

Modest success with minimum wage legislation

The membership of the Chamber overwhelmingly opposed the minimum wage proposal (70%/30%) and the Chamber took a position that the increase as proposed would be detrimental to small businesses and the community in general.

While the Governor's budget that was passed by the Legislature contains an increase in the minimum wage to \$9.00 an hour, we can take some solace that our voice was heard in the final legislation.

First, the increase is phased in over three years beginning in January of 2014. This somewhat mitigates the huge impact of a 24% increase that was originally proposed/passed by the Assembly.

Second, the increase is not indexed as proposed/passed by the Assembly. Automatic escalation would have resulted in an even more onerous burden to small businesses, not-for-profits and seasonal employers.

Third, there is a provision for some tax relief (in the form of a deduction) to employers of young employees (16 to 19) that should benefit seasonal operations such as our own Darien Lake Amusement Park.