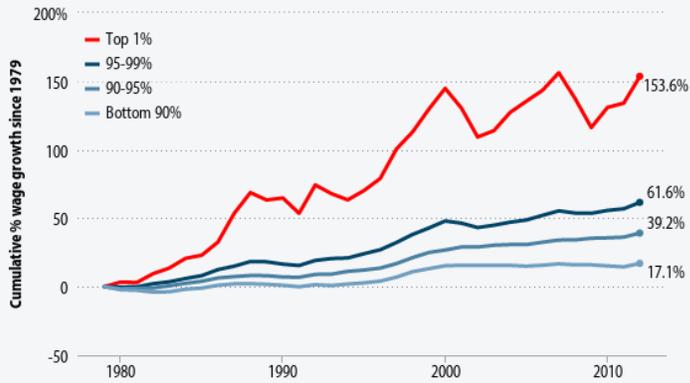
- **Twitter and Facebook.** Make sure to let us know about your events so that we can amplify them, and use the hashtags below to promote!
 - #RaiseTheWage
 - #LiveTheWage
- **Sample Tweets.**
 - I'm taking the #LiveTheWage challenge. My food, transportation and entertainment budget for the week is \$77.
 - I'm taking the #LiveTheWage challenge. Sen./Rep. XXX, will you take it with me?
 - Just spent \$X.XX on groceries. I learned you can't afford to buy milk or vegetables on a minimum wage. #LiveTheWage
 - Daily update: With 5 days to go, I only have \$X.XX left in my budget. #LiveTheWage
 - I'm now over my #LiveTheWage budget by \$X.XX and I still have X days to go.
 - #LiveTheWage Challenge shows incomes haven't kept up w/ the cost of living. We need to #RaiseTheWage so Americans can make ends meet.
When workers can't even make ends meet, how can they support businesses and grow our economy? #LiveTheWage #RaiseTheWage
- **Videos / Graphics**



ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT Interactive

Escalating wages of the top 1%

Cumulative change in real annual wages, by wage group, 1979–2012



This is an update of Figure 4H from *State of Working America*, 13th Edition.

Source: Authors' analysis of Kopczuk, Saez, and Song (2010) and Social Security Administration wage statistics

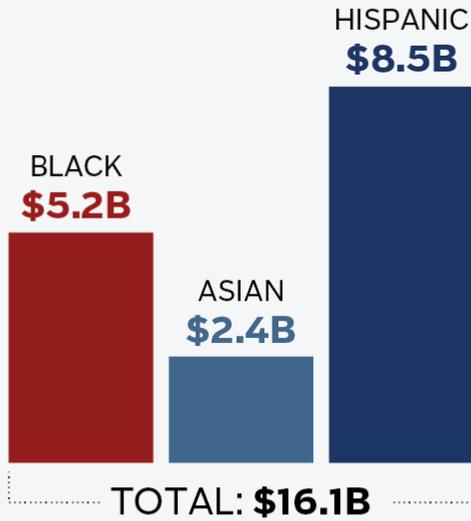
[Get the underlying data at epi.org.](#)

ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

A CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS GRAPHIC

Raising the minimum wage will benefit people of color

Total increase in wages by race if the minimum wage were raised to \$10.10 per hour



See the methodology and sources: <http://ampr.gs/0s9ICU>

Center for American Progress



FIGURE 1

Nearly two-thirds of minimum-wage earners are women

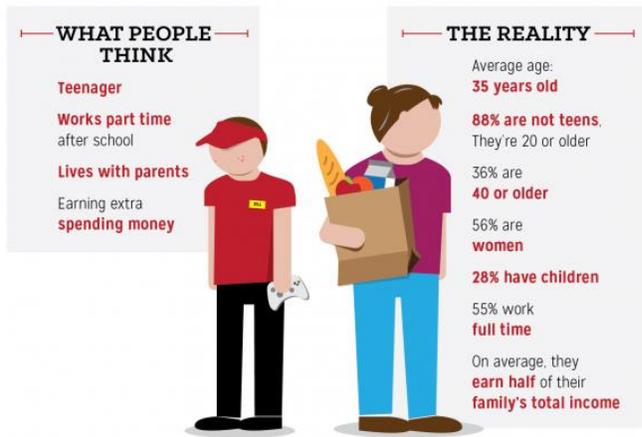
In 2012, more than 64 percent of minimum-wage workers were women



Source: Calculations using Center for Economic and Policy Research Uniform Extracts of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group data for 2012.

