

**From:** Brenna Bedard [mailto:Brenna.Bedard@uvm.edu]

**Sent:** Friday, February 17, 2017 3:09 PM

**Subject:** Raising the minimum wage

My name is Brenna Bedard and I'm emailing you in support of the bills being presented to the legislature in regards to raising the minimum wage. I'm from Barre, Vermont and go to school at UVM so I'm born and raised. I come from a single parent household where my mom has worked 40+ hours before, and still can't make ends meet. The reality behind an unfair wage is this: endless months of dreading the next bill, wondering where your food will come from since most of your bills have taken up a huge chunk of your paycheck, and crying at night as you worry if your kids will be happy and satisfied with the little you can provide. I know this, because my mom confided in me. I know this because as the oldest I've seen her slip into clinical depression because she can't give us what she wished she could, or because she just can't make ends meet regardless of working long tiring days. Vermont is expensive. The food, the rent, the lifestyle, everything about Vermont is expensive and the reality is, my family isn't the only family that struggles with this. 10.2% of Vermonters are living in poverty, and 11.4% of families suffer from hunger and food insecurity. Is this really what we want for the people who live in this great state? Do we really want to be known as a state who doesn't stand up for their citizens, who doesn't care for the children living in poverty, or the single moms who just want to give their kids the best? I urge this committee to think seriously about what voting no would say in terms of the character it's willing to present and the thousands of lives they would hurt in the process. Please, please work for the people who elected you into office. I look forward to watching the progression of this bill.

-Brenna