

Congress needs to approve \$4.55 wage

The current minimum wage proposal is showing the American people the true colors of the United States government.

On one hand there is Congress, who seems to want to give the American workers a financial break by recommending a new minimum wage between \$4.25 and \$4.55.

On the other hand, President George Bush wants to support business interests rather than the people who elected him last November.

The latter of the two is what the people should be concerned about. Bush has already stated that he will veto any minimum wage bill over \$4.25. Furthermore, the president is advocating a six month "training period" in which an employee would earn \$3.35 until the training period was over.

The biggest flaw with that idea is that employers could hire someone, let them earn \$3.35 for six months, tell the employee that they were no longer needed and hire someone else for six months. The cycle could go on forever. A training period such as this would be one simple way for employers to sidestep paying the employee the new minimum wage.

Congress is concerned that setting the bill at \$4.55 will subject it to certain doom when it is received by the president. Congress cannot afford to think that way; \$4.25 is simply not enough to support the cost of living. They need to pass a minimum wage

bill of \$4.55 without any sort of training period.

Although Bush wants to veto such a wage increase, the bill wouldn't be dead. At that point it would be up to the American people (the same American people who helped halt Congress' attempt to award themselves a 50 percent pay hike) to contact their legislators in support of overriding Bush's veto.

One of the arguments against raising the minimum wage is that employers would hire less people, and therefore unemployment would go up. The truth is that regardless of the hourly wage, the same amount of work will still need to be done. Consequently it will take the same number of people to do the work.

Some are concerned about the effect a higher minimum wage would have on the cost of goods to the consumer. That simply wouldn't be an issue. When the minimum wage was raised to \$3.35 in 1981, we didn't experience a dramatic rise in consumer costs. We're looking at one small expense to corporations. Anticipating inflated costs would be presumptuous. It clearly would not be a problem.

Join **The Clackamas Print** in supporting a \$4.55 minimum wage with no training period. Contact Senators Mark Hatfield, Bob Packwood and Representatives Denny Smith and Ron Wyden.

This is an effort that can make a difference in this country.

County makes right choice on bond levy

With the passage of the bond levy March 28 Clackamas Community College will be able to finance several construction and repair projects. But the projects were nearly in jeopardy: the levy passed by a slim 1.8 percent margin. Such a narrow victory is typical of a society which has lost its role as a leader in the field of education.

There have been numerous instances in recent years of school district operating levies failing to gain voter approval, often leading to school closures in pre-safety net days. Voters don't seem to realize that supporting education is an investment in the future of this country, regardless of whether or not the voter is directly reaping the benefits of his school district.

Well-funded educational programs means better educated citizens. Better educated citizens lead to a more productive society in a number of ways.

An argument that is often heard when a school levy comes up for a vote is that, "I don't have any children attending school. Why should I have to pay for education?" The answer is simple: the students that attend well-funded schools will have an earning potential commensurate with their higher level of education, and a higher

earning potential means more tax dollars to fund the government and ease the burden for all (not to mention more money for the social security coffers, which will directly benefit senior citizens who often complain about funding schools when they no longer have school-aged children).

Another common argument is that, "I'm not going to pay for education because our school systems aren't doing a good job." Well, it's impossible to do a good job educating an increasing number of students when enough money isn't available.

When the American education system was founded it was considered a modern miracle. Now that same system is in jeopardy, primarily due to lack of support from local communities. It seems as if those who oppose school levies don't feel that they are a part of our society, because in such a society ALL citizens are required to contribute to the community.

Clackamas Community College is an important part of this community; it is disheartening to find that almost half of those who voted March 28 don't believe in the value of their community college.

Letter to the Editor... Ban food irradiation

To the Editor,

Food irradiation is not the technological answer to our food preservation problems. The safety concerns far outweigh any future benefits. Oregon and other states are proposing and passing food legislation to ban irradiated foods.

The food is irradiated by exposing it to radioactive waste from nuclear power and weapons plants. When the food is irradiated, the gamma rays cause the food to undergo molecular changes. New compounds, known as Unique Radiolytic Products, are formed and many are considered to be carcinogenic.

In the National Institute of Nutrition study, irradiated wheat was fed to malnourished Indian children. The children developed blood polyploids, a condition associated with leukemia and characterized by extra sets of chromosomes.

In other studies, laboratory animals fed irradiated foods developed increased rates of testicular tumors, kidney damage, abnormal blood cells, chromosomal breakage, fewer offspring and a higher overall mortality.

Aflatoxins, very potent carcinogens, have been found in greater quantities in irradiated foods.

Irradiation kills the natural enemies of botulinum bacteria without killing the botulism spores, so our food will become more susceptible to botulism.

There is a major loss in nutrients from irradiating foods, which is compounded if the food is cooked.

Irradiation kills the bacterium that cause food to smell bad. Without them, we won't know when our food is spoiled.

Please write to: (your legislator), State Capitol Bldg., Salem, OR 97310, and ask them to support SB 452 to ban irradiated foods from Oregon.

Thom Alberti
Eugene, OR

Student Opinions

Compiled by Tara Powers and Jillian Porter

Did you vote in the mail-in ballot last month? Why or why not?



Yes. It's convenient. You don't have to miss a lot of school.

- Bob McDaniel



Yes. If a person doesn't vote, they have no right to complain about the government.

- Wes Duffey



No. I didn't have time. I wasn't even aware of it. If I would have had time, I would have voted.

- Shellie Reed



Yes. I feel that voting is an important responsibility to ourselves within the community.

- Julie Odoms

The Clackamas Print

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a*	13.24	18.11	-4.34	-13.80	9.82	-33.43	34.26	11.81	48.55	-0.40	-0.60	-0.75	-1.06	-1.19	-1.07
b*	15.07	18.72	-22.29	22.85	-24.49	-0.35	59.60	-46.07	18.51	1.13	0.23	0.21	0.43	0.28	0.19
Density										0.04	0.09	0.15	0.22	0.36	0.51

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