



LETTERS (11/09/06)

'Feel good law' bad for Lawrence

To the editor:

Hooray for state Superior Court Judge Linda Feinberg's ruling to stop the enactment of a Lawrence Township municipal minimum wage ordinance.

The Lawrence Living Wage Coalition's support of raising the minimum wage in Lawrence Township from the state's minimum of \$7.15 per hour to \$11.08 plus \$3.50 per hour in benefits, a total of \$14.58 per hour, will hurt all Lawrence residents. Those 1,054 people who signed the coalition's petition are under the misguided perception that businesses can be taxed without affecting the consumer. They are wrong. Requiring businesses that are among the largest employers in our township to pay double the state's minimum wage will force those employers to make some very reasonable business decisions.

First, these billion-dollar-per-year businesses will have to compute how much they can raise their prices to begin to pay for this additional cost of doing business while still remaining competitive. Then, they will have to compute how many present employees to let go in order to make up for the shortfall. Then, if the numbers are still in the negative or consumers go to other businesses to save money, they will take their losses for a time while they look for a more business friendly location. When they move, Lawrence Township will lose the taxes they now add to the municipal budget every year.

Such a feel good law creates a truly lose-lose situation. We consumers will definitely have to pay higher prices for the same goods and services, some currently employed people will lose their jobs, and Lawrence Township may lose some very good tax ratables in the foreseeable future. All of a sudden, this law doesn't feel so good anymore.

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