

# Switzerland Shows U.S. How to Handle CEOs: Voters Create Maximum Wage Policy

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In Switzerland a petition from 100,000 people, or about 1.25% of the population, creates a public referendum. By this means, last March, Swiss voters [created strict limits](#) on executive pay.

On November 24, the Swiss will vote on whether to take a further step — limiting executive pay to no more than 12 times the lowest salary in the company. Such a maximum wage policy allows the CEO pay increases, but only if workers get at least a twelfth as much.

A movement in the U.S. is asking: [If Switzerland can do it, why can't we?](#)

The Swiss are also set to vote, on a date yet to be set, to create a [guaranteed basic income](#) of \$2,800 (2,500 Swiss francs) per month for every adult. That's about \$16 per hour for a full-time worker, but it's guaranteed even for those who can't find work.

You know what country can afford such a measure even more easily, given its vast supplies of wealth? The United States of America.

Here in the United States, had the minimum wage kept pace with productivity since the 1960s it would now be [\\$21.72 an hour](#), or \$3,722 a month. The Congressional proposal of \$10.10 an hour, which President Obama now says he supports, equals \$1,751 a month for a fulltime job. The actual U.S. minimum wage of \$7.25, which does not apply to all workers, makes \$1,242 a month. But only if you can find work.

That's less than half what the Swiss are voting on, and Swiss workers also have their healthcare paid for, public transportation widely available, quality education and higher education free or affordable, 14 weeks paid parental leave, and a nearly endless list of other advantages provided by the government.

A basic income guarantee, currently practiced in Alaska and once supported by President Richard Nixon and the U.S. House of Representatives, would be [far more efficient](#) than targeted support programs, because every individual would receive the exact same check, with no stigma attached to it; and, yes — believe it or not — people who could find work would still work.

Switzerland has a greater percentage of its population made up by immigrants than the United States does. Switzerland has four national languages. What allows Switzerland to practice democracy so much more effectively?

Two major parts of the answer are obvious. Switzerland doesn't fight wars, and it doesn't [redistribute its wealth upward](#) creating an overclass of multibillionaires.

Perhaps its time to begin moving our own country in a peaceful, prosperous direction. [A growing number of people have decided to try.](#)

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