Share with <http://bit.ly/1dMqEzw>

WHO'S HELPED BY RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE?



Note: Statistics describe civilian workers, ages 16+, that would be affected by an increase in the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 over three years, as explained in *Raising the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 would give working families, and the overall economy, a much-needed boost*. The median age of affected workers is 31 years old. Visit epi.org/issues/minimum-wage for more details.

ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

Share with <http://bit.ly/1gvVHD8>

Key Facts

Millions of Americans Would Benefit From Increasing the Minimum Wage

- **Increasing the minimum wage would raise yearly earnings for minimum wage workers.** Currently, a full-time worker making the minimum wage earns just [\\$7.25](#) an hour. For a family of 3, that is [\\$4,000 below the poverty line](#). Raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 would increase yearly earnings to \$20,200.
- **Millions of workers would benefit from raising the minimum wage.** Increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 and indexing it to inflation would [raise the wages of 28 million workers by \\$35 billion](#).
- **Most minimum wage workers are women.** About [two-thirds](#) of all workers who were paid the minimum wage or less were women. Raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 would benefit [15 million women](#).
- **Minimum wage workers are older than you think.** Minimum wage workers are not just teenagers. In fact, [nearly 90%](#) of minimum wage workers are 20 years or older. The average minimum wage worker is [35 years old](#).
- **Raising the minimum wage would put [\\$16.1 billion](#) in the pocket of workers of color.** Increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 would mean a significant wage increase for blacks, Asians, and Hispanics, who would see their total wages rise by \$5.2 billion, \$2.4 billion, and \$8.5 billion, respectively.

Raising the Minimum Wage Is Good for the Economy

- **Increasing the minimum wage would immediately put more money in the pocket of workers.** Workers who will then spend the money on things like housing, food, and gas. [This boost in demand for goods and services will help stimulate the economy and help create opportunities for all Americans](#). The money gets funneled back to businesses large and small who would need to hire more workers to keep up with the demand, reinforcing a virtuous circle that will help build an economy that works everyone.
- **Increasing the minimum wage may increase economic activity.** The Economic Policy Institute showed that increasing the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 would grow the economy by [\\$22 billion](#). Research from the [Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago](#) also shows that a \$1 minimum wage hike increases household income by about \$250 and spending by about \$700 per quarter in the year following the increase.

Raising the Minimum Wage is Important for Jobs

- **Studies have shown that minimum wage increases do not cause job losses.** In 2010, economists studied employment levels in neighboring counties that straddle a border between states that had

different minimum wage rates between 1990 and 2006. The study found that “minimum wage increases [did not cause job losses](#) in counties with higher minimum wages.

- [More than 600 economists, including 7 Nobel Laureates](#), have signed a letter saying that raising min wage has little or no negative effect on employment.
- [More than half](#) of states that raised the minimum wage during periods of high unemployment saw the unemployment rate decrease over the next 12 months.

Businesses Support Increasing the Minimum Wage

- **Businesses, like [Costco](#) and [GAP](#), understand the benefits of raising the minimum wage.** They see the benefits of raising the minimum wage—it helps reduce employee turnover and increases employee productivity, commitment, and loyalty. This all helps increase profits. That’s why more and more businesses, including [Subway](#) support raising the minimum wage.
- [Nearly 60% of small business owners](#) recognize that raising the minimum wage would benefit businesses and support raising it. Small business owners already acknowledge the benefits of higher wages, which is why 82% of those surveyed don’t pay any of their workers the federal minimum wage of \$7.25.

