

## **Minimum Wages & Burien Local Economy**

### *Facilitator Report for the Burien Business and Economic Development Partnership*

#### **Executive Summary**

In 2021, the Burien City Council charged the Burien Business and Economic Development Partnership (BEDP) with the task of investigating whether a local minimum wage should be levied on large businesses. Minimum wages are a tool local policy makers may consider to enhance the work conditions and economic development of their jurisdiction. This research brief summarizes the four BEDP workshop sessions that grappled with the question of whether Burien should implement a local minimum wage. The brief concludes with recommendations for how the Burien City Council should move forward, including a proposal for community engagement.

#### **Introduction**

Minimum wages have become an increasingly popular tool at the disposal of local policy makers. To date, nearly 100 cities and 29 states have raised the minimum wage in their jurisdiction. Yet for any individual city, the goals and the unintended consequences of such a policy will be unique to the policy design, and the city's demographic and employment composition.

As a small city of 52,000, Burien boasts a thriving restaurant and hospitality industry and is the home of many small businesses and a robust immigrant community. These features are important when considering a minimum wage policy as minimum wages disproportionately affect workers in the food and hospitality industry, as well as immigrant communities and young workers.

This report is a summary of the process undertaken by the BEDP to answer city council's request. To inform their discussion, the BEDP hired a consultant to research the demographic and economic landscape of Burien, using information on Burien's demographic and industry composition from the U.S. Census *American Community Survey* and the Washington State Unemployment Insurance Records. The consultant also facilitated four discussions about considering a local minimum wage in Burien, sharing her expertise on the academic evidence and compiling sentiments and suggestions from the BEDP.

The report is structured in the following manner: Section 2 and 3 provide insight into Burien's demographic and economic landscape. The benefits and challenges of a higher minimum wage in Burien are detailed in Section 4 as it relates to employers, workers and the Burien community. Section 4 also discusses the impact of policy design on implementing a higher minimum wage. Section 5 summarizes recommendations made by BEDP including suggestions for outreach to community members to gather more information on how a minimum wage might impact them. Section 6 concludes with a discussion of limitations and offers some suggestions for further exploration.

## The City of Burien

To begin to understand the potential impacts of a labor policy on a locality, it's important to understand the demographic and economic landscape. The subsequent sections detail the residential and employment make up of Burien.

To understand how the residents of Burien compare to other regions in the state, Table 1 presents demographic information for Burien, and Washington state in 2020. Relative to the state of Washington, Burien has a substantially larger immigrant community. Nearly 25 percent of Burien residents were foreign born, a fact which is also reflected in the larger share of Asian and Latino residents (12.9 and 23.8 percent compared to 9.6 and 13 percent in Washington, respectively) and the share of households who speak a language other than English at home (36.6 percent).

Cities with large immigrant communities are distinct for several reasons. First, there are often more workers in their prime working age, which is reflected by the lower share of older adults in Burien. Second, due to language barriers, administrative burden, and fear of deportation, immigrant communities often have lower levels of education, lower levels of health insurance coverage, and lower wages and income. Relative to Washington State, Burien has a lower share of residents with a high school education by 9.1 percentage points and a lower share of residents with a college degree by 8.3 percentage points. Moreover, 12.5 percent of Burien residents lack access to healthcare, compared to only 7.7 percent of Washington residents. Given how intimately healthcare and work are tied together, ensuring that policies in Burien do not rupture the already precarious nature of healthcare is particularly important.

Finally, immigrant communities tend to be employed in low-wage work. This is reflected in the income estimates shown in Table 1: Burien households earn \$6,700 less in income relative to Washington households and have a higher poverty rate. To the extent that Burien residents work in Burien, and the large share of immigrant populations that tend to be employed in low-wage work, Burien needs to be mindful that any employment passed will affect a disproportionate share of their residents.<sup>1</sup> Policies that provide more economic security, thus should be passed with a robust amount of knowledge of how these policies may affect the immigrant community.

While many depictions of minimum wage workers are of teenagers working their first job, this is not often the case. An analysis on the demographic make-up of minimum wage workers in Washington state in 2012 found that 89 percent of minimum wage workers in Washington are at least 20 years old; 45 percent work at least 35 hours per week and 18 percent of Washington children have at least one parent to works a job affected by the minimum wage (Economic Policy Institute, 2012). In short, minimum wage workers are often adults working full-time to support themselves or their family.

