

# OBIAA 2017 BUSINESS MEMBER SURVEY



**MINIMUM WAGE IMPACTS**

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## ABOUT OBIAA:

OBIAA, since 2001, is the network that represents unique and vibrant BIAs across Ontario. The Association supports and advocates on behalf of its members through the building and nurturing of strong relationships and partnerships. OBIAA is a leader in the development and sharing of information, tools, resources and best practices, and is the ONE voice on common issues.

OBIAA, through its membership, represents, supports and encourages business improvement areas to increase their effectiveness and their contribution to the economic, cultural and social well-being of communities in Ontario.

In 2017, OBIAA's more than 75% of BIAs in Ontario collectively represent:

Over **130** part-time staff and approximately **175** full-time staff

- A combined levy of more than **\$760,000,000** that is spent keeping Ontario's communities vital
- There are more than **60,000** businesses
- A commercial assessment value of **56 Billion**.
- There are approximately **311** BIAs in Ontario.

The first BIA Legislation in the world, was created in 1970 in a partnership with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (the Government of Ontario), Bloor West Village and the City of Toronto. The BIA Legislation is a partnership between the businesses, within a by-lawed boundary, and the Municipality, with monies generated by an additional levy on commercial property owners within the BIA boundaries.

### FAQs:

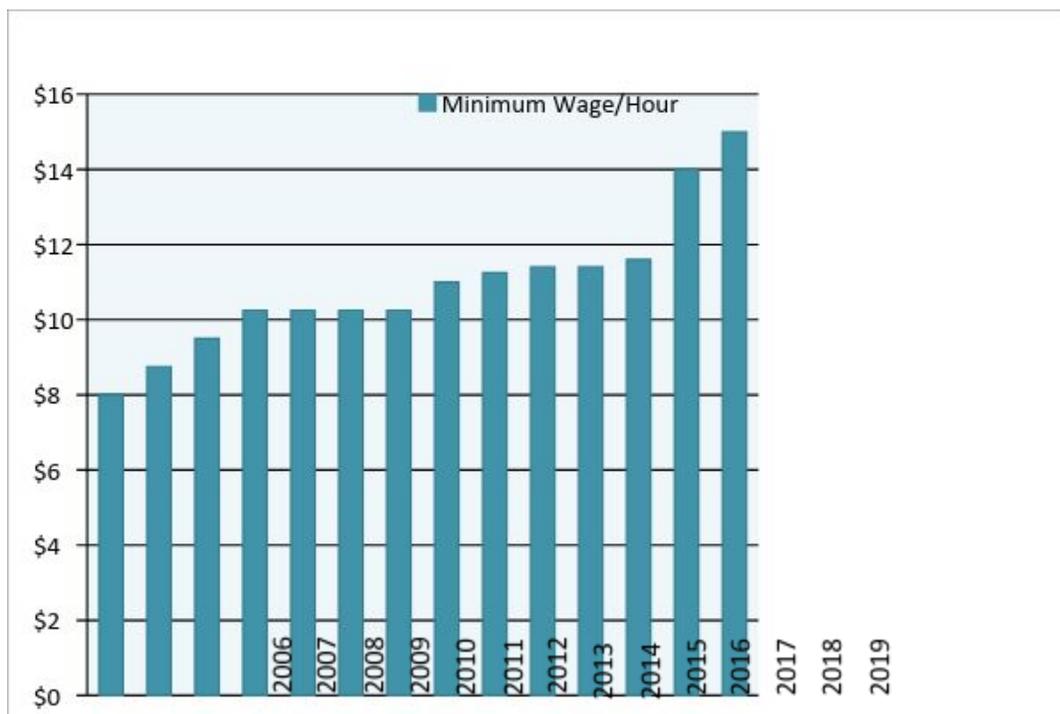
#### Quick Facts about BIAs:

- The first BIA was formed in Bloor West Village in 1970
- BIAs are self-funded Local Boards of Council(s)
- BIAs are governed by the Ontario Municipal Act (Sections 204-216)
- There are 82 BIAs in Toronto
- There are approximately 310 BIAs in Ontario (the largest amount in Canada)
- OBIAA represents more than 75% of Ontario's BIAs through membership
- There are BIAs, BIDs and BIZs across Canada
- The legislation has inspired "Downtown Revitalization" across the world with BIDs, BIAs and BIZs in many countries around the world, including the US, Great Britain, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Singapore, India and China

## BACKGROUND:

On May 31, 2017, the Government of Ontario announced significant changes to the Ontario Employment Standards Act between now and April 1, 2019. As outlined in the Changing Workplaces Review <https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/about/workplace/> all aspects of work in Ontario will be affected, from minimum wages, vacations and emergency leave.

The Canadian Minimum Hours wage in Ontario as charted below is based on [Trading Economics in Canada](#):



Wages will change as per the chart below:

Minimum Wage Categories	Minimum Wage Increases \$/HR			
	Current - Sept 30 2017	Oct 1 - Dec 31 2017	Jan. 1 - Dec 31 2018	Jan 1 - Sept 30 2019
<b>General Minimum Wage</b>	\$11.40	\$11.60	\$14.00	\$15.00
<b>Students under 18*</b>	\$10.70	\$10.90	\$13.15	\$14.10
<b>Liquor Servers</b>	\$9.90	\$10.10	\$12.20	\$13.05

\* who work not more than 28 hr/wk when school is in session, or work during a school break or summer holidays

In addition to minimum wages, nearly all other aspects for work in Ontario will change.



