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## **POSITION STATEMENT**

### **Minimum Wage Initiative**

*The SouthCoast Chamber is a non-profit business advocacy and economic development organization. It has a diverse membership base of 1,000 businesses – primarily small and medium size - in the SouthCoast region of Massachusetts. This policy position is intended to serve as guidelines for the Chamber’s Government Affairs efforts and has been reviewed and approved by the Chamber’s Government Affairs Committee and Board of Directors.*

**Adopted: 12/14/2017**

The SouthCoast Chamber and its Board of Directors oppose and do not support the proposed Minimum Wage Initiative for the state of Massachusetts.

This initiative, if passed, would increase minimum wage from the current \$11 per hour to \$15 per hour (in \$1 per year increments for the next four years). This new proposal would also alter tipped employee wages from the current \$3.75 per hour to \$9.00 per hour (over the same four-year period).

Effective upon reaching the ceiling limits in each category, increases in minimum wage would be tied to the “Consumer Price Index” (CPI). Within this initiative is a separate provision that deems all family child-care providers as employees of the state Department of Early Education and Care for the purposes of the minimum wage law and would require the Attorney General to determine rates substantially equivalent to the minimum wage for them.

If this initiative were to pass, our organization, however, would be interested in engaging in dialogue with our state lawmakers about establishing a separate minimum wage mechanism for young adults between the ages of 15-21 years old (students, mostly part time employees) so that retailers, restaurants and all other service-related industries would not be dealt the potential negative financial impact of this initiative.

In the up-coming months, our organization and its Board of Directors hope that state lawmakers take the time to contemplate the negative financial impacts of what this minimum wage initiative will have on their business constituency.

Please contact Ronald Ellis, Chair of the SouthCoast Government Affairs Committee at (508) 999-5231 with any questions regarding this policy position.

*The SouthCoast Chamber is a private, non-profit business association based in the City of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Chartered in 1885, the Chamber serves nearly 1,000 member businesses of all sizes from virtually all industries in the ten communities of New Bedford, Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Freetown, Mattapoisett, Marion, Rochester, Wareham, and Westport. The Chamber supports and promotes the local business community through leadership in public advocacy, education, networking, information, and community development.*

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