



State of Connecticut

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Honored Chairs and Ranking Members of the Labor Committee,

I would like to offer this article as testimony today. It ran in the Hartford Courant last year regarding how one of Connecticut's family owned historic landmark, Quassy Amusement Park would be affected by a raise in the minimum wage.

Quassy Stands To Lose If Minimum Wage Rises Even 50-Cent Hike Could Cost Over \$150K, Owner Says March 20, 2012 | Rick Green

If it is our government policy to help teenagers and college kids earn more on summer vacation and at after-school jobs, then raising the minimum wage to \$9.25 per hour might be a good idea.

Half of all minimum wage earners, according to federal statistics, are 25 or under, so this would directly benefit young people.

Of course, that's if there are jobs available for them.

Because while it might be fashionable to say raising the minimum wage helps the working folks, it also hammers the just-barely-making-it businesses that hire them. That's a strange message for Connecticut to be sending, just as the state is showing signs of emerging from a long economic nap and looking for small businesses to fuel a recovery.

"It would hurt us bad. I'm competing against New York and Massachusetts, where the minimum wage is a lot less," said George Frantzis, whose family has owned the 104-year-old Quassy Amusement Park in Middlebury for 80 years.

Quassy is to amusement parks what your neighborhood hardware store is to Wal-Mart or Home Depot: small, quirky and locally owned. Located on Lake Quassapaug, its affordable and retro, the kind of place that's not really so different from when my mother went there as a kid in the 1930s. It's precisely the sort of Connecticut institution legislators should be worried about preserving — instead of driving closer to the brink with a new law that scores points for politicians but does little to help the state.