

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### WE NEED A DOSE OF MINIMUM WAGE REALITY!



By Stephen L. Bakke  June 3, 2014

#### *Here's what provoked me:*

*We continually hear: "What could possibly go wrong with imposing a minimum wage increase?" A writer recently took exception to an earlier letter opposing minimum wage increases that was sloppily written, indelicate in tone, and difficult to defend in most respects. Hence, the challenger easily won that exchange. The newspaper had made a poor choice of someone to defend the conservative position that raising minimum wages produces a mixed bag of results. So I had to try one more time to get my arguments in the paper on this topic. But first a couple quotes:*

*Hey SB! Don't forget to pass on to the folks that **MINIMUM WAGE POLICIES SHOULD BE EVALUATED BASED ON ACHIEVEMENTS, NOT JUST GOOD INTENTIONS!** – Stefano Bachovich – obscure curmudgeon and wise political pundit – a prolific purveyor of opinions on just about everything – my primary "go to guy."*

*For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, AND WRONG! – H. L. Menken*

#### *Here's my response:*

#### **We Need a Dose of Minimum Wage Reality!**

Re: "Competition" on May 30, the writer took exception to a letter opposing minimum wage increases. The challenger won that exchange. The newspaper had perhaps made the wrong choice of someone to defend the conservative position that raising minimum wages produces a mixed bag of results.

The Administration's stated goal is to raise the economic well being of the poorest working Americans. I support that goal!! To give outright acceptance to minimum wage increases would require ignoring many important facts, including:

- Increases in the minimum wage tend to affect teenagers, and secondary wage earners – NOT the working poor.
- Minimum wage earners OVERALL tend NOT to come from poor families. Their average family income is more than \$53,000 per year.
- In 2011, almost 79% of minimum wage earners were NOT living in poverty.
- Raising the minimum wage reduces the number of those jobs available.
- For those in poverty an increase in wages might be "given back" because other benefits they are receiving are "means tested."
- CBO states that the immediate impact of the President's proposed increase will likely reduce job growth at least 500,000.

Those who need help the most are the most negatively affected!