Proposed changes include:

**Equal Pay for Equal Work Provisions** would ensure that casual, part-time, temporary and seasonal employees are paid equally to full-time employees when performing the same job for the same employer.

The proposed amendments would enable employees to request a review of their wages if they believe that they are not receiving equal wages to full-time employees. The employer would have to respond to the request with either an adjustment in pay or a written explanation. If the proposed legislation passes, this proposal would come into force on April 1, 2018

**Scheduling** provisions would set out new rules:

- Employees would have the right to request schedule or location changes after having been employed for three months, without fear of reprisal.
- Employees who regularly work more than three hours per day, but upon reporting to work are given less than three hours, must be paid three hours at their regular rate of pay.
- Employees can refuse to accept shifts without repercussion if their employer asks them to work with less than four days' notice.
- If a shift is cancelled within 48 hours of its start, employees must be paid three hours at their regular rate of pay.
- When employees are "on-call" and not called in to work, they must be paid three hours at their regular rate of pay. This would be required for each 24 hour period that employees are on-call.
- If a collective agreement is made between an employer and a union, the agreement would prevail in place of some of these new rules.

This proposal would come into force on January 1, 2019.

**Public Holiday Pay** rules would simplify the formula for calculating public holiday pay so that employees are entitled to their average regular daily wage. Other elements of the public holiday provisions will also be simplified. This proposal would come into force on January 1, 2018.

**Overtime Pay** employees who hold more than one position with an employer and who are working overtime must be paid at the rate for the position they are working during the overtime period. This proposal would come into force on January 1, 2018

**Paid Vacation** would ensure that employees are entitled to three weeks of paid vacation after five years of service with the same employer. This proposal would come into force on January 1, 2018.

**Paid Emergency Leave (PEL)** changes will ensure that all employees are entitled to 10 PEL days per year, including two paid PEL days. The reasons for taking PEL would also be expanded so that employees experiencing domestic or sexual violence or the threat

of sexual or domestic violence could take the leave. This proposal would come into force on January 1, 2018.

**Physician Notes for Absences** would be prohibited. Employers would no longer be allowed to request a sick note from an employee taking Personal Emergency Leave. This proposal would come into force on January 1, 2018.

**Family Medical Leave** would increase Family Medical Leave from up to 8 weeks in a 26-week period to up to 27 weeks in a 52-week period. This proposal would come into force on January 1, 2018.

**Leave for the Death of a Child and for Crime-Related Disappearance** would create a new, separate leave for child death from any cause for a period of up to 104 weeks. The proposed amendments would also establish a separate leave for crime-related child disappearance for a period of up to 104 weeks. This proposal would come into force on January 1, 2018.

**Penalties for Non-Compliance of the ESA** would increase flexibility around the administrative monetary penalties that Employments Standards Officers can give out to employers that do not comply with the ESA.

The government also intends to amend a regulation under the ESA to increase the maximum administrative monetary penalties for non-compliant employers from \$250, \$500, and \$1000 to \$350, \$700, and \$1500, respectively.

The proposed changes would allow the Director of Employment Standards to publish (including online) the names of individuals who have been issued a penalty, a description of the contravention, the date of the contravention and the amount of the penalty. The legislative proposal would come into force on January 1, 2018.

There are additional provisions and changes as part of the proposed legislation for the update. We have included only those that we believe will have the greatest impact on Downtown Collingwood members. Businesses that are governed by legislation of the Government of Canada are exempt from the Ontario Employment Standards Act changes

Full details can be found at

<https://news.ontario.ca/mol/en/2017/05/proposed-changes-to-ontarios-employment-and-labour-laws.html> or <https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/>

In June 2017, OBIAA, upon receiving numerous calls and emails of concern from our members, conducted a Minimum Wage Increase Survey.

Newsletters were sent out to 400 recipients, which represents 219 member BIAs asking them to forward the survey to their members. Over three weeks 1,055 survey responses were received. The survey is in no way 100% accurate or conclusive and should be accepted as guidelines only.

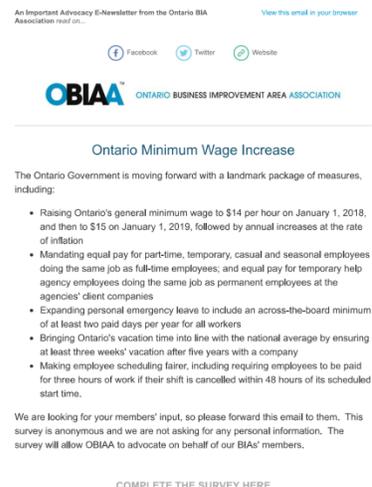
OBIAA's goal was to clearly identify:

- Potential Government offsets or small business support
- Unintended consequences
- Economic Impact Study
- Economic Impact on Small Businesses
- Regional Impacts

As a part of our consultation, we reached out to Minister Flynn, Minister of Labour requesting any Economic Impact Study that the Government of Ontario had undertaken leading up to the Minimum Wage Increase. Unfortunately, we did not receive a response to our request. We also consulted with our Board Liaison from the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth (MEDG) and confirmed our wish to support our small businesses by offering suggestions of potential offsets. We stress our commitment to working with MEDG to mitigate the economic impact that the Minimum Wage (and other recommendations) may bring.