---

<sup>1</sup> A 2015 report notes that Burien draws in 5 percent of workers from outside the Soundside region, suggesting that some residents from Burien may also work elsewhere. Community engagement can help in gaining and understanding of how many Burien workers are also Burien residents.

## **Burien Workforce**

Labor policy principally affects employers in a given jurisdiction. Figure 1 provides information on the types of firms operating in Burien. The figure shows that the vast majority of Burien firms are small businesses. Just over 73 percent of Burien businesses have fewer than 9 workers and just over 80 percent of businesses have fewer than 20 workers. The figure also shows that 32 percent of Burien businesses were minority owned in 2012 (compared to 17 percent throughout Washington state), echoing the large immigrant community among Burien residents. Like Washington state, nearly half of firms are owned by men and 10 percent are owned by veterans<sup>2</sup>.

The large share of small firms in Burien is relevant in the decision-making process of a minimum wage law, as the BEDP is interested in understanding impacts of a minimum wage law for large businesses only.

Although the proportion of large firms in Burien is small, the proportion of workers employed in large firms is not. Nearly 76 percent of Burien jobs are in firms with 10 or more employees and 64 percent of Burien jobs are in firms with 20 or more employees. This suggests that while a minimum wage on large firms may not target a large share of Burien employers, it has the potential to impact a large number of Burien workers.

Figure 2 shows the number of jobs in Burien in each major industry, by wage rate in 2020<sup>3</sup>. Panel A shows the distribution of jobs which pay less than \$13 per hour. Given that Washington State minimum wage was \$13.50 in 2020, it is not surprising that the share of jobs in this group is small: Only 2 percent of all Burien jobs paid less than \$13 per hour in 2020. Panel B shows the industry breakdown for jobs that are likely to be directly or indirectly affected by a higher minimum wage: jobs which pay more than \$13 per hour but less than \$17 per hour. The majority of these jobs are concentrated in three industries: retail, health care and social assistance, and food services. Panel C and D show the distribution of jobs that earn between \$17 and \$40 per hour and jobs that earn more than \$40 per hour across industry. The figure shows that both health care and social assistance and retail trade, even at higher wage levels, are important for the Burien economy.

### **How might the minimum wage affect Burien's local economy?**

We used two modes of information finding, the first was discussing potential implications with BEDP and the second is surveying the academic research. We detail both below:

#### Challenges for Businesses to Minimum Wage Laws: BEDP Perspectives and Themes

The timing of the Council-directed BEDP study of minimum wage is a challenge identified by the BEDP in how the discussion is messaged to and heard by the business community. The negative economic impacts of the pandemic pose a continuing challenge to the health and viability of local businesses. Business owners have experienced enormous stresses in trying to

---

<sup>2</sup> Demographic information on business owners is not asked by the U.S. Census every year, and thus the most recent year for which data is available is 2012.

<sup>3</sup> For a full description of jobs included in Figure 2, see the Data and Methods Appendix.

respond to public health and economic challenges of the pandemic and will need time to recover. It is important to the BEDP that the business community feels supported by the City.

The BEDP is also concerned that a higher minimum wage may place additional stress on small business owners who may be impacted in ways detrimental to themselves and their wellbeing. They think business owners may need to layoff valuable employees and expect to work more hours themselves to make up for the loss of employee hours due to a higher minimum wage, placing additional stress on their business. Also, many business owners have expressed that their customers are very price sensitive, due to the income demographics of the community. It is important to the BEDP that the main street charm that Burien possesses, and that the business community significantly contributes to, is encouraged and maintained as a community asset.

Finally, the BEDP recognizes that Burien's economy is more fragile than that of a large city like Seattle, which raised its wage in 2014. Burien faces more competition from smaller sized cities and is worried that firms may choose to relocate, or startup, elsewhere if labor costs become too high or the City is seen as unfriendly to business

### Benefits and Challenges to Minimum Wage Laws: Evidence from academic studies

To understand how Burien's economy may be affected by the minimum wage, this section centers prior academic and policy evaluation studies on minimum wage laws. Minimum wage laws have impacts on employers, workers, and the broader community and I discuss the impact of prior minimum wage laws on each of these groups. To investigate the impact of the minimum wage on employers, I focus on evidence surrounding employer decisions such as employment and price changes, scheduling changes or other levers of adjustment. To investigate the impact of the minimum wage on workers, I focus on workers' economic circumstances (earnings, employment) and their perspective on the minimum wage. Finally, to investigate community impacts, I focus on evidence of firms' decision to remain open or closed in response to the minimum wage and discuss how higher minimum wages can be recirculated into the economy.

