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Minimum wage needs to be better addressed in U.S.

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Recently, there has been a lot of discussion surrounding minimum wage. I am not here to argue that minimum wage should be raised or lowered, but it is interesting to see how minimum wage affects the United States population.

Minimum wage is often associated with high school teenagers who are working part time. However, the Economic Policy Institute did some research to disprove these theories. The findings were astounding to me: “88 percent of workers who would be affected by raising the minimum wage are at least 20 years old, and a third of them are at least 40 years old.”

Is it possible for a person working full-time — possibly with a family — to support themselves on minimum wage? After working 40 hours a week at minimum wage, I feel qualified to say that it is nearly impossible.

Minimum wage is currently at \$7.25. There are proposals to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 by 2015. Those working 40 hours a week at our current minimum wage make a little over \$1,000 a month. With the proposed increase, monthly income goes up to \$1,600. That \$600 can be the difference between missing a rent payment and having a little extra for groceries.

Although minimum wage affects everyone, women and minorities are especially impacted. Chron.com recently wrote an article on minimum wage and looked closely at minorities, stating, “some experts suggest that minimum wages harm the very minority populations they were designed to support.” It is ironic that minimum wage, which is designed to help the U.S. population receive their just pay, is in fact harming the public.

There are plenty of legitimate arguments about why a raise in minimum wage would not fix any of our current problems. The CATO Institute claims that, “As government raises the minimum wage, it prices people out of the market.” This is a very realistic view and is a possible consequence of raising minimum wage. Many think that a 40 percent increase in minimum wage would cause more problems. These facts unfortunately put me in a position where I cannot say

that raising minimum wage would solve many of our problems. However, I do feel that it is an important conversation to have.