



MINIMUM WAGE DEBATE AGAIN SPARKED IN DC AND AUSTIN

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State Representative Trey Martinez Fischer filed the latest bill calling for the raising of the Texas minimum wage from \$7.25 per hour up to \$15 by the year 2025. This process of phasing-up the minimum wage mirrors that currently being pushed federally by President Biden.

According to Martinez Fischer's House Bill 1827 the minimum wage would rise to \$10 per hour starting in 2022, followed by a jump to \$12.50 in 2023, \$14 in 2024, finally settling at \$15 in 2025. The Texas bill was designed like its federal counterpart "to give businesses, particularly small businesses the ability and time to adjust, give the economy some time to recover," said Martinez Fischer. "This won't have the economic whiplash that some people think it will have. It will grow as the economy grows."

The perceived economic whiplash Martinez Fischer is talking about is coming from Republicans in Texas and Washington, DC. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office recently released a report that revealed that this plan would result in 1.4 million jobs lost nationally over the same period of time. About that Martinez Fischer said, "That same study also showed 900-thousand people would be coming out of poverty; there is a give and a take." He also believes his bill would help boost the economy. "The money's not going to be sitting in some off-shore Swiss bank account," said Martinez Fischer. "It's going to be spent in the local community, creating more jobs, creating more consumption, and that's what we need right now."

Texas Republicans fear the job losses are too much for an economy to take as it slowly tries to recover from the pandemic. "I worry that at a time when we're in a recession and small businesses are struggling, those that have actually survived to this point, adding additional costs for their workforce through a federal minimum wage will just put further pressure on them," said US Senator John Cornyn of Texas. Cornyn believes that while raising the minimum wage may poll well, it would be counter-productive while recovering from a pandemic.

Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, who presides over the State Senate told members of the **Texas Business Leadership Council** on Thursday that raising the minimum wage would hurt businesses and take jobs away from people. Patrick said it's not something he thinks is going to happen.