

Sept. 29, 2006

Washington's minimum wage to increase to \$7.93 an hour Jan. 1

TUMWATER - Washington's minimum wage will increase 30 cents to \$7.93 an hour beginning Jan. 1, 2007. The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) recalculates the state's minimum wage each year in September as required by Initiative 688, which was approved by Washington voters in 1998. The law requires that the state minimum wage be adjusted each year according to the change in the federal Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) during the 12 months ending each Aug. 31.

The CPI-W measures the average change in prices on a fixed "market basket" of goods and services such as food, shelter, medical care, transportation and other goods and services people purchase for day-to-day living. It increased 3.9 percent during the 12-month period ending Aug. 31, compared to a 3.8 percent increase during the same period in 2005.

That increase, applied to Washington's current minimum wage of \$7.63 an hour, generated a 30-cent increase in next year's minimum wage. Washington's minimum wage applies to workers in both agricultural and non-agricultural jobs, although 14 and 15-year-olds may be paid 85 percent of the adult minimum wage.

For more information on Washington's minimum wage, go to Wages.LNI.wa.gov and select "Minimum Wage." Employers and workers may also call 360-902-5316 or tollfree 1-866-219-7321 for more information.

###

For media information: Elaine Fischer, L&I, 360-902-5413 or nele235LNI.wa.gov.