Raising the Minimum Wage Saves Taxpayers Money

- **Raising wages for low-income workers would cut government spending and save taxpayers money.** A groundbreaking study released by the Center for American Progress finds that raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 would lower government spending on SNAP by [\\$4.6 billion a year, or \\$46 billion over the next 10 years](#).

Wages Have Not Kept Up With Increased Productivity or Inflation

- **Wages are not keeping pace with increased productivity.** If the minimum wage kept up with increases in worker productivity, the minimum wage would be [over \\$18 an hour](#).
- **The minimum wage has not kept pace with inflation.** Back in 1968, the federal minimum wage was \$1.60 an hour. If the minimum wage kept up with inflation, it would more than [\\$10.50](#) today. Today’s minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour is [31% lower](#) than the value of the minimum wage in 1968.

Income Inequality Has Increased Dramatically

Although the average workers’ wages have remained stagnant, the pay for those at the top has skyrocketed.

- **CEOs make 744 times more than average workers do.** While wages for average workers have been stagnant, CEO pay has been skyrocketing. In 2013, CEOs made [774 times](#) a minimum wage worker.

The 1% is getting richer and richer. Between 1979 and 2007, the richest top 1% of American households saw their income rise by [281%, or an increase of more than \\$973,000 per household](#). Meanwhile, the poorest Americans saw an increase in their income of only [16%, or \\$2,400](#).

State-by-State Impact of Raising the Minimum Wage

According to the Economic Policy Institute, raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 would raise the wages of nearly 28 million workers while creating roughly 85,000 new jobs. Plug in and use these state-by-state impact numbers as you develop advocacy materials to urge Congress to raise the wage for millions of working families struggling in an economy that's failing them.

The Table below shows the estimated effects of raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 by 2016 (when it would be fully phased in) for each state. In 18 states, more than 500,000 workers will be affected.

APPENDIX TABLE 1

Estimated effects of proposed federal minimum-wage increase to \$10.10 by 2016, fully phased in, by state

