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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New data shows nearly 1 in 5 Albertans still earn \$15 per hour or less

Edmonton - Public Interest Alberta released new data from Statistics Canada today showing nearly 1 in 5 employed Albertans earn \$15 per hour or less.

“More than 340,000 employed Albertans are still earning low wages,” said Joel French, Executive Director of Public Interest Alberta. “The good news is that all of those workers will receive a raise when the minimum wage increases to \$15 per hour over the next year. A remaining challenge, however, is that \$15 per hour is still less than a living wage in Edmonton and Calgary.”

The data also showed that 60% of Alberta’s low wage workers are women.

“Gender inequality is still a major issue in the province,” continued French. “In every part of the province, women make up a clear majority of low wage workers. Increasing the minimum is one important way of addressing the gender pay gap.”

The data also included a breakdown by age and showed that more than 260,000 (76.6%) low-wage workers are 20 years of age or older.

“It is a popular myth that most low-wage workers are teenagers still relying on their parents’ support,” added French. “The vast majority are at least 20 years old. They are in their prime earning years, and many are planning for or supporting their families. These are the workers seeing the benefits of increases to the minimum wage.”

For more information, visit <https://pialberta.org/LowWage2017>

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