

In Support of Modern Labor Standards

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3 **WHEREAS** income inequality in Washington State continues to increase;

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5 **WHEREAS** low-income workers suffer not just from poverty wages, but also from lack
6 of sick and safe leave;

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8 **WHEREAS** as Democrats, we are committed to the principle that all workers should be
9 able to work full time and not live in poverty, and should have the right to earn paid
10 sick and safe days for themselves and their families;

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12 **WHEREAS** the city councils, other jurisdictions, and other states have successfully
13 adopted paid sick and safe days standards and increased the minimum wage that help
14 local economies, protect public health, increase worker income, and create shared
15 prosperity with businesses and workers;

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17 **WHEREAS** over one million Washington workers have limited paid leave to deal with
18 their health needs or the consequences of domestic violence, and 40% have no paid sick
19 leave, so that even a minor illness or injury can lead to a family economic crisis;

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21 **WHEREAS** even those workers who do have paid sick leave often face discipline when
22 they use their earned time or cannot access their paid sick leave banks on the first day
23 they are sick;

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25 **WHEREAS** when workers are denied paid sick leave they often have no other choice
26 but to go to work sick, which is bad for the health of the workers, their co-workers and
27 the general public;

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29 **WHEREAS** there are currently 730,000 workers in Washington who are earning less
30 than \$13.50 an hour, and the impact of low wages on workers is compounded by less-
31 than-full-time hours and unpredictable schedules;

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33 **WHEREAS** once controlling for inflation, neither women's nor men's median earnings
34 significantly increased between 2013 and 2014 in the United States;

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36 **WHEREAS** the federal minimum wage should have reached \$21.72 an hour in 2012 if it
37 kept up with increases in worker productivity since 1968;

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39 **WHEREAS** low minimum wages negatively impact all workers by dragging wages
40 down in various industries and sectors, and have a disproportionate impact on women
41 and people of color;

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43 **WHEREAS** six in ten poor adults are women, more than half of all poor children live in
44 families headed by women, poverty rates are especially high for single mothers, women
45 of color, and elderly women living alone;

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47 **WHEREAS** more than half (54%) of minimum wage workers are white; one in four is
48 Hispanic (26%), which shows an over-representation of workers of color living in
49 poverty;

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51 **WHEREAS** Initiative 1433 was introduced in January 2016 by a coalition of workers,
52 community groups, the faith community and others to begin to raise wages and provide
53 sick and safe leave for all workers in Washington;

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55 **WHEREAS** Initiative 1433 calls for the state minimum wage to phase-in to \$13.50 by the
56 year 2020, and require employers to provide up to seven days of paid sick leave for
57 workers;

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59 **WHEREAS** Initiative 1433 when implemented would mean an additional \$607 a month
60 for a worker who currently makes \$10.00 an hour, and would create \$2.5 billion more in
61 earnings annually for over 730,000 low-wage workers across the state;

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63 **WHEREAS** Initiative 1433 would allow workers to earn one hour of paid sick and safe
64 leave for every forty hours worked, allowing part time and full time workers to take
65 leave if they or their family members are sick;

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67 **WHEREAS** Initiative 1433 includes safe leave, an important policy component, which
68 ensures that victims of domestic violence can use their paid safe leave if needed to seek
69 medical attention or seek safety from an abuser;

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71 **WHEREAS**, according to statewide polling completed in 2015, nearly nine-in-10
72 Democrats (87%) support the proposed increase in the minimum wage to \$13.50 by
73 2020, and majorities of self-identified Democrats (88%) support providing paid up to 7
74 days of sick and safe leave to workers; and

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76 **WHEREAS** Initiative 1433 specifically states in Section 11 that "nothing in the act
77 precludes local jurisdictions from enacting additional local fair labor standards that are
78 more favorable to employees, including but not limited to more generous minimum
79 wage or paid sick leave requirements," which allows local municipalities to continue to
80 pass higher minimum wages and other labor standard protections;

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82 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Central
83 Committee endorses Initiative 1433 to pass paid sick and safe days so that all
84 Washingtonians can have up to seven days of leave a year, and to increase the state
85 minimum wage to \$13.50 phased-in by the year 2020; and

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87 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic
88 Central Committee urges our members to support the signature-gathering and
89 campaign efforts for Initiative 1433 to increase the minimum wage and pass paid sick
90 and safe leave.

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93 Submitted by the 37th LD Democrats to the WSDCC. (Date Submitted 1/14/2016)

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95 Submitted by the Pierce County Democrats to the WSDCC. (Date Submitted 1/15/2016)

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97 The Resolutions Committee amended this resolution and recommended that it be
98 "PASSED" at its January 30, 2016 meeting in Lynnwood.

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100 The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its January 30, 2016 meeting in Lynnwood.