State	Estimated workforce ¹	Directly affected ²	Indirectly affected ³	Total affected	Share of workforce affected	Increased wages for all affected workers ⁴	GDP impact ⁵	Jobs impact: Full-time employment ⁶
<i>United States</i>	130,635,000	16,718,000	11,101,000	27,819,000	21.3%	\$34,987,008,000	\$22,146,777,000	84,800
<i>Alabama</i>	1,936,000	323,000	139,000	462,000	23.9%	\$819,951,000	\$519,029,000	1,900
<i>Alaska</i>	303,000	28,000	16,000	44,000	14.5%	\$68,073,000	\$43,089,000	200
<i>Arizona</i>	2,466,000	331,000	186,000	517,000	21.0%	\$677,190,000	\$428,661,000	1,600
<i>Arkansas</i>	1,113,000	227,000	88,000	315,000	28.3%	\$615,085,000	\$389,349,000	1,400
<i>California</i>	14,994,000	94,000	2,614,000	2,708,000	18.1%	\$458,628,000	\$290,311,000	2,200
<i>Colorado</i>	2,260,000	269,000	141,000	410,000	18.1%	\$578,138,000	\$365,962,000	1,500
<i>Connecticut</i>	1,540,000	140,000	87,000	227,000	14.7%	\$158,511,000	\$100,337,000	500
<i>Delaware</i>	379,000	55,000	23,000	78,000	20.6%	\$112,230,000	\$71,042,000	200
<i>District of Columbia</i>	317,000	23,000	12,000	35,000	11.0%	\$48,045,000	\$30,412,000	100
<i>Florida</i>	7,705,000	1,067,000	710,000	1,777,000	23.1%	\$2,178,731,000	\$1,379,137,000	5,400
<i>Georgia</i>	4,038,000	571,000	340,000	911,000	22.6%	\$1,371,822,000	\$868,363,000	2,900
<i>Hawaii</i>	552,000	59,000	40,000	99,000	17.9%	\$127,199,000	\$80,517,000	300
<i>Idaho</i>	615,000	112,000	51,000	163,000	26.5%	\$269,464,000	\$170,571,000	600
<i>Illinois</i>	5,494,000	733,000	394,000	1,127,000	20.5%	\$1,359,415,000	\$860,509,000	3,900
<i>Indiana</i>	2,726,000	436,000	201,000	637,000	23.4%	\$954,820,000	\$604,401,000	2,200
<i>Iowa</i>	1,423,000	216,000	90,000	306,000	21.5%	\$430,462,000	\$272,483,000	900
<i>Kansas</i>	1,285,000	201,000	88,000	289,000	22.5%	\$423,441,000	\$268,038,000	1,000
<i>Kentucky</i>	1,794,000	304,000	158,000	462,000	25.8%	\$664,748,000	\$420,786,000	1,400
<i>Louisiana</i>	1,745,000	320,000	143,000	463,000	26.5%	\$773,419,000	\$489,574,000	1,700
<i>Maine</i>	573,000	84,000	37,000	121,000	21.1%	\$153,746,000	\$97,321,000	400
<i>Maryland</i>	2,717,000	306,000	140,000	446,000	16.4%	\$677,281,000	\$428,719,000	1,600
<i>Massachusetts</i>	2,969,000	303,000	205,000	508,000	17.1%	\$596,401,000	\$377,522,000	1,600
<i>Michigan</i>	3,916,000	641,000	299,000	940,000	24.0%	\$1,399,338,000	\$885,781,000	3,300
<i>Minnesota</i>	2,564,000	321,000	141,000	462,000	18.0%	\$614,388,000	\$388,908,000	1,500
<i>Mississippi</i>	1,082,000	185,000	95,000	280,000	25.9%	\$465,334,000	\$294,557,000	1,000
<i>Missouri</i>	2,549,000	373,000	205,000	578,000	22.7%	\$821,404,000	\$519,948,000	1,900
<i>Montana</i>	400,000	60,000	28,000	88,000	22.0%	\$101,452,000	\$64,219,000	300
<i>Nebraska</i>	897,000	122,000	68,000	190,000	21.2%	\$237,626,000	\$150,417,000	500
<i>Nevada</i>	1,155,000	158,000	104,000	262,000	22.7%	\$315,847,000	\$199,931,000	900

