

Nixon Asks \$2-an-Hour Wage Law

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President Nixon has urged Congress to raise the minimum wage to \$2 an hour—a move he vetoed last year—but to exclude government employees, household servants and youths under 18.

Minimum wages for most workers have been at the \$1.60 level for six years. Mr. Nixon said in a letter to the House and Senate Labor Committee leaderships, "There can be no doubt it should be higher."

The President has proposed increasing the minimum wage to \$2 immediately and then to \$2.10 next year and \$2.30 in 1976. Last year, he proposed an increase to \$1.80 and vetoed the proposal that would have raised the level to \$2.

His new proposals match the proposed House provisions, while the Senate proposal calls for \$2 this year rising to \$2.20 next year.

The President said government employees should be excluded from coverage because they are already adequately protected by other laws. He also said many domestic servants would lose their jobs if the law compelled a minimum wage of \$2 for them and argued that any law lacking a "youth differential" exempting those under 18 would amount to "a vote for higher youth unemployment."