A key theme that comes across in evaluations of the minimum wage is that the size of the minimum wage increase matters: Economic theory suggests that employer, worker and community adjustments occur in proportion to the change in the minimum wage. Small wage increases will have small impacts while large wage increases will have larger impacts as employers have to handle a larger cost of labor. Following the discussion of benefits and challenges of higher minimum wages, I detail the policy design decisions Burien City Council should consider if they decide to craft a minimum wage policy.

#### *Impact on Employers*

Employers have several pathways at which they can adjust to a higher minimum wage. First, if they are profitable enough, employers can absorb the higher cost of the minimum wage at the expense of reduced profits. This absorption may not cut into profits substantially if the proposed new minimum wage is similar to the wage they're already paying their lowest paid workers. Second employers can reduce hours worked or employment of the current workforce to adjust to the higher cost. Third, employers can reduce the number of hires into their business. Fourth,

employers can raise the price of goods and services to shift the burden of the higher wage onto consumers. Finally, employers can choose to evade the new law.

Evidence from a meta-analysis of 200+ of minimum wage law evaluations found that the average employment impact was 0 or very small when the local, state, or federal minimum wage laws increased (Belman & Wolfson, 2014).<sup>4</sup> This meta-analysis included studies on local minimum wage, so the lessons are instructive for Burien. By contrast, Seattle's minimum wage law increased their minimum wage by substantial amount – higher than prior state and federal laws-- within the two years months of enactment and this led to a larger reduction in employment growth by 5 percent and a reduction in the growth of hours worked by 7 percent.

Employers may also choose to reduce hires to save on labor costs. In the case of Seattle, the reduction in employment and hours growth was not attributed to outright cuts in employment or hours. In fact, workers employed at the time the ordinance passed experienced an increase in earnings. Seattle employers adapted to the minimum wage instead by reducing the rate of hires, specifically hires of less experienced workers.

Evaluation of minimum wage laws on price changes have generally found that prices do not tend to change in response to a higher minimum wage. The Seattle minimum wage evaluation conducted a comprehensive evaluation of prices and found that prices in basic grocery store items, gas prices and housing did not change at all, while prices in the restaurant and accommodation industry increased by 10 percent to reflect the new cost (Hill et al., 2016).

A final pathway employers have at their disposal is noncompliance. Evidence from research assessing the impact of state and federal minimum wage increases found that employers underpaid worked by 14 – 22 percent of realized wage gains (Clemens & Strain, 2020). In a survey of 4,387 workers in Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York in low-wage industries like hospitality and domestic care, researchers found that 44 percent had been paid less than the law required within the past year (Bernhardt et al., 2009). One way to mitigate the likelihood of wage theft is through strong enforcement regimes; many lost wages are not recovered due to small labor departments and limited oversight. This is a consideration for Burien, as they do not have a dedicated office of labor standards.

One concern the BEDP brought up was that a higher minimum wage may lead to increased automation to save on labor costs, which may reduce employment for the Burien workforce. The academic evidence to date doesn't find this to be a credible threat. Evidence on minimum wage laws showed that instead of a employment decline, minimum wages have the potential to shift employment away from routinized jobs (cashiers) towards less-routinized low-wage jobs (food preparation) (Aaronson & Phelan, 2019). This shift is most likely to occur in manufacturing jobs (41% are routinized jobs), retail jobs (40% are routinized jobs) and service industry (30 % are routinized jobs, most of which are driven by fast food restaurants (Lordan & Neumark, 2018).

---

<sup>4</sup> A meta analysis is an analysis of hundreds of studies on a given topic. See Belman and Wolfson (2014) for details.

## *Impact on Workers*

Workers, too, can experience and adjust to the minimum wage in several ways. Workers who may experience higher earnings in response to employers complying with the minimum wage, leading to greater economic security. Workers may also have increased job satisfaction in response to the minimum wage. Wages are a main component of overall job quality and this increase may lead to workers being more satisfied at their job (Kalleberg, 2011). Workers who are more satisfied with their job tend to be more productive and have better employer-employee relations at work. This final result could lead to fewer quits, and potentially benefit employers through reduced turnover costs. A final consideration is how the added wages affect workers' overall income.

