## NEW ENGLAND PAYROLL SERVICES, LLC 3190 WHITNEY AVE., BLDG. 8 HAMDEN CT PH. (203) 287-5427

# NEPS Payroll Newsletter



#### Volume VII, Issue III

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## HP Reveals the Worlds Thinnest Laptop

At four-tenths of an inch thick, and weighing a little less than two and a half pounds, it's thinner and lighter than the 13-inch MacBook Air. (It weighs slightly more than the new Mac-Book and Lenovo Yoga 900S).

HP gave its new portable computer a copper sheen to appeal to anyone who loves gold gadgets or devices that look like jewelry. The guts of the new Spectre are meant to attract people who care about power: The Spectre boasts an Intel Core i7 processor, 8 GB of memory, and about 10 hours of battery life. And for music lovers, HP tapped Bang & Olufsen to give its laptop cred in the audio department.

HP describes the Spectre as being "more artisan than manufactured" in a promo video. "It looks as if a craftsman made just one of those," the narrator says.

Spectre is meant to compete with other high end laptops -- and its \$1,170 price tag is.

Smartphones and 2-in-1 tablet-laptop devices have put pressure on PCs. People are also holding on to their older computers rather than upgrading.

Pre-orders for the new Spectre are available at HP (HPQ) and Best Buy (BBY) beginning on April 25. CNN-Tech

## California Increases Minimum Wage to \$15

Both the California State Assembly and State Senate passed the measure on Thursday afternoon. Governor Jerry Brown said he would sign it on Monday, April 4th, 2016.

"No one who is working full time in California should live in poverty due to a low wage," said Democratic State Senator Mark Leno, who cosponsored the bill.

The measure will raise the state's minimum wage to \$10.50 in January and to \$11 in January 2018. It will then increase by an additional \$1 per hour every year until it reaches \$15 in 2022. If, however, the state goes through an economic downturn or budget crisis, the governor may choose to slow the implementation.

The final bill gives small businesses, with 25 or fewer employees, an extra year to implement the increases.



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CNN

Special Points of Interest in 2016:

- HP and the Worlds Thinnest Laptop
- Small Business News:



- Unemployment
  Compensation
- California Minimum
  Wage Increase

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Client of the Month: Hideaway Day Spa

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# **Reform to Unemployment Compensation**

Connecticut's unemployment trust fund was hit hard by the recession - the state had to borrow nearly \$1 billion in federal funds to keep the system above water.

It's a billion-dollar debt - plus yearly interest rate hikes and special assessmentsthat Connecticut businesses have been paying back for the last five years.

Employers here were paying more than four times the rate that businesses in neighboring states were paying: \$189 federal tax per employee in Connecticut instead of \$42 per employee elsewhere.

That high federal tax has been paid back, but employers want to be sure it doesn't come back.

Connecticut businesses have shouldered that burden for years now, but it didn't have to be this way.

Much of the borrowing could have been avoided if Connecticut had made the same reforms our neighboring states had made and are contained in HB 5367, such as:

**Raising the minimum earnings to qualify** for unemployment benefits to \$2,000. Claimants in Connecticut need only earn \$600 in a year to qualify for benefits the third lowest earnings requirement in the U.S. For perspective, 32 states/ territories require between \$2,000 and \$5,000 in earnings. The earnings requirement in Connecticut has not been raised since the statute went into effect in 1967.

**Requiring claimants to post their resumes online** to receive benefits after six consecutive weeks of unemployment. Rhode Island recently instituted this reform which studies show gets the unemployed back to work faster. Connecticut's labor department already has an online resume listing portal in operation that can be utilized for this purpose.

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