

For immediate release – May 20, 2014

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RUNNING FOR CONGRESS ON \$10.10 PER HOUR

When he started his campaign for U.S. Congress in Missouri's 2nd District, Arthur Lieber didn't want to accept any campaign donations at all--until he hit upon a better way to get small donors involved, while supporting an important economic issue. So he's asking his supporters to donate no more than \$10.10 to his campaign—an amount that reflects the new federal minimum wage proposed by President Barack Obama.

Lieber, an avowed progressive Democrat, is running for Congress against Republican incumbent Ann Wagner, in Missouri's 2nd Congressional District.

"I know it's contrary to conventional political wisdom, but small donations can make a difference. They give non-wealthy and non-corporate supporters a voice in the political system," says Lieber. "Relying on small donations helps move us toward a more grass-roots democracy. And in today's post-Citizens United world, that is very important.

"Also, by not seeking or accepting large contributions, I can focus my time on talking with constituents, studying issues, and once elected, doing the day job of a Congressman as a representative of everyone in the district."

Lieber's \$10.10 donation limit also symbolizes his strong support for an increase in the federal minimum wage.

"Workers deserve an increase," says Lieber. "Even though the minimum wage was increased in 2009—to \$7.25 per hour, that amount has not kept up with increasing costs."

Lieber also notes that research studies consistently show that jobs are not lost when the minimum wage goes up. "In fact, raising the minimum wage is good for the economy," he says, "because it puts more dollars in circulation."

\$10.10 per hour would be an improvement, says Lieber, but it's still not enough. "\$10.10 is still short of a livable wage—and that should be our next goal."