The first order effects of a minimum wage increase are the realized wage gains for workers. If these wage gains are acquired without any changes in hours worked, the minimum wage has the potential to improve the earnings of low-wage workers, which can have positive effects on their economic security. Evidence from the meta-analyses discussed above found modest changes in earnings in response to the minimum wage (Belman & Wolfson, 2014). In Seattle, workers who were employed at the time the minimum wage was passed, saw earnings increases on the order of \$10–12 per week over the first two phase-ins of the minimum wage. Importantly, these earnings changes varied by worker experience: workers who worked more hours, and as a result were more attached to the labor force in the quarters prior to the law, experienced closer to a \$22 increase in weekly earnings, whereas less experienced workers saw negligible earnings changes (Jardim et al., 2021).

Another way workers may adjust to higher minimum wages is through reduced quits. Wages are a key component of job quality. In a qualitative study of 55 Seattle minimum wage workers conducted before and during the implementation of Seattle's minimum wage law, workers who expressed positive sentiments about the minimum wage noted that the higher wage made them feel more valued at work (Hill & Wething, 2019). A higher minimum wage may increase job quality for workers engaged in low-wage work and workers may stay on longer with their employer as a result. Workers who enjoy their job more may also be more productive and employers may lay off fewer workers as well. Evidence of state and federal policies found that minimum wages reduced turnover by 2.3 to 3 percent per a 10 percent increase in the minimum wage (Dube et al., 2016); in Seattle the minimum wage reduced job turnover by 4 percent (Jardim et al., 2021).

A final consideration is the impact of a higher minimum wage on household budgets. In the Seattle qualitative study discussed above, many workers (52/55) spoke positively about the law, and the law being fair, particularly given Seattle's high cost of living and their perceived value of their time. Despite these positive sentiments, however, most workers didn't think the wage would change their circumstances much or were concerned that increases in wages were offset by increases in rent and other expenses (Hill & Wething, 2019). Many workers earning minimum wages at the time still qualified for rental assistance and food stamps; the increase from \$9.47 to \$15 merely shifted their budget away from relying on government program benefits to wages from their employer. It's unclear whether this same effect would happen in Burien as the statewide minimum wage is higher than \$9.47. Washington state passed a law to



raise its wage to \$13.50 by 2020 and increase every year to inflation thereafter. In 2022 the minimum wage in Burien was \$14.49.

### *Impact on Community*

Workers and employers make up the heart of a business community, but so do structures, physical buildings where establishments reside, and economic business growth overall. There are two main pathways of adjustment that the minimum wage can affect the overall community. First, the minimum wage could affect business turnover: the opening and closing of firms. While this is at the employers' discretion, firm openings and closings have ripple effects on the surrounding community. Second, the minimum wage could affect worker spending power, which could lead to economic growth. Workers who receive raises in low-wage jobs are theorized to respond differently than those in high wage jobs. While workers in high wage jobs often save the additional wage increase; workers in low-wage jobs spend that money directly in their local economy through spending on groceries, healthcare, and basic household needs. The recirculation of money into the economy from workers earning low wages can spur economic development in a region.

While the academic evidence on the impact of minimum wage laws on firm opening and closures are still in early stages, an evaluation of Seattle's law found that the policy had no effect on a firm's decision to open and that the law caused only 7 out of every 1,000 firms (<1 percent) to shut down (Jardim & Inwegen, 2019). This is particularly notable given that the Seattle increase was large.

Another way workers adapt to the minimum wage is by increasing spending on consumer goods. Evidence from a national study found that a \$1.75 increase in the national minimum wage increased household spending by roughly \$48 billion in the year following the law (Aaronson & French, 2013). While this spending could be on a range of items, from paying down utilities to going to the doctor's office, one study found that households likely to be earning minimum wages increased their spending on food; specifically they increased the number calories purchased in response to a higher minimum wage (Palazzolo & Pattabhiramaiah, 2021).

### Policy Design

There are several policy design decisions that need to be considered in implementing a higher minimum wage. A primary consideration is determining which firms are affected. In minimum wage legislation, this determination is designed by identifying a certain employer size threshold. Above that threshold, employers are mandated to raise their wages. Many labor laws exclude small employers, which can be as small as 4 employees in the case of Seattle's paid sick leave policy, or larger like the 26 employee cutoff for San Diego's minimum wage law or the 100 employee cutoff for the minimum wage law in Novato, CA.

