



Media Release
For Immediate Release
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Tri-City Regional Chamber Reaction to Governor Gregoire's Announcement on the Minimum Wage Increase Beginning January 2011

TRI-CITIES — Governor Gregoire announced today that minimum wage will increase to \$8.67 at the beginning of next year. The Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce is concerned how this additional increased cost will affect all businesses across the state. Washington State's economy is suffering, and its common knowledge that business growth is what will create jobs and pull the state out of this economic slump.

"This couldn't have come at a worse time for businesses in our region," said Tri-City Regional Chamber Vice President Colin Hastings, "This comes on the heels of Olympia increasing taxes on business earlier this year, uncertainty of the cost of the new federal healthcare law, and a day after the Governor endorsed a state income tax. This will just prolong the recovery."

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) determines what the minimum wage rate in Washington State will be. Two years ago the (CPI) dropped dramatically. By statute, the minimum wage cannot decrease; therefore it remained unchanged for 2010. The CPI has since climbed slightly, and triggered the minimum wage to increase, even though the CPI hasn't risen to the level it was two years ago. Social security and veteran pension's cost of living adjustments (COLA) are also tied to CPI. For the second straight year there hasn't been an increase.

To bring relief to businesses in our area and the state, the Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce is encouraging yes votes on I-1053 (2/3 majority to raise taxes) & I-1082 (L&I competition) and NO votes on I-1098 (income tax) and R-52 (increase WA debt limit).

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