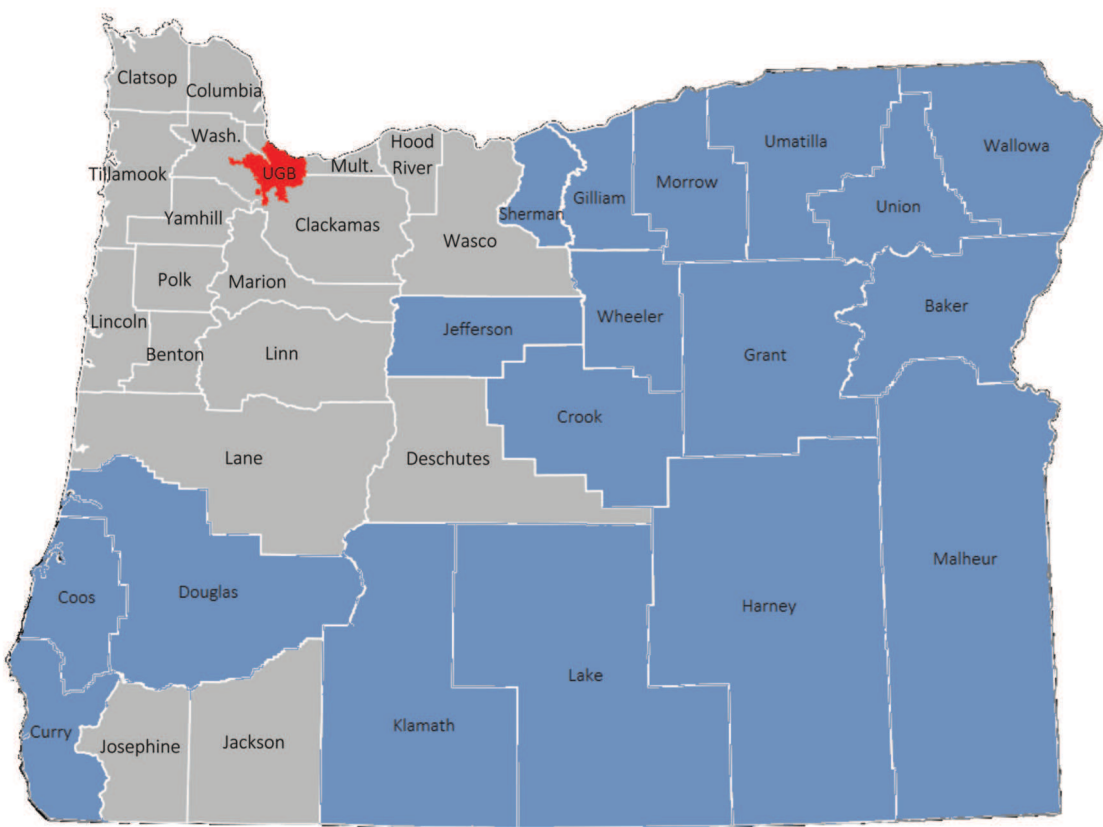


Oregon set to have nation's highest minimum wage



SB 1532, a bill to raise the minimum wage, passed the Oregon Senate on Feb. 11 by 16-12, and the Oregon House on Feb. 17 by 32-26. Once signed by the governor, it will raise Oregon's minimum wage from its current \$9.25 an hour to \$13.50 over six years, with a lower wage for Oregon rural counties and a higher wage for the Portland area (within the Urban Growth Boundary).

The bill's passage led the union-backed Raise the Wage coalition to announce Feb. 29 it will drop its \$13.50 minimum wage ballot initiative and a related initiative to let local jurisdictions go higher.

The steering committee of a separate union-backed ballot initiative campaign for a \$15-an-hour minimum was expected to determine whether to continue at its March 1 meeting (after this issue went to press.)

	Portland area wage	Oregon base wage	Rural wage
July 2016	\$9.75	\$9.75	\$9.50
July 2017	\$11.25	\$10.25	\$10.00
July 2018	\$12.00	\$10.75	\$10.50
July 2019	\$12.50	\$11.25	\$11.00
July 2020	\$13.25	\$12.00	\$11.50
July 2021	\$14.00	\$12.75	\$12.00
July 2022	\$14.75	\$13.50	\$12.50
July 2023	Base + \$1.25	\$13.50 + CPI	Base - \$1.00

Washington ballot measure would secure sick leave and \$13.50 minimum for workers

Raise Up Washington, a coalition of union, faith and community organizations, has filed a ballot initiative to raise Washington state's minimum wage — and allow all workers in the state to earn paid sick leave.

Unions are expected to take a leading role in gathering the 250,000 valid signatures needed by the end of June to qualify Initiative 1433 for the November 2016 ballot. If it qualifies and is approved by voters, it would mandate up to seven days of paid sick leave per year, and raise Washington's minimum wage to \$13.50 over four years. The minimum wage would rise from its current \$9.47 an hour to \$11 in 2017, \$11.50 in 2018, \$12 in 2019, and \$13.50 in 2020 — after which it would continue to rise in line with the Consumer Price Index.

The campaign is holding its kickoff event March 5 at the Washington State Labor Council's Seattle office.

The sick leave component of the measure allows workers to earn one hour of paid sick leave for every 40 hours worked, which they can use to take care of themselves or their family members when they're sick.

The campaign estimates that 730,000 low-income workers in Washington would get raises under the measure. An increase from \$10 to \$13.50 per hour would provide an additional \$607 per month to a low-wage worker — equivalent to feeding a family of four for a month, or covering the cost of buying health insurance for an adult in most parts of the the state.

Currently, one million people in Washington lack paid sick leave at their jobs.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

To help gather signatures for I-1433, the ballot measure that would win paid sick leave and a higher wage for working people, sign up at the campaign web site at raiseupwa.com/get-involved

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