Another key consideration is the level of the new higher wage. Jurisdictions take one of two approaches. First, jurisdictions may choose to set a new minimum wage that automatically increases annually with inflation. Examples of this approach include Seattle and Washington

state. Second, jurisdictions may set a new minimum wage and keep the wage at that level until it is re-legislated. An example of this design is the federal minimum wage. Jurisdictions define the exact dollar amount in several ways: they may find a target percentage increase, or identify the cost of living in their area and set a new minimum that represents a “living wage.”

Beyond determining the dollar amount of the minimum wage, jurisdictions need to decide the phase-in period. Some jurisdictions opt to phase in the higher wage all at once, as is done at the federal level. Other jurisdictions, particularly those who increase their minimum wage substantially, choose to phase in the minimum wage over several years. Prominent examples include Seattle, which phased in its wage over a 3-7 year period, Tacoma, which phased in its wage over a 4 year period, and Washington State, which phased in its wage over a 4 year period.

A final consideration is compliance. To craft an effective public policy, the Burien City Council needs to consider how to report employers who are not complying with the law. In many jurisdictions, this takes the form of employee complaints to the city or state office of labor standards. In order for this design to meaningfully deter employers from noncompliance, employees need to have full knowledge of their rights. This can happen through a public knowledge campaign, or a mandate for employers to post information about employee rights in a prominent at the business establishment.

### **BEDP Recommendations**

After several months of study and discussion, the BEDP made three recommendations regarding the topic:

- 1) to define large businesses as having 500+ employees worldwide
- 2) that the state minimum wage is sufficient for Burien at this time
- 3) that any changes to the minimum wage planned require outreach to the ‘large businesses’ and the employees affected by a minimum wage change.

These recommendations were passed unanimously by the membership.

### **Conclusion**

In 2021, the Burien City Council charged the Burien Business and Economic Development Partnership (BEDP) with the task of investigating whether a local minimum wage should be levied on large businesses. Over the course of several months, the BEDP grappled with this question, drawing on experience from a consultant and their own lived experience in four workshop sessions. The BEDP concluded that the state minimum wage is sufficient for Burien at this time and recommended that any changes to the local minimum wage that Council may consider for ‘large businesses’ require outreach to the ‘large businesses’ and employees potentially affected by a minimum wage change.



## References

- Aaronson, D., & Phelan, B. (2019). Wage Shocks and the Technological Substitution of Low-wage Jobs. *The Economic Journal*, 129(617), 1–34.
- Belman, D., & Wolfson, P. (2014). *What Does the Minimum Wage Do?* W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research: Upjohn Press.
- Bernhardt, A., Milkman, R., Theodore, N., Heckathorn, D., Auer, M., DeFilippis, J., Gonzalez, A., Narro, V., Perelshteyn, J., Polson, D., & Spiller, M. (2009). *Broken Laws, Unprotected Workers: Violations of Employment and Labor Laws in America's Cities* (p. 72). <https://www.nelp.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/BrokenLawsReport2009.pdf>
- Clemens, J., & Strain, M. R. (2020). *Understanding "Wage Theft": Evasion and Avoidance Responses to Minimum Wage Increases* (Working Paper No. 26969; Working Paper Series). National Bureau of Economic Research. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w26969>
- Dube, A., Lester, T. W., & Reich, M. (2016). Minimum Wage Shocks, Employment Flows, and Labor Market Frictions. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 34(3), 663–704. <https://doi.org/10.1086/685449>
- Economic Policy Institute. (2012). *Characteristics of workers who would be affected by increasing the federal minimum wage to \$9.80 by July 2014*. <https://files.epi.org/2012/minimumwagestateimpact.pdf>
- Hill, H., & Wething, H. (2019). *Will everything go up? Worker knowledge and interpretation of the Seattle Minimum Wage Ordinance* [Unpublished Manuscript].
- Jardim, E., & Inwegen, E. van. (2019). Payroll, Revenue, and Labor Demand Effects of the Minimum Wage. *Upjohn Institute Working Papers*. <https://doi.org/10.17848/wp19-298>
- Jardim, E., Long, M. C., Plotnick, R., van Inwegen, E., Vigdor, J., & Wething, H. (2021). Minimum Wage Increases and Low-Wage Employment: Evidence from Seattle. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.20180578>
- Kalleberg, A. (2011). *Good Jobs Bad Jobs: The Rise of Polarized and Precarious Employment Systems in the United States, 1970s-2000s*. Russell Sage Foundation, American Sociological Association Rose Series in Sociology.
- Lordan, G., & Neumark, D. (2018). People versus machines: The impact of minimum wages on automatable jobs. *Labour Economics*, 52(C), 40–53.
- Palazzolo, M., & Pattabhiramaiah, A. (2021). The Minimum Wage and Consumer Nutrition. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 58(5), 845–869. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222437211023475>

