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Insurance

Governor Deval Patrick signed legislation to increase the minimum wage in increments to \$11 per hour by 2017. The law also lowers unemployment insurance costs.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • Jun. 26, 2014

Over the past few years, several states and cities have increased the minimum wage, from Seattle going to \$15, to less hearty increases in New Jersey, Oregon, Arizona, Florida, Connecticut, California, Minnesota and even West Virginia.

Now Massachusetts has joined that list, with Governor Deval Patrick signing legislation to increase the minimum wage in increments to \$11 per hour by 2017. This will be the highest state minimum wage, but will be significantly less than Seattle's.

The minimum wage increase also lowers unemployment insurance costs for employers, raises safety protections for some workers, and makes the multi-agency task force charged with combating the underground economy into a permanent agency.

“Raising the minimum wage brings a little relief to the working poor, many of whom do jobs we could not live without and who recycle money right back into the economy,” said Governor Patrick. “By signing this bill, we show the Nation that opportunity can and must be spread outward, not just upward. I thank the Legislature for their important work in reaching this milestone.”

“A 38 percent pay raise means a lot to low-wage workers who may have to work several jobs just to put food on the table,” said Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Rachel Kaprielian. “Massachusetts is leading the way in bringing them closer to earning a paycheck they and their families can live on.”

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