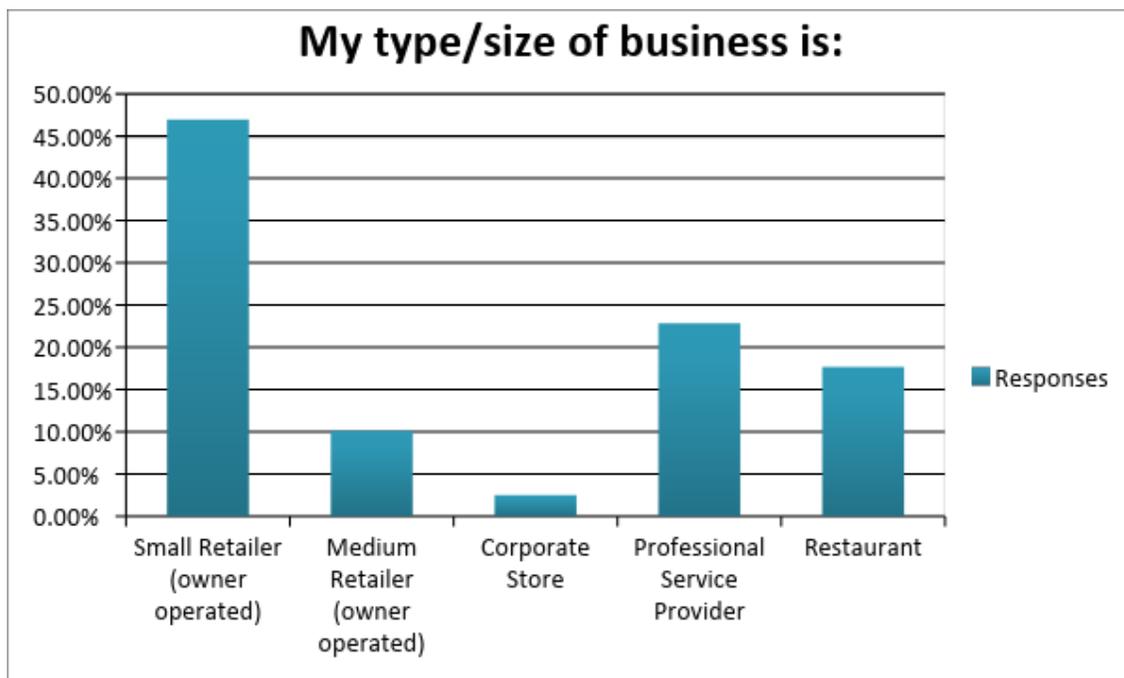
It is our intention to bring this issue, among others, to the Planning, Environment, Resources and Land Deputy Ministers (PERL) in early 2018.

The following is the results of our findings:



**QUESTION 1 – My type/size of business is:**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Small Retailer (owner operated)	46.96%	455
Medium Retailer (owner operated)	10.11%	98
Corporate Store	2.48%	24
Professional Service Provider	22.81%	221
Restaurant	17.65%	171
Other (please specify)		124
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>969</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>86</b>



**QUESTION 2 – How will the minimum wage increase impact your business?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Positive Effect	7.34%	76
Negative Effect	78.28%	811
Don't Know	14.38%	149
Additional Comments		386
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>1036</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>19</b>



**Other included:**

Inn	Entertainment (Bowling Center)	Motel with restaurant & lounge	Residential General Contractor
Artists' Co-operative	Financial Services	Music School	Sewing Machine Sales & Repairs
Bakery	Fitness facility	Non-profit charitable social service agency	Small boat rental business and tour boat operators
Barbershop	Food franchise	Non-Profit restaurant	small business - service
Beauty	Golf Course	Non-Profit retail store	small business
Building, Renovation	Greenhouse and farm	Non-Profit, Charitable Arts	-wholesale
Construction	Hair salon	Payday Loans Store	Small Healthcare Company
Cafe/bakery	Health Club	Personal Grooming	Software Company
Charitable organization	Hotel	Place of Worship	Spa
Cinema	Industrial Sales and Marketing	Private Career College	Travel Agency
Coffee shop/ restaurant	Landlord of commercial-residential properties	Psychology office	Veterinary hospital
Commercial Printer	Law Firm	Summer theatre	Wholesale Lubricants Sales
Construction	Manufacturer	Property management	
Daycare		Radio Station	
Dental Office		Real Estate Brokerage	
Desserts shop			

