

Session 2, St. Paul Minimum Wage Input Session

submitted by Tracy Nordstrom, table facilitator

- First Question: Neighborhood

West Side

Inver Grove Heights, grew up in MacGroveland

Como Park

Mpls

Ramsey Hill

What brings you here?

Server – friends and family are in full service restaurants

Here to learn – mom worked 2 jobs while I was growing up, always in restaurants mostly as server.

Server

Work at Metro State University, employer, meeting host (Metro State Pres Arthur)

- Second Question: Opportunities/Challenges

Litmus test, comparing St. Paul to Mpls – we are different cities

St. Paul is pragmatic/community oriented, so we can do it differently than Mpls.

Opportunity for nuance in our ordinance – careful to mind unintended consequences

Opportunity to raise more boats with minimum income

Challenge: “First, do no harm” Do what is best for the MOST number of citizens

Opportunity for rich conversations, eventual agreement

Challenge – Tip credit/penalty – a minefield. Make sure big business doesn't co-opt needs of lower wage workers. Lower wage workers deserve a larger/fuller voice.

Question: How long will the phase in take?

Opportunity: improve the economy in St. Paul

Challenge: effort to help citizens understand/explain the process; communication is key

Opportunity: Continue the conversation AFTER implementation, continue to re-tweak, re-frame as we go. Minneapolis implemented an annual assessment that included the full community.

- **Third Question: How to move forward?**

Suggestion: Restaurants should include language on menus/invoices about the wage increase so customers understand they are paying a fuller cost for the true service

Challenge: perception of Us vs. Them – don't politicize the issue, it is not a binary solution

Continue to include individual stories, be mindful of who is conducting research and providing data

Fairness must be a driving force

Listen to workers and those it impacts most

Would like St. Paul to get to \$15/hour FASTER to get more folks out of poverty sooner

Consider inflation as St. Paul implements (\$15 today, will not be enough in, say 7 years)

\$15 in St. Paul is different than \$15 in Seattle or Los Angeles. Make sure data/info is correct and applicable to St. Paul

Some say market forces are already pushing wages up, that doesn't account for future downturns

Consider impact of one city (St. Paul) having the minimum, next to community that doesn't (Woodbury, Eagan, etc)

Remember dire predictions don't always come true – continue to evaluate and be realistic, be willing to adjust

Disagreement about WHO should receive the wage. Our table had supporters of EVERYONE receiving it, but not with tip credit/tip penalty. This is the policy difference that divided participants.