

San Jose will vote in November on a measure that would force employers to offer more hours to part-time workers before additional hiring - Silicon Valley Business Journal



Silicon Valley Rising, a campaign created by the South Bay Labor Council and Working... [more](#)

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San Jose's November ballot looks likely to include a measure intended to increase the hours of part-time workers.

Supporters of the Opportunity to Work Ordinance turned in 35,000 signatures to the city clerk's office today, well above the approximately 19,000 needed to qualify for the November ballot. The initiative was first filed in January by Silicon Valley Rising, a campaign created by the South Bay Labor Council and Working Partnerships USA.

Businesses with 35 or less employees would be exempt from the measure, which would require employers to offer additional hours to qualified part-time employees before hiring additional workers, including subcontractors and temps.

The initiative states that employers, using "good faith and reasonable judgment," can determine whether an employee is qualified to perform the needed work. Though details of how the ordinance would be enforced are unclear, the initiative states that the city can grant a "hardship exemption" to businesses

that can prove they've taken steps to comply with the law.

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The San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce opposes the measure, which a South Bay Labor press release claims would benefit 64,000 hourly workers in San Jose.

Chamber CEO and President [Matt Mahood](#) said the measure would decrease part-time work and seasonal employment opportunities for people seeking such employment, such as teens.

Mahood said this year has felt like "tax-ageddon" in light of an earlier proposal to raise the city's business tax (which ended up in a compromise that will double revenue from that tax) and the state minimum wage hike to \$15 by 2022, which local labor would like to see implemented by 2019 instead.

"You can't keep on layering on regulatory hurdle after regulatory hurdle and not expect it to impact business," he said. "Jobs will be lost (and) companies will stop hiring."

When asked about what the Chamber's strategy to oppose the initiative would be, Mahood said it is "too early to tell, (we're) working on it."

The Silicon Valley Leadership Group has not taken a position on the initiative at this time, according to spokesperson Nancy Sanchez.

Bryce Druzin is economic development reporter at the Silicon Valley Business Journal.