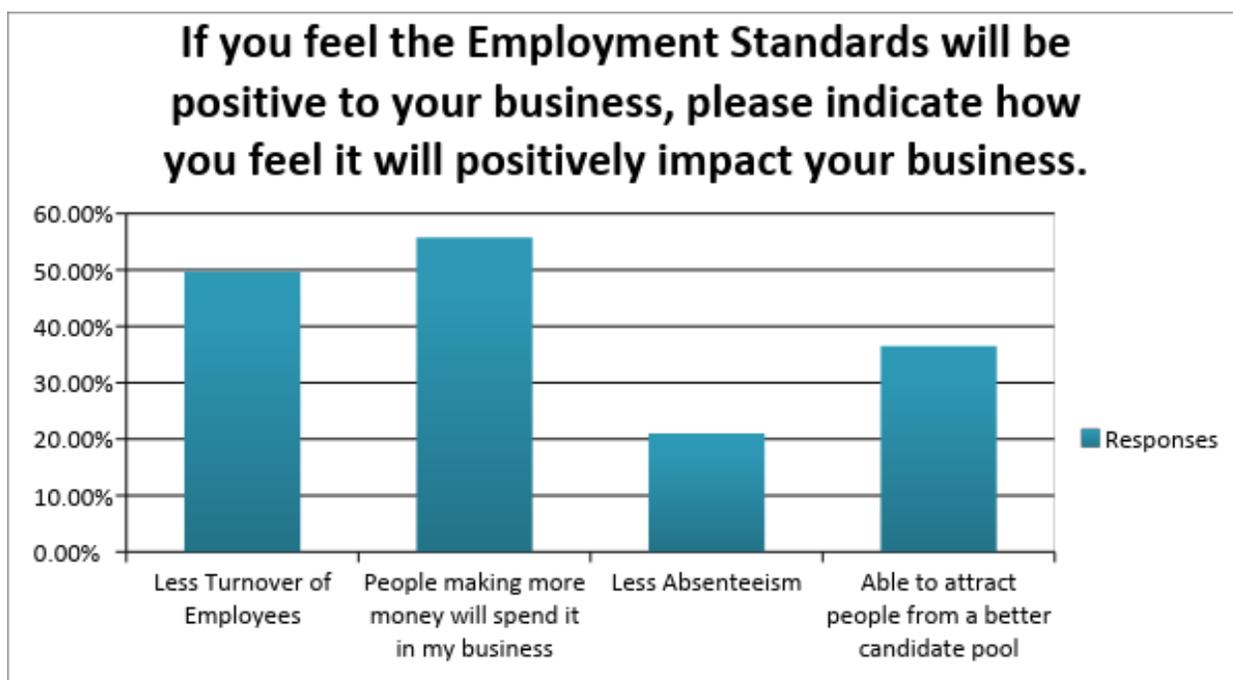
Dog grooming  
Professional Service  
provider

Marketing and  
Promotions  
Mobile service provider

Wholesale Showroom

**QUESTION 3** – If you feel the Employment Standards will be positive to your business, please indicate how you feel it will positively impact your business.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Less Turnover of Employees	49.72%	90
People making more money will spend it in my business	55.80%	101
Less Absenteeism	20.99%	38
Able to attract people from a better candidate pool	36.46%	66
Other (please specify)		172
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>181</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>874</b>



*Here are some comments that we have randomly selected:*

Both - Positive and Negative. Positive because it will make my employees happier, and hopefully less stressed worried about making ends meet, however it is Negative because the government needs to do things to alleviate this added cost. Equal pay goes both ways, business owner, operator, employees, etc.....So employers don't typically have an issue paying more, but government needs to come up with ways to alleviate costs or expenses such as taxes, hydro, EI, WSIB, red tape, etc.....you need to continue to balance a motivated workforce, and entrepreneurship.

While I indicated that I don't know how the Employment Standards will impact my business, I certainly don't see how it will create less absenteeism, or attract a better candidate pool, or for that matter, less employee turnover.

After doing calculations, it seems that the increase in product will only go up 5%, I have a feeling some retailers will take advantage and raise the prices higher than needed and therefore increase their income to cover wages plus more.

**QUESTION 4 – If you feel the Employment Standards will be negative to your business, please indicate how you feel it will negatively impact your business.**

Answer Choices	Responses	
I may have to lay off employees	53.00%	503
I may have to shorten my employees' work hours	66.60%	632
I may need to raise my business' prices?	77.87%	739
Other (please specify)*	36.56%	347
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>949</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>106</b>



In the category of “\*Other” we noted a trend in businesses stating they will reduce benefits, such as parties, incentive programs, health plans and bonuses that would be affected.

*Here are some comments that we have randomly selected:*

We assist people who have intellectual disabilities to find and maintain competitive employment within their community. It is already a very difficult task to find employers willing to hire people who have disabilities. With these impending changes, employers will be forced to hire fewer employees and will require all employees to be proficient in most sectors of the business. Fewer employers will be willing to hire someone who requires some accommodations to their job description. This will make it very difficult for people who have intellectual disabilities to find meaningful employment.

48 hour Shift cancellation notice is not practical when weather determines what work will be done certain days.

I sell Canadian art and fine craft. I provide a venue for varied artists to sell their work, there is no room for raising prices in order to hire someone. I don't make enough to pay myself a minimum wage much less share that with an employee. I think there could be special rules for micro businesses.

I have a seasonal business for 9 months of the year. I'm forced to pay 3 weeks' vacation to full time employees who don't work the whole year. I am currently paying them for two. Our seasonal business with many others work when the climate allows and scheduling would be costly if we have to pay for cancelled work due to bad weather.

We manufacture furniture, upholstery is a dying art, there is no school that promotes this trade. We have to train individuals, which takes up to 3 years to be a self-sufficient upholsterer. It takes approximately 8 months - 1 year of training to receive production in return from an employee. The increase makes training someone very costly. All of our employees once trained receive over \$15.00/hour, but they generally start at \$13.

