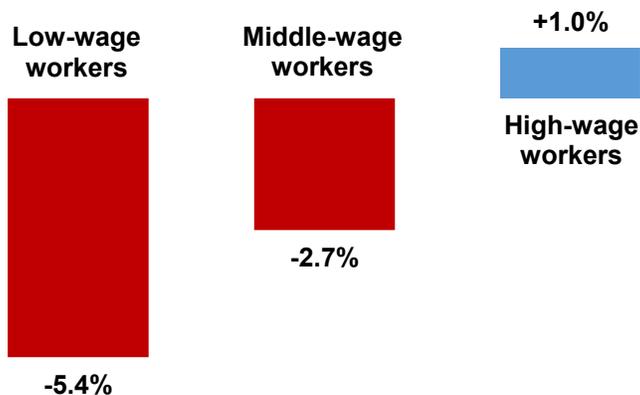


Low- and Middle-Wage Workers Lose Ground During Economic Recovery

Low- and middle-wage Oregon workers have seen their paychecks shrink in the economic upswing following the end of the Great Recession. This decline in wages during a period of economic expansion is one more reason why Oregon lawmakers should significantly increase the state's minimum wage.¹

Low- and middle-wage workers lose ground during economic expansion

(2009 to 2014 change in wages for Oregon workers at 20th, 50th and 80th percentiles)



Figures in 2014 dollars adjusted for inflation using CPI-U-RS.
Source: OCPP analysis of Current Population Survey data.

As the economy expanded from 2009 to 2014, low-wage workers saw their wages decline by more than 5 percent, after adjusting for inflation.² Over the same growth period, middle-wage workers also saw their wages decline by nearly 3 percent, while high-wage workers saw their inflation-adjusted wages rise by 1 percent.

While low- and middle-wage workers lost ground, the Oregon economy expanded by nearly 13 percent.³

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Significantly increasing Oregon's minimum wage would help lower-paid workers share in the economic gains they have helped produce.

A View of the State of Working Oregon is a series of occasional OCPP fact sheets explaining Oregon's economy from the perspective of working families.

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Endnotes

¹ “Low-wage” refers to workers earning at the 20th percentile, meaning those workers earning more than the bottom fifth of wage earners. “Middle-wage” refers to workers earning at the 50th percentile, or median, meaning those workers earning more than the bottom half of workers. “High-wage” refers to workers earning at the 80th percentile, meaning those workers earning more than the bottom four-fifths of workers.

² OCPP analysis of Current Population Survey data. All figures in 2014 dollars adjusted for inflation using CPI-U-RS.

³ OCPP analysis of Bureau of Economic Analysis data.