

April 13, 2020

The Honorable J.B. Pritzker
Governor of Illinois
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker:

During your briefing of April 9th, you made the comment that “only the large business organizations” have expressed a desire to delay the July 1st increase in the minimum wage. The undersigned represent a significant number of small employers throughout the state and those small employers are all extremely worried about the July 1st wage hike. In fact, employers of all sizes are worried.

We fully recognize that a \$15 minimum wage was one of your primary priorities coming into office. No one is suggesting a repeal. We are, however, strongly recommending a one-year delay.

No one foresaw the pandemic and the economic devastation it has wrought. It is not, as you suggested, ‘a very small raise’. If, in fact, the July 1st increase is not delayed, Illinois employers will experience a 21% increase in 2020. And please remember wages rise for all employees, not just those at minimum wage.

To subject employers to another significant expense at the same time they have had to lay people off, close or operate at an extremely limited capacity, or expend tremendous resources to adapt their operations to the demands of the pandemic, is unreasonable and alarming, especially for employers who have seen their sales significantly reduced or completely eliminated. Many of these employers are wondering how they will be able to reopen let alone afford the July 1st wage increase. Employers are desperately looking for ways to find the liquidity necessary to give them the best shot at re-opening, staying open, and hiring back their employees. Measures and policies must be put in place to recover from this and put people back to work. Postponing this increase is a down payment on what will be needed. Our employers are looking to you for reassurance that the State of Illinois has their back and will support employers of all sizes in opening their doors to welcome employees and customers back. Artificially increasing wages at a time when small business owners are fighting for their livelihoods and those of their employees is no small thing. We would hope that the leaders of our state would understand the precarious position that our members find themselves in. Again, what is being suggested is a one-year delay, no one is suggesting a repeal.

On behalf of employers of all sizes who have been impacted so severely by this epidemic, we are respectfully asking that you reconsider and help give employers the best possible chance to recover. Without them, state and local governments face a dim future.

Sincerely:



Alicia Martin
President
Associated Builders & Contractors, IL Chapter



Gary Manke
Executive Director
Automotive Parts & Service Assn. of Illinois



Jack Lavin
President & CEO
Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce



Kraig Lounseberry
President
Community Bankers Assn. of Illinois



Manish Patel
Member/Manager
Federated Alliance of IL Independent Retailers



Todd C. Maisch
President
IL Chamber of Commerce



Kevin S. Semlow
Director of State Legislation
IL Farm Bureau



Brian Jordan
President
IL Food Retailers Association



Michael Jacobson
President & CEO
IL Hotel & Lodging Association



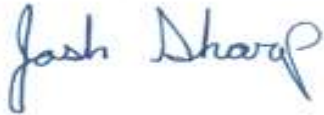
Dan D. Clausner
Executive Director
IL Licensed Beverage Association



J. Barry Johnson
Executive Director
IL Lumber & Material Dealers Association



Mark Denzler
President & CEO
IL Manufacturers' Association



Josh Sharp
Executive Vice President
IL Petroleum Marketers Association




Garth Reynolds
Executive Director
IL Pharmacists Association



Rob Karr
President & CEO
IL Retail Merchants Association



John J. Haka
Managing Director
Midwest Hardware Association



Gary Manke
President
Midwest Southeastern Equipment Dealers Assn.



Mark Grant
IL State Director
National Federation of Independent Business



Christopher Johnson
CEO
North Assn. of Theater Owners of Illinois



Steve Rauschenberger
President
Tooling & Manufacturing Association

Cc:

The Honorable Don Harmon, Senate President

The Honorable Michael J. Madigan, Speaker of the House

The Honorable Bill Brady, Republican Leader of the Senate

The Honorable Jim Durkin, Republican Leader of the House

Dan Hynes, Deputy Governor

Erin Guthrie, Director, DCEO

Anne Caprara, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor

Kristin Richards, Chief of Staff, Senate Democratic Caucus

Jessica Basham, Chief of Staff, House Democratic Caucus

Brian Burian, Chief of Staff, Senate Republican Caucus

Andrew Freiheit, Chief of Staff, House Republican Caucus