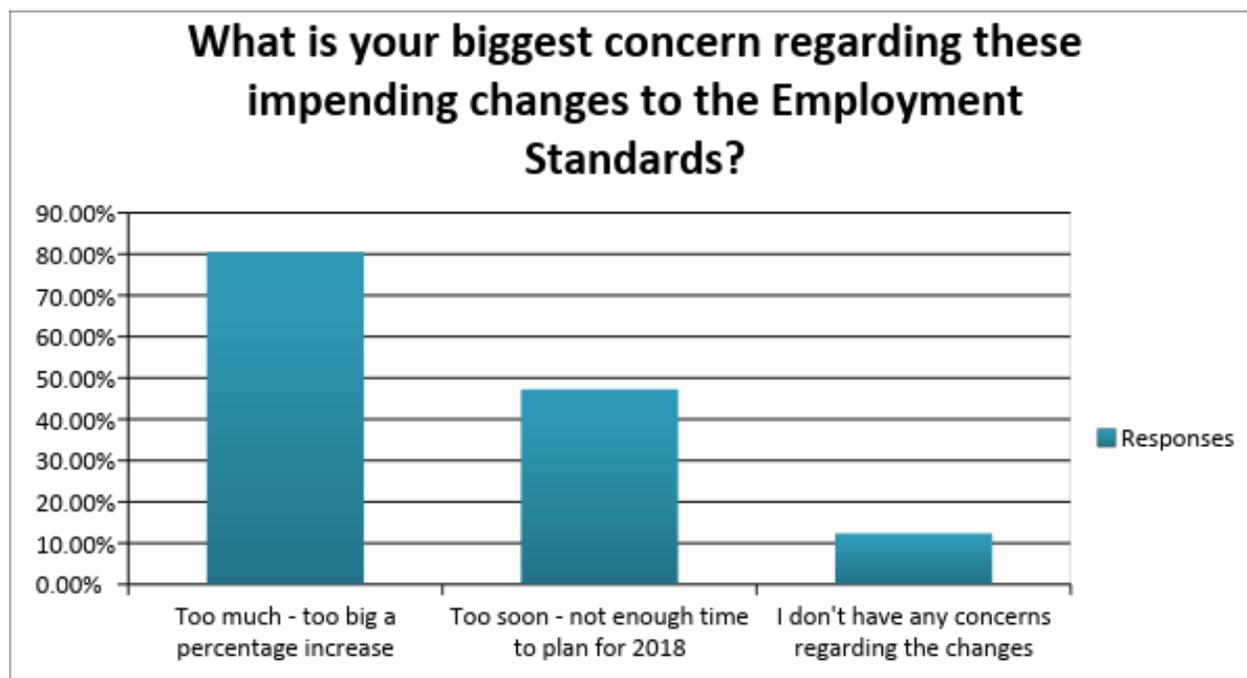
Any small town business struggles to keep the doors open... Increasing cost of staffing eats into any extra there might be... Business owners can't often pay themselves much less pay more for staff and other benefits... I make up for what I can't pay my staff with generosity and flexibility in any way I can...I have a happy staff.

The quality of workers will not improve simply because we're forced to pay them more. As far as I'm concerned, I believe more effort should be put into making people better employees rather than just force employers to pay more for the same poor quality people. If potential employees were more attractive to employers the issue of minimum wage would be irrelevant as employers would end up competing with each other to hire them. In my view, the people who reside at the lowest end of the wage scale will, going forward, simply have a harder and harder time finding any work at all.

At present student rates are too high. I should be allowed to pay them less during training period however long it takes for them to work on their own. Training rates should also apply to adults who have no experience.

**QUESTION 5 – What is your biggest concern regarding these impending changes to the Employment Standards?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Too much - too big a percentage increase	80.54%	807
Too soon - not enough time to plan for 2018	47.21%	473
I don't have any concerns regarding the changes	12.38%	124
Other (please specify)		222
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>1002</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>53</b>



*Here are some comments that we have randomly selected:*

After tax it's only a bump of roughly \$1.60

A more phased in approach over (say) three years is suggested (e.g. \$1, \$1.5, \$1, \$1 for each of 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020).

The bigger picture is getting people to work for a living wage. In our small town it's tough to find people who view working for a wage as better than getting EI or welfare.

Those that are now paid at the proposed new rate will expect increases and will use the new minimums as the justification - so the impact will be much greater than those below the minimum pay but those just at or above will expect higher rates of pay.

I can't answer that I do not have concerns - I think it is a good change, but it does affect my bottom line.

The previous plan of pegged to inflation with rational steady increases was something we could work with and handle gradually. Though costs increasing were a concern, it was manageable.

For my business, it is the longer vacation time that it most problematic as finding a temporary skilled replacement is always hard to do and this will increase the challenge.

This will not help attract better candidates because they will be offered the same amount anywhere they go. Right now, I pay more than minimum wage so I attract better people. Now I won't be able to do that.

48 hour notice for cancelling shifts eliminates the ability to have on-call shifts. Which is crucial for restaurants in order to control labour costs.

I support the increase, but it should have been implemented over a long period...allow small price increases and get the market/customers acclimatized slowly.

This is a bomb shell that hit all of us small business owners. It is hard enough to stay afloat. Based on my current 2017 payroll, which does not reflect my salary nor giving my 2 managers raises, I will see a \$25,000 increase in my overhead. I will have to see an increase in my overall sales of 10% which is absolutely impossible.

Minimum wage increase doesn't solve the problem of low wages, it simply raises the wages of the people who don't need to be making \$15 to flip burgers. If the government wants to truly impact the Employment Standards, they should look at making a minimum wage for full-time employees and ensure there is equitable distribution of full and part time employees at an establishment. I would much rather pay an adult \$15 for working a full-time job than a part-time high school student.

We were not expecting this at all. We now have to plan for the future and this is to be implemented during the slowest time of retail which is after the holidays.

Our employees in large part depend on gratuities, in fact most servers, if not all, work mainly for tips. Their paycheques are a distant second. They feel with an increase of this size to their hourly rate, their gratuities will be severely impacted.

