

From: Laura McCamy [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2019 12:18 PM
To: Ally Medina <amedina@emeryville.org>; John J. Bauters <jbauters@emeryville.org>; Christian Robin Patz (Personal) [REDACTED]; Scott Donahue <sdonahue@emeryville.org>; Dianne Martinez <dmartinez@emeryville.org>
Cc: Sheri Hartz <shartz@emeryville.org>
Subject: Public comment on minimum wage proposal

Dear Emeryville City Councilmembers,

I'm not able to be at the City Council meeting tonight, so I'm sending written comment for the record.

A recent [New York Times Magazine article](#) about minimum wage increases heavily featured success stories from Emeryville. The article started with this statement: "A living wage is an antidepressant. It is a sleep aid. A diet. A stress reliever. It is a contraceptive, preventing teenage pregnancy. It prevents premature death. It shields children from neglect."

All workers deserve a living wage, no matter what business they work for. I'm proud to be from Emeryville, the small city with the highest minimum wage in the country and some of the best worker protections.

Please don't take away a living wage from Emeryville workers.

There are many pressures on small restaurants in the Bay Area. An article in today's [Washington Post](#) highlighted the outrageous rent increases driving small businesses out of San Francisco, a problem that has rippled across the bay. *It's unfair and unwise to solve this structural problem in our economy on the backs of minimum wage workers.* Even if those workers are tipped, chances are they are barely getting by in the Bay Area.

If you want to help small restaurants survive in Emeryville how about a tax on vacant retail properties (which we have a lot of) that goes into a fund to support small businesses? Or some other creative idea to help struggling restaurant owners. I believe diners would be willing to pay more for meals, in exchange for restaurant staff who are paid a fair wage. I know I am willing to pay extra for that.

If the only way a business can survive is to underpay its workers, then its business model is fundamentally flawed. Don't prop up a flawed business model on the backs of the most vulnerable workers.

At the very least, **please don't rush a minimum wage decision** to beat the July 1 deadline for the minimum wage increase. Take the time to consider all the options and come up with a reasoned decision, not a rash one.

Thank you for your attention and for your service!

Laura McCamy
Writer/Editor/Researcher
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