<i>New Hampshire</i>	637,000	77,000	36,000	113,000	17.7%	\$143,575,000	\$90,883,000	400
<i>New Jersey</i>	3,899,000	469,000	255,000	724,000	18.6%	\$584,498,000	\$369,987,000	1,800
<i>New Mexico</i>	780,000	104,000	43,000	147,000	18.8%	\$201,561,000	\$127,588,000	500
<i>New York</i>	8,137,000	987,000	582,000	1,569,000	19.3%	\$1,037,532,000	\$656,758,000	3,100
<i>North Carolina</i>	3,970,000	735,000	317,000	1,052,000	26.5%	\$1,664,257,000	\$1,053,474,000	3,700
<i>North Dakota</i>	344,000	37,000	23,000	60,000	17.4%	\$74,536,000	\$47,181,000	200
<i>Ohio</i>	4,863,000	815,000	332,000	1,147,000	23.6%	\$1,544,047,000	\$977,382,000	3,900
<i>Oklahoma</i>	1,543,000	256,000	111,000	367,000	23.8%	\$561,893,000	\$355,679,000	1,300
<i>Oregon</i>	1,523,000	173,000	96,000	269,000	17.7%	\$169,537,000	\$107,317,000	800
<i>Pennsylvania</i>	5,540,000	721,000	353,000	1,074,000	19.4%	\$1,611,687,000	\$1,020,198,000	3,800
<i>Rhode Island</i>	469,000	65,000	26,000	91,000	19.4%	\$122,847,000	\$77,763,000	300
<i>South Carolina</i>	1,873,000	301,000	148,000	449,000	24.0%	\$710,820,000	\$449,948,000	1,600
<i>South Dakota</i>	363,000	60,000	31,000	91,000	25.1%	\$126,350,000	\$79,979,000	300
<i>Tennessee</i>	2,624,000	437,000	198,000	635,000	24.2%	\$987,829,000	\$625,296,000	2,100
<i>Texas</i>	10,927,000	1,945,000	920,000	2,865,000	26.2%	\$4,977,598,000	\$3,150,819,000	11,000
<i>Utah</i>	1,231,000	191,000	80,000	271,000	22.0%	\$381,270,000	\$241,343,000	900
<i>Vermont</i>	291,000	29,000	18,000	47,000	16.2%	\$38,409,000	\$24,313,000	100
<i>Virginia</i>	3,657,000	511,000	233,000	744,000	20.3%	\$1,261,582,000	\$798,581,000	2,800
<i>Washington</i>	2,885,000	188,000	212,000	400,000	13.9%	\$150,020,000	\$94,963,000	700
<i>West Virginia</i>	689,000	120,000	48,000	168,000	24.4%	\$287,648,000	\$182,081,000	700
<i>Wisconsin</i>	2,622,000	404,000	183,000	587,000	22.4%	\$816,060,000	\$516,566,000	1,800
<i>Wyoming</i>	262,000	33,000	15,000	48,000	18.3%	\$61,263,000	\$38,779,000	100

Questions and Answers

Q: Why \$77 a week?

A: The weekly budget for the minimum wage challenge is based on the earnings of a full-time worker earning the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour, minus average taxes and housing costs. Tax costs are based on a national average that includes federal and state taxes. Housing costs are based on the national average rent for a 1 bedroom apartment.

These national averages were constructed using raw data provided by Economic Policy Institute, based off of data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the National Bureau of Economic Research Taxsim model 9.2.

Q: What does this budget cover?

A: This budget covers food, transportation, entertainment, and any other miscellaneous expenses. For purposes of this challenge, we are not including health insurance or health care costs. We are also not asking individuals who take the challenge to try and have their children or other family members operate within this budget – though that is frequently a reality for minimum wage workers.

Q: If I spend less money on transportation or other items for the week, can I spend more on food?

A: Yes – though your budget of \$77 does not give you much leeway.

Q: Don't many minimum wage workers receive SNAP benefits to help with their food budget?

A: Yes, minimum wage workers make so little that many receive SNAP (food stamp benefits). In fact, raising the federal minimum wage would lift approximately [3.1 million to 3.6 million people out of SNAP](#).

Q: Is this a realistic exercise?

A: We have made a number of simplifications to make the Challenge more accessible. For example, we have not factored in geographic variations in taxes and housing costs, and we are not asking participants to consider things like a health care emergency or a broken down car. But the choices you will face in taking the Live the Wage Challenge are real – these are the sorts of choices that minimum wage workers are confronted with every day.

Q: What if I fail the challenge?

A: You may not be able to successfully complete the Challenge, and that's okay. \$77 is not a lot – you may simply run out of money and be forced to go over budget. But by taking the Challenge and sharing your experience, you'll help highlight the critical need to raise the minimum wage.

Q: Aren't there are other versions of the challenge?

A: There are. Senator Cory Booker, for example, did the food stamp challenge – which is to live on what the average SNAP recipient gets in benefits for a week. State legislatures have also undertaken minimum wage challenges before. These challenges are a great way to highlight important issues facing hardworking American families.

Q: Can I invite other people to participate in the challenge?



A: Of course, the challenge is open to anyone! The goal is to spread awareness about why we need to raise the minimum wage as much as possible.