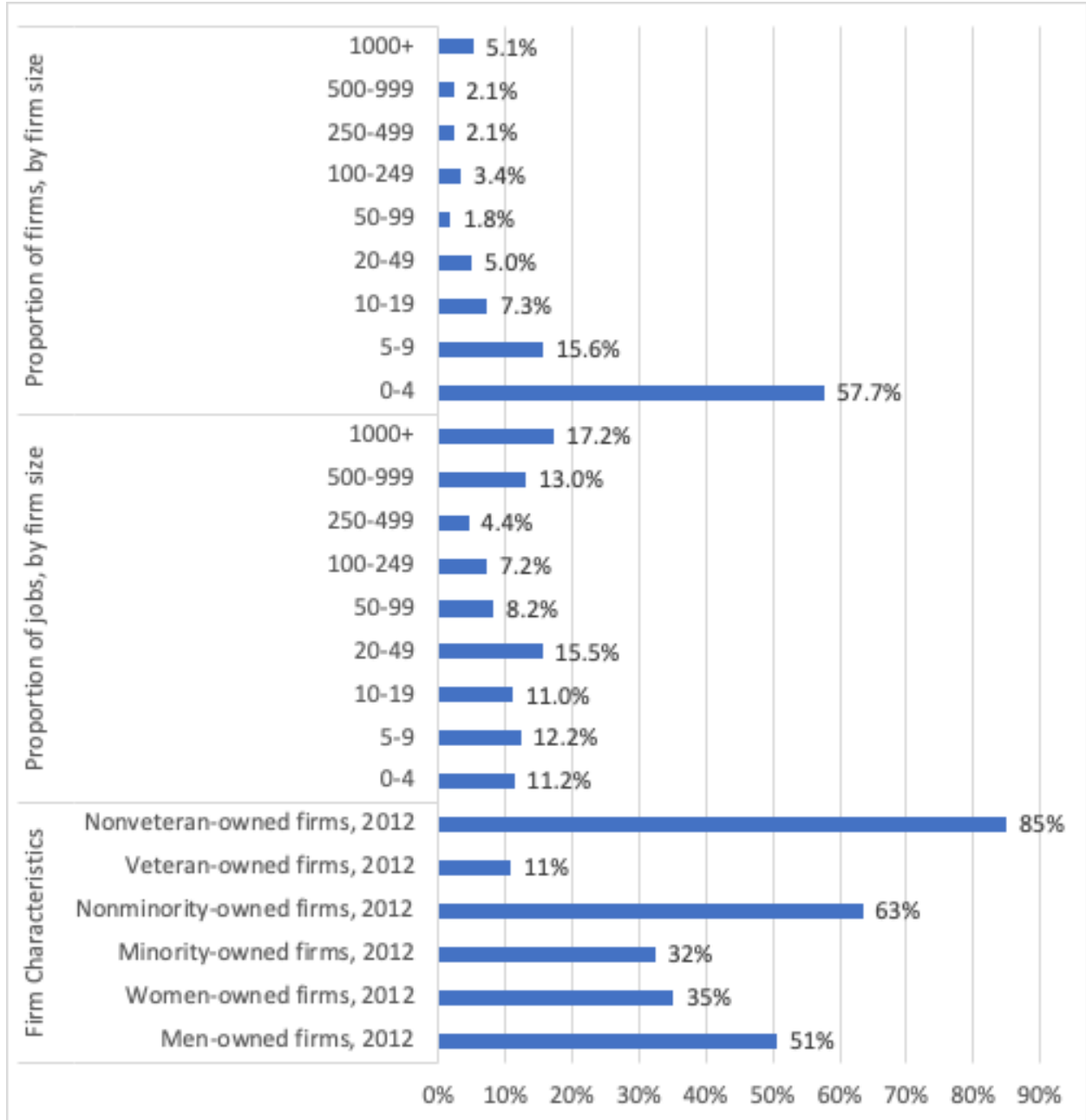
Table 1. Demographic information for Burien and Washington

