

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **YWCA SF + Marin Joins SEIU-UHW to Deliver 600K Signatures to Qualify Ballot Initiative Raising CA's Minimum Wage**

[Jan. 20, 2016] SAN FRANCISCO – YWCA San Francisco & Marin joined healthcare employees, low-wage workers and community leaders across California to submit 600,000 voter signatures this week to election officials to qualify a ballot initiative to raise California's minimum wage.

[The Fair Wage Act of 2016](#) would raise the state's minimum wage to \$11 in 2017 and then gradually increase it a dollar a year until it reaches \$15 in 2021. Once the minimum wage reaches \$15, it will automatically be adjusted each year to keep pace with the cost of living.

"I work so hard to provide for me and my daughter, and that's almost impossible on the minimum wage in California," said Maria Sandoval, a cashier from Los Angeles who earns \$10 an hour. "I want a better future for my daughter and that's why I collected so many signatures in my community to get this initiative on the ballot."

The measure would affect an estimated 3.3 million workers and their families in California, or 22 percent of the state's workforce, according to the California Employment Development Department.

It is endorsed by California Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom, California Controller Betty Yee, U.S. Rep. Janice Hahn, Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, 13 California state legislators, and is co-chaired by San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee and Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. In addition, more than 200 labor and community organizations from across the state, including YWCA San Francisco & Marin, support the measure.

“Businesses thrive when their employees are happy, healthy and productive,” said Gary Gerber, CEO of Sun Light & Power in Berkeley, Calif. “When employees are not stressed out over how to pay their rent or other expenses, they can focus on helping you serve your customers and build your business. And raising the minimum wage puts more money into the hands of workers who are most likely to spend it, reinvesting in the local economy.”

Members of SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West, which is sponsoring the ballot initiative, and community leaders delivered the 600,000 voter signatures to county registrars statewide – far more than the 366,000 needed to qualify the measure for the November 2016 ballot. Election officials have until around March 7 to review the signatures and verify if the initiative qualifies for the ballot.

“I’m so excited that the members of my union are living up to our mission to improve the lives of all working people,” said Georgette Bradford, an employee of Kaiser Permanente in Sacramento, Calif. “By doing this work, we’re helping lift up so many lives of those who want to get ahead but can’t when their wages are stuck at poverty levels.”

According to a [recent Field Poll](#), 68 percent of registered California voters support the initiative. To learn more about the Fair Wage Act of 2016, visit [www.liftupcawages.com](http://www.liftupcawages.com).

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