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Dear Legislator:

A \$15/hr. minimum wage is overdue in Vermont. It needs to be phased in by 2020. The alternative is poorer families with deprived children likely to need expensive services.

A \$15/hr. minimum wage would force the large box retailer (Wal-Mart, etc.) to share some of their huge tax cuts with their workers. Most of this added income, if not all, would be spent locally, and consequently demand for State services would decline. Some of these retailers even counsel their employees on how to apply for the state benefits their low wages qualify them to receive.

Low income workers would have to pay more taxes as their wages rise. Some of that revenue could even be used to provide temporary tax relief to small businesses, especially along the Connecticut River. The rest of the state would be a level playing field for business.

The near elimination of taxes on the rich by Republicans will send almost all of the new wealth to the top 1%. A \$15/hr. minimum wage, with inflation adjustment, is about the only way to provide economic justice for those stuck in poverty.

If this legislature does not act, it will fail its basic duty to serve all the people, not just those who can hire lobbyists.

Yours truly,

Geoffrey Cobden