Total Population	7,705,281	52,066
Age and Sex		
Persons under 5 years, percent	6.0%	6.5%
Persons under 18 years, percent	21.8%	22.5%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	15.9%	13.7%
Female persons, percent	49.9%	48.6%
Race and Hispanic Origin		
White alone, percent	78.5%	54.8%
Black or African American alone, percent	4.4%	8.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	1.9%	0.8%
Asian alone, percent	9.6%	12.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.8%	1.3%
Two or More Races, percent	4.9%	7.7%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	13.0%	23.8%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	67.5%	47.9%
Population Characteristics		
Veterans, 2015-2019	6.9%	5.2%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2015-2019	14.3%	25.5%
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+	19.7%	36.6%
Education		
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+	91.3%	82.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+	36.0%	27.7%
Health		
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent	8.70%	8.70%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	7.70%	12.50%
Income & Poverty		
Median household income (in 2019 dollars)	\$73,775	\$67,402
Persons in poverty, percent	9.50%	12.50%

Source: U.S. Census *American Community Survey, 2022*

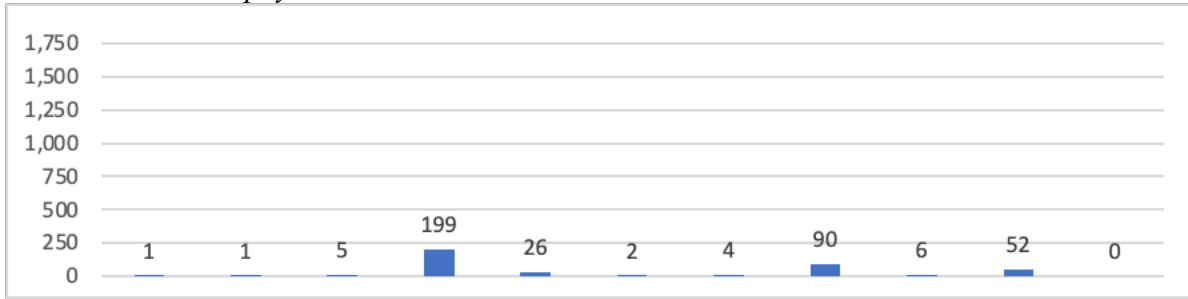
Notes: Education, disability, foreign language, and household information is taken from the 2015-2019 American Community survey; all other demographics are for the year 2020

**Figure 1.** Burien Firm Characteristics, 2020

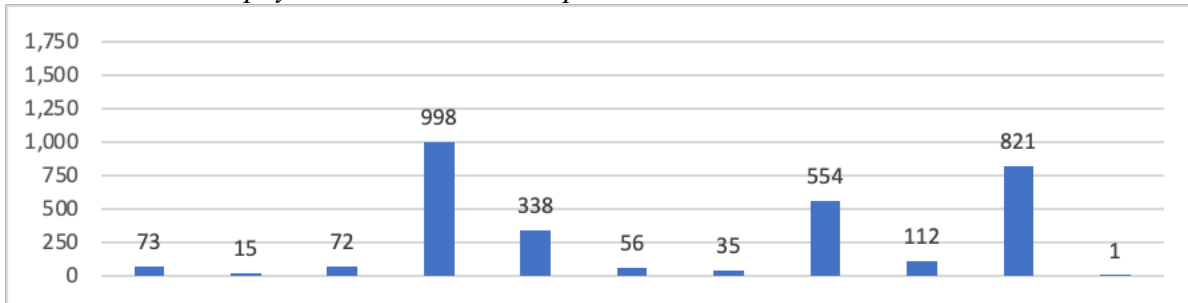


Source: Author’s analysis of data from the U.S. Census *American Community Survey*, and the Washington State Unemployment Insurance Records.

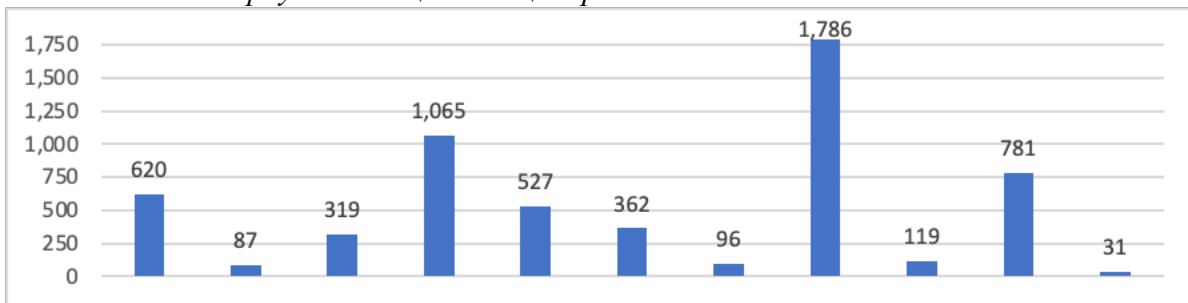
**Figure 2.** Number of wage records, FTE employment, wages by industry and wage range, 2020  
*Panel A. Jobs that pay less than \$13*



