

---

# Small-business owners ask New York to reject \$15 minimum wage

DAVID KLEPPER, ASSOCIATED PRESS | March 8, 2016 | Updated: March 8, 2016 10:07pm

---

0

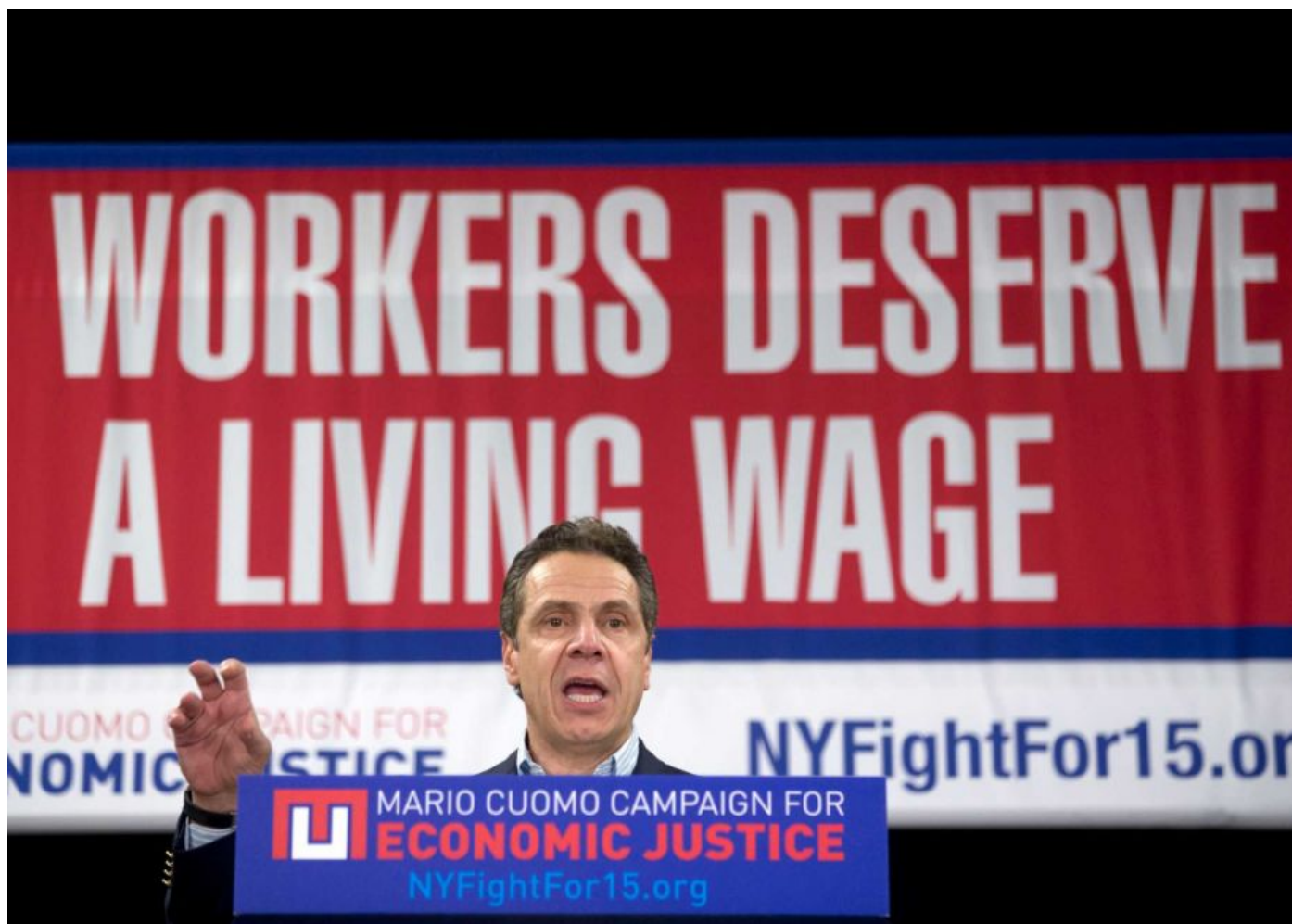


Photo: Mike Groll, STF

---

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo speaks last month during a rally in support of a higher minimum wage.

---

ALBANY, N.Y. - Small-business owners struck back against New York Gov. Andrew

Cuomo's plan to implement a \$15 minimum wage Tuesday, saying the Democratic governor's call to enact what would be the highest state minimum in the country would devastate an already struggling economy.

Gathering at the Capitol in Albany, the business owners warned that such a steep increase would squeeze small businesses struggling in an already challenging economic climate.

"You're either going to cut back on employment or raise prices," said Art Price, owner of a Southern Tier plumbing business.

Eric Ooms said his family dairy farm near the Hudson River is now employing robotic milkers, a move partially prompted by higher labor costs that could reduce his overall staff by up to three workers. He predicted other dairy farmers would also switch.

"We're competing with states like Pennsylvania and Idaho," he said, listing states with significantly lower minimum wages. He said the wage hike would be "incredibly awful for the dairy industry, but it's even worse for the vegetable farmers and the fruit farmers who can't do the automation."

The state's current minimum wage is \$9 an hour. Cuomo, a Democrat, argues that a higher minimum would get low-wage workers off government assistance, while giving them more money to inject in local economies. To help businesses adjust, he is proposing a gradual increase to \$15 - by the end of 2018 in New York City and by July 2021 in the rest of the state - and



---

## BUSINESS

---



**Shareholders welcome CEO back with challenge to United board**

**The Motley Fool: Don't be in a hurry for IPO**

**U.S. will test ways to cut Medicare drug expenses**

**In brief: Profit declines for Dick's Sporting Goods**

nearly \$300 million in small business tax relief.

"We will have the highest minimum wage in the United States of America, which is a tremendous, big step toward economic justice and economic freedom," he told an audience Monday on Long Island.

A vote on Cuomo's measure is expected in the coming weeks.

The measure is widely backed in the Democratic-led Assembly but faces greater challenges in the GOP-run Senate.

Still, Senate leaders haven't shut the door completely on a minimum wage increase, suggesting that the size of the raise, the duration of the phase-in and the size of tax cuts for businesses could be up for negotiation.



**Report: The U.S. has more millionaires than ever before**

**KBR wins oil refinery project in Azerbaijan**