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## **IPA: ABOLISHING THE MINIMUM WAGE WOULD HELP FORMER PRISONERS FIND WORK**

In an opinion piece published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* today, Daniel Wild, research fellow with the free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs, outlines the harmful effect of the minimum wage on former prisoners trying to enter the workforce.

A new research program of the IPA into criminal justice has found that former prisoners have some of the worst socio-economic outcomes in the country. They are more likely to be unemployed, have poor work histories, be involved with drugs and alcohol and come from broken families than the rest of the population.

“The minimum wage exacerbates these problems by making it more difficult for businesses to employ people with lower productivity.

“The law already recognises this as a problem by allowing people with disabilities, apprentices and youth to be paid a portion of the full adult rate” said Mr Wild.

Furthermore, the minimum wage increases the likelihood that former prisoners will reoffend by making it more difficult for them to find work.

“While governments think they are helping the most vulnerable Australians by imposing high minimum wages, in fact the policy makes it hard for those vulnerable Australians to get a foothold in the labour market”, said Mr Wild.

**The piece is available at:** <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/the-minimum-wage-is-holding-prisoners-back-when-they-leave-jail-20160527-gp58sg.html>

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