

Resolution in Support of Restoring the State's Overtime Threshold

Whereas the current threshold for employers to exempt (deny) workers overtime pay is approximately \$24,000 per year; and

Whereas Washington state's overtime exemption threshold has not been increased since 1976; and

Whereas in 1975, 63 percent of salaried workers were eligible for overtime pay while less than seven percent are eligible today^[1]; and

Whereas the 40-hour workweek is one of the most important worker protections in the United States; and

Whereas the average full-time employee works 47 hours per week^[2]; and

Whereas no employee should be forced to work in exchange for zero additional pay; and

Whereas time spent at work without pay is time stolen from family, self-betterment, community, and civic life; and

Whereas the Department of Labor & Industry's proposal to restore the state's overtime threshold to 2.5 times the state's minimum wage will increase the exemption threshold to roughly \$75,000 per year; and

Whereas the increase will gradually phase in over seven years with a lower threshold for small employers; and

Whereas the new threshold will be the highest in the nation but will still well below historical levels, when the middle class was at its strongest; and

Whereas Washington state continues to be the best state in the union for businesses^[3] and small business^[4] thanks to our high minimum wage, secure scheduling laws, and other strong worker protections.

Therefore be it resolved that the 46th District Democrats urge the Washington State Department of Labor & Industry to finalize their proposed rule restoring the state's overtime threshold to a multiple of 2.5 times the state minimum wage.

Submitted by Hunter Brown, PCO 46-2252, originated by Civic-Ventures, for consideration by the 46th District Democrats. Date of submission: November 20, 2019.

^[1]Celine McNicholas, Samantha Sanders, and Heidi Shierholz, “What’s at stake in the states if the 2016 federal raise to the overtime pay threshold is not preserved—and what states can do

about it,” Economic Policy Institute, 2017, <https://www.epi.org/publication/whats-at-stake-in-the-states-if-the-2016-federal-raise-to-the-overtime-pay-threshold-is-not-preserved/>

[2]https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2014/09/02/the-average-work-week-is-now-47-hours/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.16f1f2acd33a

[3]<https://www.cNBC.com/2017/07/11/washington-is-americas-top-state-for-business-in-2017.html>

[4]<https://www.seattlebusinessmag.com/economy/seattle-metro-ranks-no-1-small-business-job-growth-while-national-rate-dips>