**QUESTION 6** – The Ontario BIA Association (OBIAA) would like to understand how you feel this may affect your business, so that we are able to communicate these concerns and inform the Government from your point of view. My suggestions for off-setting costs to businesses are:

Answers

d 613

*Here are some comments that we have randomly selected:*

Support small business with grants and incentives. It's hard to find extra money but when we have to, it ALL goes to other independent small businesses or employees and they spend it all locally, too. Strong communities with strong local economies are the future. Staff level government wages should be the model for staff level private sector wages.

Do not implement the proposed changes. Instead, foster the growth of SMB. Wages naturally rise in an environment that encourages business growth and investment. As businesses are started and grow, the demand for labour increases - naturally creating competitive pressure to raise wages to secure the talent needed to keep up with growing the business.

There is nothing that the government can do to offset this other than cancel the idea. Increase minimum wage by .50 cents a year and drop all the extras. My top employees that deserve more do get more. Big issue is also employees that are already well above min. want to be increased along with this.

Reduce the minimum wage, create benefits to employers to encourage full time employment, remove benefits to having only part time employment. Reduce energy costs, encourage hiring of new staff, lower taxes.

Has the government opened discussion with private insurers on the Family Medical Leave? Rather than payroll continuation for pennies on dollar to have this included in disability benefits. It would be suggested that a sliding scale as to size of employer in the implementation of the plan in order to prepare the business to afford the changes. Most of these changes are necessary but the province enabled much of the current situation and is addressing it in a manner that is rapid (and pre-election) that will negatively impact a number of individuals. We can only trust it will create more spending because the price of goods and services are going to increase.

This will not cost our business anything - these common-sense policies are already in place at our office

Eventually it will even out. If you advertise that you are paying your employees a living wage and actually do so, more people will come and support your business. No need to raise costs as more can be spent in your stores.

With the high increase all at once, I will have to also increase my services at the same rate. This will hurt my business due to the amount of elderly on a set income who will not benefit from the wage increase due to not working and being on a set pension. To offset the costs, the government should offer a grant for a large percentage of the wage increase per employee to be tax deductible towards the business.

My only option is to increase my rates to help cover the costs, not only employees cost but also the increases my suppliers may need to add due to their increase of expenses for employees. The downfall to an increase of wages is it starts the snowball effect from the top down. My suppliers increase prices to recover costs. I would need to increase my prices to cover my extra costs from my suppliers. Plus the extra costs of employees. Therefore the customer now will have a double increased bill where their increase in salary will not cover the increased prices I would need to do to make my bottom line.

This snowball will happen in most if not all businesses regardless of the type of business. The area my business is located, has been hit hard over the last years. My prices represent the demographic I am in. The wage increase will force me to raise prices and take the gamble I will lose valuable clients that I need to keep my business afloat.

I personally believe these changes are long overdue. It seems that those in power have no idea what the basic living costs are for people, and have been basing the minimum wage on 2 income households. A single person cannot have a decent standard of living on the current minimum wage.

I also feel that full time employees should continue to be paid at a higher rate than part-time, seasonal, casual or subcontracted employees doing the same job. Employees in full time positions generally are more in tune with things that need to be done in the business due to the time allocated to work, and take on more responsibility through osmosis. (ie: a pilot with 1,000 hours of flight time in a year does not have the same experience as a pilot with 500 hours of flight time in a year).

Regarding vacation time, Canada lags far behind in terms of taking care of employees' quality of life. Two week's vacation for a whole year does neither the employee nor the business itself any good, and now that the work force has been shifted to more contract work, part-time positions, and people changing jobs and careers more frequently, vacation hours never get built up to a reasonable level as they did in the past with long term service.

1. Not increasing minimum wage to \$14 an hour by January 2018, I would suggest a much SLOWER increase, maybe \$1 a year to allow businesses time to slowly increase this prices without killing off their business.
2. Not increasing minimum wage to \$14 an hour period.
3. Providing more government grants, with less strings and regulations to small rural business for directly paying staff wages
4. Reducing employer payments for things like CPP, EI, Employer Health Taxes, WSIB
5. Making the wage increase an item for a public vote, on the next election

How is it fair that we continue to push costs onto small business owners and expect them to be able to absorb it? As a business owner investing funds, I should be able to expect a return on the investment which is greater than a \$15/hour wage, however with increases in hydro, minimum wage, etc. I certainly don't always see it. It would be easier for many small business

owners to work for someone else rather than put up with the hassles of owning a business. If this is the case, who will create jobs in Ontario.

Lower service fees (taxes, heat, hydro) do not increase EI contributions, workers comp fees, CPP. Raising minimum wage hurts small mom and pop shops and seasonal tourist locations whom employ students as their first jobs. This increase will stop small business growth because the labour costs are going to be too high. Prices will have to increase and people won't buy!

Wage programs and benefit packages for no sick days = reward for not taking time off other than holidays. Student wage subsidies.

Some larger corporations like Large factories that are making a fortune, big box stores like Walmart etc. maybe have guidelines for them. As a small business I cannot have someone dictate to me how much to give my staff. They work hard and dedicated but how when someone with no experience walks in off the street works for the same amount as a manager. E.g. if manager is getting \$15 and a new person comes in at \$15 with no clue how to make sales, etc. IS THAT FAIR.... I will lose a long term employee unless I pay her \$20 and where do I get that kind of money. Less sales cause people will have to pay more for groceries because as I have said everything goes up. Why are people not seeing in the Gov't will be making lots of money charging more taxes on these increases, and of course they will complain after it goes through. Wages should have a min like \$11.40 but let us do our own increases by performance, accomplishments, sales etc. Larger businesses can afford this not us small business owners. We will continue to see more stores closing and our small town people will travel to the city to shop therefore money will be leaving our community supporting another community. Which is not what we want.

