In “County Distribution of Washington’s Minimum Wage Jobs,” we discussed the geographical distribution of minimum wage jobs in the state and current proposals to increase the already high minimum wage. The data also show that the accommodation and food services (hotels and restaurants), retail trade, and agricultural sectors would bear the brunt of those proposals.

**Sector Data**

Based on data from the Washington Employment Security Department, of minimum wage full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in King County in 2012, 39.7 percent were in the accommodation and food services sector, 21.6 percent were in the retail trade sector and 0.6 percent were in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. Of minimum wage jobs in the rest of the state, 36.1 percent were in accommodation and food services, 21.6 percent were in retail, and 16.6 percent were in agriculture. Of jobs paying under $12, 16.4 percent were in accommodation and food services, 21.6 percent were in retail, and 16.6 percent were in agriculture. Of jobs paying under $15, 12.7 percent were in accommodation and food services, 20.0 percent were in retail, and 13.2 percent were in agriculture.

Health care and social assistance jobs made up only 4.6 percent of minimum wage jobs in King County and 6.6 percent of minimum wage jobs in the rest of the state. Of King County jobs under $12, they accounted for 12.0 percent; of King County jobs under $15, they accounted for 12.3 percent; of jobs under $12 in the rest of the state, they accounted for 12.3 percent; and of jobs under $15 in the rest of the state, they accounted for 12.7 percent.

**Comment**

An increase of the minimum wage to $12 statewide, as has been proposed in the Legislature, or to $15, as has been proposed in Seattle, would be an especially heavy burden on employers in the accommodation and food services, retail, and agricultural sectors. It would also have a significant impact on health care and social assistance workers.
Chart 1: FTE Jobs at Minimum Wage, King County, 2012. Total FTE employment in King County was 940,597.

- Accommodation and food services: 5,977
- Retail trade: 3,256
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting: 90
- Health care and social assistance: 690
- Administrative, support, waste management, and remediation services: 1,200
- Other: 3,827

Chart 2: FTE Jobs at Minimum Wage, State Excluding King County, 2012. Total FTE employment in the state excluding King County was 1,324,556.

- Accommodation and food services: 19,325
- Retail trade: 10,061
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting: 9,071
- Health care and social assistance: 3,555
- Administrative, support, waste management, and remediation services: 2,287
- Other: 9,228
- Other: 9,228
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<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Total FTE Employment</th>
<th>Minimum Wage FTE Jobs</th>
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*Data cannot be disclosed for confidentiality reasons.*