



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

July 24, 2020

Governor's Veto Message Regarding House Bill 731

By the authority vested in me, pursuant to part II, Article 44 of the New Hampshire Constitution, on July 24th, 2020, I have vetoed House Bill 731.

In case after case across the country, we have seen that artificial increases in the minimum wage have negative unintended consequences on the very workers that those policies are designed to support. Workers often have reduced take-home pay as their hours are reduced or their jobs are eliminated. At the same time, prices to consumers become inflated as employers struggle to balance new government mandates. It is important to remember that a law can force an employer to pay a minimum wage but it cannot force an employer to hire or retain a worker at that wage, or to continue offering the same number of hours to that worker.

This problem is only exacerbated by the economic situation caused by COVID-19. Now is exactly the wrong time to pursue policies that will reduce the chances of Granite Staters being able to get back to work and that will further hinder our employers who are already struggling in this global pandemic. This bill would have meant fewer jobs and fewer available hours for our workers who are unemployed or underemployed. It would mean our employers who are fighting for survival would have one more burden placed on their backs as they try to recover.

In our current economic environment, the greatest burden would fall squarely on entry level workers, who need job skills to advance in their careers. Raising the minimum wage would create a barrier for these new workers, as well as those re-entering the job market from the criminal justice system at a time when unemployment remains high. That is an unfair burden that no one should place on these individuals.

New Hampshire's economy will bounce back by following the formula of success we have pursued over the last 3 years: increase opportunities for our employers and workers while removing barriers that stifle our growth. We must support the New Hampshire Advantage that helped us have among the lowest poverty, unemployment rates, and highest wages in the country prior to COVID-19.

For the reasons stated above, I have vetoed House Bill 731.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris T. Sununu".

Christopher T. Sununu
Governor