

\$15 ballot measure passes 15,000

Organizers say they're aiming to have 30,000 by the time Legislature meets in February

In the three months that Oregon's \$15 minimum wage initiative has been on the streets, volunteers have collected close to 16,000 signatures. That actually means they're a little behind: The union-backed campaign has until July 8, 2016, to turn in 88,184 valid signatures, and they're aiming to collect 125,000 in order to have a healthy buffer. Up to now, it's been an all-volunteer effort except for full-time campaign coordinator Justin Norton-Kertson of the group 15 Now (and he earns \$15 an hour). But the campaign got a boost in early December when Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) committed \$25,000 to fund paid signature gatherers.

Incredibly, more than a quarter of the signatures collected so far have come from a single individual: retired letter carrier Jamie Partridge, the initiative's chief petitioner. Partridge, 66, is a lifelong activist and 31-year member of the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 82. He's been involved with countless groups over the years, including Portland Jobs with Justice, which he helped found.



Retired letter carrier Jamie Partridge, above, is the chief petitioner on a ballot measure to raise Oregon's minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2018.

In 2008, his civic involvement garnered official honors by proclamation of then-mayor Tom Potter. And Partridge only stepped up the pace after his 2011 retirement. Since mid-September he's spent 15 hours a week out on the sidewalks, riding light rail, or outside public events gathering signatures. He's approaching 5,000 signa-

tures now and says he's shooting for 15,000 before the end of the campaign.

"Generally people are very receptive and thankful that I'm doing it," Partridge said of the reaction he gets when he approaches with his clipboard. "Low-wage workers want to tell me their stories about how hard

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Happy Holidays!

From the
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The Newsstand for Working People in Washington State

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We Wish All The Working Men, Women and Their Families Joy and Happiness This Holiday Season and a Very Special New Year

The Pacific Northwest Iron Workers District Council
and its
Affiliated Local Unions

The Executive Board, Staff and members of OPEIU Local 11 wish everyone a Happy and Joy-filled Holiday!

Office & Professional Employees International Union Local 11