

# The Manatee Chamber Opposes Amendment 2

## What It Means to Our Business Community

On the 2020 General Election ballot, Floridians will be asked to vote on six constitutional amendments. One of those, Amendment 2, proposes to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. This amendment would make Florida the only state to constitutionally mandate a \$15 minimum wage and would negatively impact job growth, limit opportunities for entry-level workers, and increase consumer prices. All of this with the very real potential to close the doors of many of our area small businesses.

With a mission focused on building a positive businesses environment while enhancing our community's quality of life, the Manatee Chamber supports economic opportunity and self-sufficiency for all Floridians. However, this constitutional mandate will harm the very individuals that supporters claim to be helping. Under this mandate, businesses will face increasingly difficult decisions that will result in job losses, reduced employee hours, and increased consumer prices – all negatively impacting our most vulnerable populations. According to the Florida Chamber, this mandate will jeopardize more than 500,000 training wage jobs for young people, seniors, and those looking for entry-level positions to gain new skills. 80% of our members employ 25 or fewer workers and we remain concerned about the disproportionate impact and extra costs this mandate will impose on these small employers, including small family and entrepreneurial businesses.

This "one size fits all" mandate applies to all employers in Florida – there is no carve-out to address tipped employees (the majority of our hospitality sector) nor part-time or incentive-

based wage earners. Employers need the ability and flexibility to make workforce and operational adjustments, especially in times of economic downturn. In thinking about the economic stressors on our local tourism-driven industries of 2017's hurricanes and 2018's red tide disaster, imagine almost doubling employee base wage expenses for restaurants and bars or a sporting event employing part-time workers that, at this point, are just trying to hold on long enough to begin recovering from the economic damage caused by the coronavirus.

In Florida, we have long discussed what should and should not be incorporated into the Florida Constitution, a document established to outline the structure and function of government. Over the years, our Constitution has been amended to include topics well beyond structure with an almost impossible path to later correct unintended consequences. If passed, this amendment, which negatively impacts some residents, employees, industries, and businesses more than others, will remain in the Florida Constitution with almost no recourse for adjustments or corrections.

Adding this new mandate on local businesses is the wrong way to work towards economic opportunity and self-sufficiency for all Floridians caught in the cycle of generational poverty.

Instead of a constitutional mandate, we should come together to ensure there's a universal path to prosperity through job training, skills development, and economic opportunities that result in careers paying well above the minimum wage.

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**October 19 - November 1**

Early voting sites  
open from  
8:30 AM to 6:30 PM

**October 24**

Deadline to request  
a vote-by-mail  
ballot to be  
mailed to you

**November 3**

General Election  
polls open from  
7:00 AM to 7:00 PM

**November 3**

All vote-by-mail  
ballots must be  
received by the  
Supervisor of  
Elections  
by 7:00 PM

