

WASHINGTON--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--The [National Retail Federation](#) issued the following statement from President and CEO

[Matthew Shay](#)

in response to the announcement expected in tonight's State of the Union address that President Obama will sign an executive order increasing the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour for workers on new government contracts and ask Congress to approve the same increase for all workers:

"If you want to create minimum opportunities, then raise the minimum wage. We welcome the president's focus on the economy and jobs, but a minimum wage hike runs counter to that goal. Raising the minimum wage would place a new burden on employers at a time when national policy should be focused on removing barriers to job creation, not creating new regulations or mandates. It's simple math – if the cost of hiring goes up, hiring goes down.

"Fewer than 5 percent of hourly workers are paid the minimum wage. It's really a starting wage that allows teen-agers or others with little job experience to enter the workforce. A mandated hike in labor costs would negatively impact businesses that employ people in entry-level jobs and ultimately hurt the people it is intended to help. This isn't economic theory – when the minimum wage went up in 2009, half a million part-time workers lost their jobs. That's a risk our economy can't afford to take."

NRF is the world's largest retail trade association, representing discount and department stores, home goods and specialty stores, Main Street merchants, grocers, wholesalers, chain restaurants and Internet retailers from the United States and more than 45 countries. Retail is the nation's largest private sector employer, supporting one in four U.S. jobs – 42 million working Americans. Contributing \$2.5 trillion to annual GDP, retail is a daily barometer for the nation's economy. NRF's [This is Retail](#) campaign highlights the industry's opportunities for life-long careers, how retailers strengthen communities, and the critical role that retail plays in driving innovation.

www.nrf.com