



New Jersey Gasoline, C-Store, and Automotive Association (**NJGCA**)
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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August 30, 2016

NJGCA Applauds Governor Christie for Veto of Extreme Wage Bill

*Gov. Christie vetoes small business suffocating legislation;
Who is paying for this near doubling of the minimum wage?*

Sal Risalvato, Executive Director of the New Jersey Gasoline, Convenience Store, Automotive Association (NJGCA), released the following statement in response to the Governor's decision to veto the bill that would hike the minimum wage to \$15 an hour:

"There is no doubt that it would be nice if every worker in this state were able to take home a bigger salary. But the fundamental problem with this dramatic increase in the minimum wage is a simple question: where does the money come from?"

"The state is mandating that every business, no matter its size, significantly increase its payroll. ALL of our members are small businesses. None of them are Fortune 500 companies, none of them are listed on the stock market, and none of them would qualify for 'the 1%'. These business owners work virtually non-stop in order to keep the doors open and to provide just enough for their own families, and to provide jobs for their employees. They simply do not have tens of thousands of dollars just lying around that can be spent on wage increases.

"The ignorance displayed by those advocates who seem to think the only reason workers are not paid more is 'corporate greed' on the part of business owners is shocking and insulting, and I am glad that we have a Governor who recognizes the challenges of being an employer and will fight against feel-good legislation that will squeeze business owners out of existence."

NJGCA Associate Director of Government Affairs Eric Blomgren, who attended the Governor's veto ceremony alongside representatives of virtually every industry in the state, added:

"If this bill were to become law, then the Legislature will have doubled the minimum wage in less than ten years. Such a move would be unprecedented, and so too would be the consequences. Our members have reviewed their books and say that on average they will have **to increase the cost of gas by about 10 cents per gallon**. That would come on top of the anticipated 23 cent increase in the gas tax. Not only can small businesses not afford these increases, neither can middle class consumers, who will not be seeing an increase in wages but will have to deal with the increased costs of virtually everything they spend money on."

Risalvato also pointed out: "Let's remember that under this bill, overtime wages will rise to \$22.50 an hour, just to pump gas. There is a reason that it is common to drive in to a gas station and wait behind several cars in front of you, while other pumps are blocked by orange cones. Those orange cones represent an employee that is already unaffordable and therefore not hired. Forcing small businesses to pay higher wages makes it likely, even a necessity, that more orange cones will be seen at gas pumps."

"The State of New Jersey should be working to create policy that will incentivize and encourage small businesses to hire and expand. Small businesses are the backbone of American society, and the gasoline service station industry is a quintessential part of that. I shudder to think what our State economy will look like if a \$15 an hour minimum wage is imposed in New Jersey," Risalvato concluded.

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