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Compromise On State's Minimum Wage

(AP) - Legislative negotiators have agreed on a bill raising Kansas' lowest-in-the-nation minimum wage.

The compromise drafted Wednesday raises the wage to \$7.25 an hour in January 2010 from its present \$2.65. The federal minimum wage is \$6.55 and will increase to \$7.25 in July.

The House had backed a provision to allow the Kansas Department of Labor to raise the state's wage whenever the federal government increases its wage. But House and Senate negotiators rejected the idea to preserve legislative oversight.

Negotiators kept a House provision allowing employers to pay \$4.25 an hour to workers under 20 during their first 90 days on the job.

The state estimates that between 17,000 and 20,000 Kansans fall under the state's wage, out of about 1.4 million workers.

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