



March 26, 2018

Women and children would benefit most from statewide minimum wage increase

Women workers and their families have the most to gain from Sen. Troy Carter’s Senate Bill 162, which would raise the statewide minimum wage to \$8.50 per hour by January 1, 2020. While [10.7 percent](#) of all Louisiana workers would get a raise under the bill, more than 65 percent of workers that would benefit are women. Sen. Carter has put forth similar legislation three times in as many years, with little success, despite [76 percent of Louisianans](#) expressing their support for a minimum wage of \$8.50.

A minimum wage hike would also help to narrow the gender wage gap in Louisiana. The wage gap between men and women in Louisiana is the second largest in the country with women earning [68 cents for every \\$1](#) men earn, with a disproportionate number of female workers earning at or just above the federal minimum wage. As a result, more than twice as many Louisiana women will be affected by increasing the minimum wage to \$8.50 than men.

Impact of raising minimum wage to \$8.50 on Jan 1, 2020					
	Estimated workforce	Directly affected workers	Indirectly affected workers	Total affected	Share of total
Total	1,811,774	71,206	122,037	193,243	100.0%
Female	901,128	42,215	84,335	126,550	65.5%
Male	910,646	28,992	37,702	66,693	34.5%

Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of 2017 CPS data
 Note: Indirectly-affected workers have a wage rate just above the new minimum wage (between the new minimum wage and 115 percent of the new minimum). They are projected to receive a raise as employer pay scales are adjusted upward to reflect the new minimum wage.

Senate Bill 162 would also benefit families with children, particularly female-headed families. Louisiana has the [second highest](#) rate of single-mother households in the country, and many low-wage female workers in Louisiana are the sole breadwinners for their families. SB 162 would give a raise to more 35,000 single parents in the state and another 19,000 two-parent households. Overall, 105,325 Louisiana children would benefit from higher household earnings.

**Impact of raising minimum wage to \$8.50
on Jan 1, 2020**

Category	Estimated workforce	Directly affected	Indirectly affected	Total affected
Married parent	413,912	10,233	8,841	19,073
Single parent	195,314	13,986	21,066	35,052
Children		50,805	54,520	105,325

Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of 2017 CPS data
 Note: Indirectly-affected workers have a wage rate just above the new minimum wage (between the new minimum wage and 115 percent of the new minimum). They are projected to receive a raise as employer pay scales are adjusted upward to reflect the new minimum wage.

Senate Bill 162 would give working mothers a modest, but significant boost in wages that could make a real difference in their families' financial stability. The average increase in wages under the legislation would be \$1,690 per year for directly affected workers, while indirectly affected workers would earn an average of \$821 more per year. While that may not seem like a lot of money to some, for the impacted families, it could be the difference between having enough food to eat, keeping up with the utility bill, or being able to buy or repair a vehicle to get to work.

by Caroline Blatt
 LBP/Tulane University Service Learning Student