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QuickPoint! – Oregon Legislators Raised the Minimum Wage; Students Lose Their Jobs

By Kathryn Hickok

Oregon's three-tiered minimum wage law was just signed by Governor Kate Brown last week, but it's already set to cost Oregon university students their campus jobs. *The Oregonian* reports that Oregon's [public universities are now calculating how the wage increases will affect their budgets for student workers](#).

Most college jobs paying the current minimum wage are not part of the federally funded work-study program; student workers are hired by the universities, which pay them hourly. According to *The Oregonian*, "Oregon's new minimum could put more money in some students' pockets, but it will more likely lead administrations to either cut back on the number of students they hire or the number of hours they're allowed to work."

The new wage law goes into full effect over six years, and Oregon is divided into three wage regions, so the cost increases will compound over time and affect colleges differently depending on where they are located. A spokesman for Oregon State University says OSU may need to cut up to 700 student worker positions by 2019, which is about a nine-percent reduction in student employment.

Until legislators understand that income [cannot be generated by state mandate](#), minimum wage increases will continue to hurt workers they're thought to help, including first-time job-seekers, workers with less experience, and college students just trying to get a part-time campus job.

Kathryn Hickok is Publications Director at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research organization.