A full economic impact study prior to implementation. Information out of Seattle, San Francisco and Alberta, have confirmed what we knew would happen; prices go up, hours are reduced or eliminated.

Keep minimum wage where it is! We are slowly going out of business between fuel which eats 35% of our income, hydro which is another \$600 a month and wages which take up a whopping 58% of our income! Soon there will be no business owners left to employ the people of Ontario!...then what?

It does not affect my business per se. We already pay a living wage to our employees and believe that every worker deserves that same. In Australia the minimum wage was set at \$15/hour over 10 years ago and it has been of benefit to business and workers alike.

Tax break or payroll reductions break for young employees. With the increase, it seems unlikely we could ever afford to hire first time and/or teenage workers again as their skill set simply won't meet \$15/hour expectations.

I would like to see the government give small businesses relief in other areas. Such as business taxes and hydro costs. Every small business owner knows that their employees are what makes them successful.

The repercussions of this drastic minimum wage increase will trickle down and only hurt the people that have a small business.

Paying \$15 an hour for people to do an entry level job will hurt the economy even more as the government will receive more in taxes from these people. The costs of goods will go up and the actual take home pay of the individual is less than before the increase, therefore making living less affordable than it is now.

Also it will be a 32% wage increase for all my staff, because my Chef will need to be paid more than the sous chef, line cooks more than the dishwasher and so on.

In a business where there is little to no profit we are the ones to be hurt the most.

It is the big corporations that should take this hit and not the small entrepreneurs who employ the community and work very hard to do so.

Suggestion- employee should get a raise in minimum wage as their seniority increases possibly every six months of employment at the same place of employment.

Reduced corporate taxes?

Tax credits for hiring full time employees?

Expanded intern programs?

Subsidized hiring programs?

categorize employees in skilled, unskilled and employed with dependents

Likely more time is needed for businesses to prepare for the additional costs.

Our particular concern has more to do with the lack of skills in the work force. We are more than prepared to pay more if the skills are available.

Greater tax returns for small business and grants for existing business to help with training and development of new employees. It is expenses already training employees in the restaurant industry and will be more difficult at \$15 an hour. There is also high turnover in the industry.

With the minimum wage increase my business will have less to invest in the future of the business. Our future expansion plans will not take place since the possibility for making a profit becomes very difficult. We will have to reduce hours, and change our business model.

We will have to increase our prices. The question is by what percentage?

We are a family run restaurant and run 70% of our business on minimum wage. I have 29 employees which means an increase of \$1000 per week and that does not include the increase my suppliers will implement. How do I offset these costs, I truly don't know. Can I charge \$16 for a burger and still have customers coming in the door?

We plan to reallocate dollar spending in other areas, such as events we pay to attend and marketing we participate in. For example, using less traditional marketing and more social media. Our staffing is the most important aspect to the success of our business, and hiring the right person makes a huge difference for us. We are stronger and get much more out of the right hire vs. spending more in other areas as mentioned above. Paying staff more we see as a positive as they are so key to our success.

Extend the length of time between now and the full \$15/hr increase. Offer credits, similar to the EI small business credit that will reduce the payroll liability. Or, don't plan to increase to \$15/hr and just move minimum wage up with inflation each year. By increasing minimum wage, the government is devaluing all the other jobs in Ontario. Those, such as my husband, who earn \$22/hour, will not see a similar \$3.60 pay increase, yet all other costs are going to increase. Therefore, we are going to be spending more on everyday items but earning the same. It is going to offset all the gains our economy has made.

Our business only employs people over the minimum wage (MW). Given the large percentage increase in MW, we will be forced to increase our wages more than normal. We unlike some business can control our pricing. Some business(farmers, some restaurants) do not have this option. People will be laid off, hours cut back, some will go out of business. Those who currently make more than MW, and fixed income people(seniors) will have their purchasing power deteriorate as their income will go up by an amount less than price increases.

Give us more time, i.e. gradual increase spread over many years versus the big jump up at once, this will allow us to plan and gradual increase wages with increased program fees (we operate as a non-profit)

Labour laws are quickly becoming quite onerous. I have already cut down on number of staff, and concentrating their hours to try and decrease overhead costs. I feel like I'm losing control of my own business. I'm encouraging my children to NOT continue in my field because of stress that I'm experiencing as a DIRECT result of recent (past 5 years or so, and getting much worse) government labour laws, and taxation issues.

I think before the government gives money to profit making businesses they should look at how it impacts on non-profit charitable agencies.

It is too much too fast, such a massive increase (nearly 33%) is absurd over such a short amount of time. I have absolutely no problem with the minimum-wage being raised to \$15 per hour, but it should be done in very small increments as it always has been in the past.

With the high increase all at once, I will have to also increase my services at the same rate. This will hurt my business due to the amount of elderly on a set income who will not benefit from the wage increase due to not working and being on a set pension. To offset the costs the government should offer a grant for a large percentage of the wage increase per employee to be tax deductible towards the business.

Where do I start.... Subsidize small business wages or revamp the employment standards for small business and part time unskilled employees based on revenue and expenses vs. large companies and full time employees with a skillset and with huge revenue streams and large profits. Big box stores will not fit into our little BIA spaces...  
I have customers who tell me almost every day "thank you for being here!" I don't have the heart to tell them it may not be for much longer....

