



NEWS RELEASE

Attorney General Mike Hilgers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lancaster County District Court Prohibits the City of Lincoln from Enforcing Unconstitutional Minimum Wage Ordinance

Today, the Lancaster County District Court stopped the City of Lincoln from enforcing its unconstitutional minimum-wage ordinance. The Court concluded that the State's arguments are "strong enough that the Ordinance should be enjoined until the merits are fully litigated."

In 2026, the Nebraska Legislature amended the State's Wage and Hour Act to set the growth rate for the minimum wage and to allow employers to pay youth employees a distinct minimum wage. The Lincoln City Council apparently disagreed with the balance the Legislature struck and enacted a municipal ordinance directly at odds with State law.

The Legislature said the minimum-wage growth rate "shall" be 1.75%; the City's ordinance would modify that statute to say "shall not" and sets the growth rate at a different level. Similarly, the Legislature said that employers "may" pay youth employees a minimum wage of \$13 per hour; the City's ordinance effectively rewrites that law to say "may not" and instead requires employers to pay youth employees \$15 per hour.

"I appreciate the Court's thoughtful consideration here," stated Attorney General Mike Hilgers. "The injunction stops the City's unlawful ordinance and its illegal attempt to circumvent the Constitution."

Contrary to the City's arguments, the Court concluded that "the minimum wage is likely a matter of statewide concern." Further, the State "will be irreparably harmed if the Ordinance contradicts state law." The Court therefore enjoined the City from enforcing its ordinance "until further order of the Court."

As the State continues to litigate the case, the Court's order will prevent the City of Lincoln from enforcing its ordinance. The Legislature's 2026 amendments to the Wage and Hour Act will remain the law across the State—including within the City of Lincoln.

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