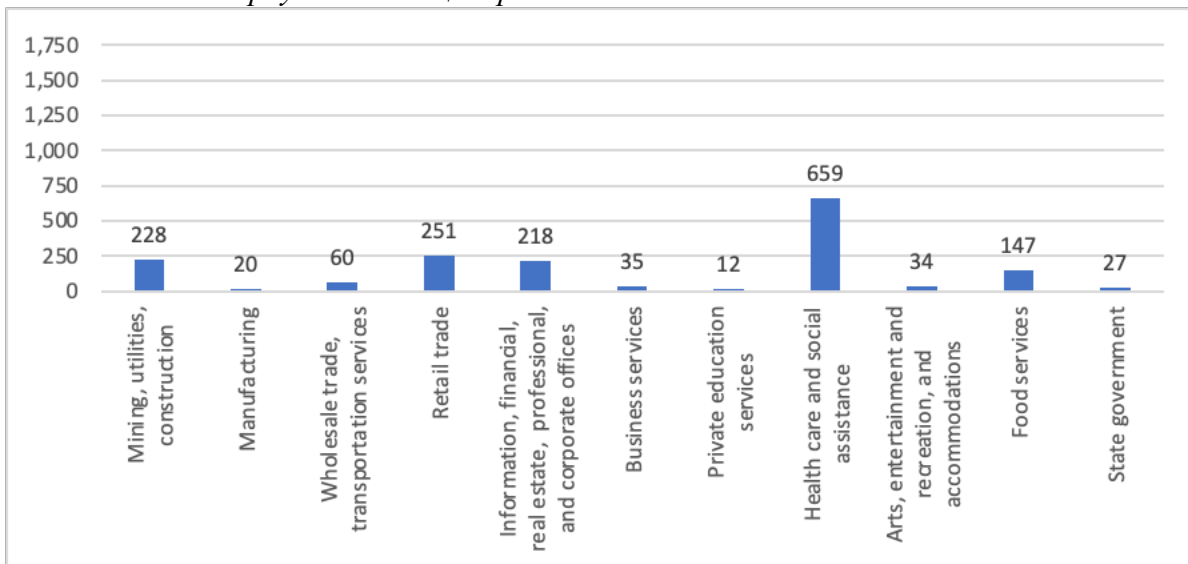
*Panel B. Jobs that pay between \$13 and 17 per hour*



*Panel C. Jobs that pay between \$17 and \$40 per hour*



*Panel D. Jobs that pay more than \$40 per hour*



Source: Analysis of data from the Washington State Unemployment Insurance Records.

## Appendix: Data & Methods

Data for this *Preliminary Assessment* came from the U.S. Census *American Community Survey* and the Washington State Employment Security Department Unemployment Insurance Records. The *American Community Survey* is a survey conducted every year by the U.S. Census that works in conjunction with the decennial Census to estimate demographic information for each community in the U.S. Not all survey questions are asked every year. Data is from 2020 unless noted otherwise.

The Washington State Employment Security Department collects quarterly payroll records from employers for all workers that receive earnings in Washington State and are eligible for the state Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. For every quarter the employee-employer match exists in Washington state, the employer must report the total number of earnings and hours worked by that employee, allowing for analysis at the wage rate level. The employer must also report the physical address of their firm, allowing for data to be assessed for Burien specifically. Data was obtained for the following industries using two- and three- digit NAICS codes:

Industry	NAICS
Mining, utilities, construction	21-23
Manufacturing	31-33
Wholesale trade, transportation services	42, 48-49
Retail trade	44-45
Information services, financial services, real estate, rental & leasing, professional services, corporate offices	51-55
Business services	56
Private education services	61
Health care and social assistance	62
Arts, entertainment and recreation, and accommodations	71, 721
Food services	722
State government	

Wage records for Agriculture, and forestry, fishing (NAICS 11), Other services (NAICS 81), and Local Government were suppressed due to data disclosure regulations. In 2020 there was an average of 19,034 wage records for firms in Burien. Of those 19,034 records, 4,047 were suppressed from this analysis due to data disclosure regulation