Costs to businesses are not the concern of the provincial government. Their responsibility is to the people of Ontario. Owning a business is a privilege, and increases to minimum wage do not

pose a threat to economic viability of already proven business models. The government is not responsible for propping up businesses whose profit margins are so tight that they cannot pay their employees a living wage.

Eventually it will even out. If you advertise that you are paying your employees a living wage and actually do so, more people will come and support your business. No need to raise costs as more can be spent in your stores.

Has the government opened discussion with private insurers on the Family Medical Leave? Rather than payroll continuation for pennies on dollar to have this included in disability benefits. It would be suggested that a sliding scale as to size of employer in the implementation of the plan in order to prepare the business to afford the changes. Most of these changes are necessary but the province enabled much of the current situation and is addressing it in a manner that is rapid (and pre-election) that will negatively impact a number of individuals. We can only trust it will create more spending because the price of goods and services are going to increase.

This will not cost our business anything - these common-sense policies are already in place at our office

Support small business with grants and incentives. It's hard to find extra money but when we have to, it ALL goes to other independent small businesses or employees and they spend it all locally, too. Strong communities with strong local economies are the future. Staff level government wages should be the model for staff level private sector wages.

There is nothing that the government can do to offset this other than cancel the idea. Increase minimum wage by .50 cents a year and drop all the extras. My top employees that deserve more do get more. Big issue is also employees that are already well above min. want to be increased along with this.

Reduce the minimum wage, create benefits to employers to encourage full time employment, remove benefits to having only part time employment. Reduce energy costs, encourage hiring of new staff, lower taxes.

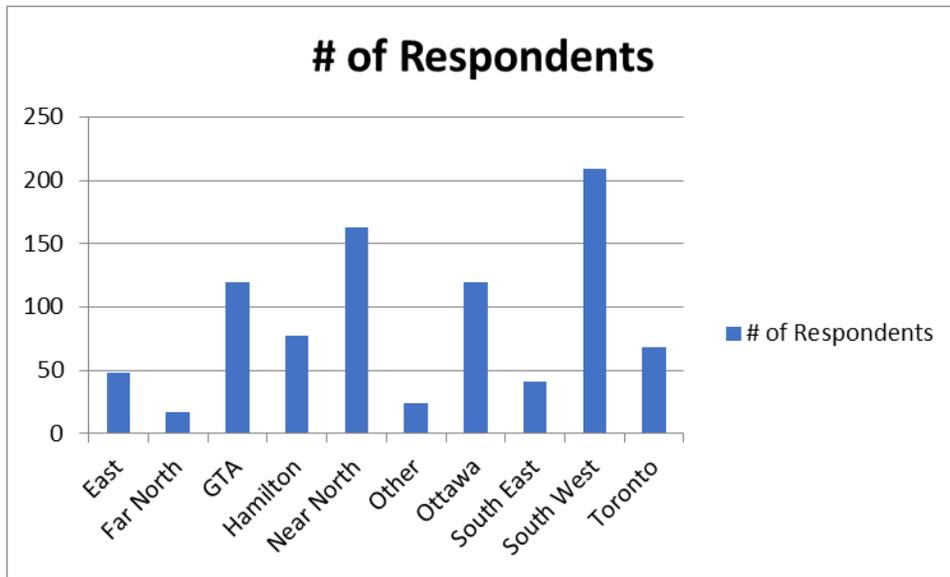
I am a small independent store owner competing against box stores. I already work six days a week with part-time on weekends. I will either lay staff off and I work seven days or close the business.

Lower small business tax rates equivalent amount to increase in payroll to help small businesses.

Large businesses can absorb it but small ones will struggle. And remember 80% of Canadians are employed by SME's without deep pockets.

**QUESTION 7 – Which BIA is your business/property located in?**

Region	# of Respondents
East	48
Far North	17
GTA	120
Hamilton	77
Near North	163
Other	24
Ottawa	120
South East	41
South West	209
Toronto	68
Unknown	168
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## Observations and Conclusions

*What can be done to mitigate the fears and concerns as expressed by Ontario's small businesses? How can the Government provide assistance, specifically to the Small to Medium Business?*

In reviewing this survey, there were a number of suggestions that the Government of Ontario could review, and with OBIAA's assistance, implement.

As a result of the survey, comments that focused on providing offsets to Small and Medium Business regarding the proposed 32% Minimum Wage increase, major themes presented themselves, they include:

- compensate business on employee benefits
- equalize taxes
- exempt small businesses
- extend time
- Foster growth of small & medium businesses instead
- funding non-profit businesses
- grants for hiring apprentices
- HST Rebates incentives to hire students
- increase HST ITC
- lower assessments
- lower hst
- lower income tax for lower income families
- lower taxes
- lower taxes for small businesses
- realistic sliding wage scale
- reduce income tax
- reduce or incentivize source deductions
- reduce property taxes
- reduce taxes
- small business considerations
- small business investment strategies
- small business subsidy
- subsidize if hiring a PWD
- tax break for young employees
- tax credits
- wage subsidy program

The strongest messages we heard from our BIA membership, through this survey, is the need for a 'slow down' on the implementation of the \$15 minimum wage increase, coupled with providing subsidies and consideration to small and non-profit businesses.

OBIAA is pleased to present the results of our findings. Our goal is to strengthen small and medium sized businesses that represent the majority of our BIAs. We also wish to assist the Government in the roll out of Bill 148 (Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act) and urge the Province

to take into account some of the issues and suggestions made by our small and medium businesses that would encourage the very businesses who are the backbone of Ontario's economy.