

rate and tariff approvals, wetlands permits, grazing permits, plant licenses or permits, drug and medical device approvals, new source review permits, hunting and fishing take limits, incidental take permits and habitat conservation plans, broadcast licenses, and product approvals, including approvals that set forth the conditions under which a product may be distributed.

Subsection 804(3)(B) excludes "any rule relating to agency management or personnel" from the definition of a rule. Pursuant to subsection 804(3)(C), however, a "rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice," is only excluded if it "does not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties." The committees' intent in these subsections is to exclude matters of purely internal agency management and organization, but to include matters that substantially affect the rights or obligations of outside parties. The essential focus of this inquiry is not on the type of rule but on its effect on the rights or obligations of non-agency parties.

GRAND OPENING OF MAIN BRANCH, SAN FRANCISCO LI- BRARY

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 1996

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on the 90th anniversary of the devastating 1906 San Francisco earthquake, to celebrate with the city of San Francisco a monumental achievement of community cooperation and commitment. I invite my colleagues to join me in conveying our congratulations and admiration to the people of San Francisco who have committed their precious resources to the construction of the new main branch of the San Francisco Library, a beautiful and highly functional testament to the love that San Franciscans have for their city and for books and education. It is a love that has found its voice through the coordinated efforts of corporations, foundations, and individuals.

A library should reflect the pride, the culture, and the values of the diverse communities that it serves. The San Francisco main library will undoubtedly be successful in reaching this goal. The library will be home to special centers dedicated to the history and interests of African-Americans, Chinese-Americans, Filipino-Americans, Latino-Americans, and gays and lesbians. The library will be designed to serve the specialized needs of the businessman as well as the immigrant newcomer. It will become home to the diverse communities that make San Francisco unique among metropolitan areas of the world. It will also become a home, most importantly, that serves to unite.

The new San Francisco main library represents an opportunity to preserve and disperse the knowledge of times long since passed. The book serves as man's most lasting testament and the library serves as our version of a time machine into the past, the present and the future. This library, built upon the remains of the old City Hall destroyed 90 years ago today, is a befitting tribute to the immortality of thought. Buildings will come as they will most definitely pass, but the books of this new library and the information that they hold are eternal and serve as an indelible

foundation that cannot be erased by the passage of time.

The expanded areas of the new main library will provide space for numerous hidden treasures that no longer will be hidden. The people of San Francisco will have the opportunity to reacquire themselves with numerous literary treasures previously locked behind the dusty racks of unsightly storage rooms.

Although the new San Francisco main library serves as a portal into our past, it also serves to propel us into the future. It is an edifice designed to stoke the imagination by providing access to the numerous streams of information that characterize our society today. The technologically designed library will provide hundreds of public computer terminals to locate materials on-line, 14 multimedia stations, as well as access to data bases and the Information Superhighway. It will provide education and access for those previously unable to enter the "computer revolution." The library will provide vital access and communication links so that it can truly serve as a resource for the city and for other libraries and educational institutions throughout the region. The new library will serve as an outstanding model for libraries around the world to emulate.

Like an educational institution, the San Francisco Library will be a repository of human knowledge, organized and made accessible for writers, students, lifelong learners and leisure readers. It will serve to compliment and expand San Francisco's existing civic buildings—City Hall, Davies Symphony Hall, Brooks Hall, and the War Memorial and Performing Arts Center. The library serves as a symbiotic commitment between the city of San Francisco and its people. In 1988, when electorates across the country refused to support new bond issues, the people of San Francisco committed themselves to a \$109.5 million bond measure to build the new main library building and to strengthen existing branch libraries. Eight years later those voices are still clearly heard and they resonate with the dedication of this unique library, built by a community to advance themselves and their neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, on this day, when we celebrate the opening of the new main branch of the San Francisco Library, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the community of San Francisco for their admirable accomplishments and outstanding determination.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID J. WHEELER

HON. WES COOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 1996

Mr. COOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, on February 1, 1996, the President signed H.R. 2061, a bill to designate the Federal building in Baker City, OR in honor of the late David J. Wheeler. As the congressional representative for Baker City, and as the sponsor of H.R. 2061, I recently returned to Baker City for the building dedication ceremony. Mr. Wheeler, a Forest Service employee, was a model father and an active citizen. In honor of Mr. Wheeler, I would like to submit, for the record, my speech at the dedication ceremony.

Thank you for inviting me here today. It has been an honor to sponsor the congress-

sional bill to designate this building in memory of David Wheeler. I did not have the privilege of knowing Mr. Wheeler myself, but from my discussions with Mayor Griffith—and from researching his accomplishments—I've come to know what a fine man he was. I know that Mr. Wheeler was a true community leader, and I know that the community is that much poorer for his passing. With or without this dedication, his spirit will remain within the Baker City community.

Mayor Griffith, I have brought a copy of H.R. 2061—the law to honor David Wheeler. The bill has been signed by the President of the United States, by the Speaker of the House, and by the President of the Senate. Hopefully, this bill will find a suitable place within the new David J. Wheeler Federal Building.

I'd like to offer my deepest sympathy to the Wheeler family, and to everyone here who knew him. And, I'd like to offer a few words from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow—who once commented on the passing-away of great men. His words—I think—describe Mr. Wheeler well:

If a star were quenched on high,
For ages would its light,
Still traveling down from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight.

So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men."

So too with David Wheeler. His light will shine on the paths of us all—particularly of his family—for the rest of our days.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 1996

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, April 17, 1996, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

Rewarding work is a fundamental American value. There are many ways to achieve that goal, including deficit reduction to boost the economy, opening markets abroad to our products, improving education and skills training, and investing in technology and infrastructure. Increasing wages must be a central objective of government policies.

The economy is improving. It has in recent years reduced the unemployment rate of 5.6%, cut the budget deficit nearly in half, and spurred the creation of 8.4 million additional jobs. Real hourly earning has now begun to rise modestly, and the tax cut in 1993 for 15 million working families helped spur economic growth.

But much work needs to be done. We must build on the successes of the last few years, and address the key challenges facing our economy, including the problem of stagnant wages. This problem will not be solved overnight, but one action we can take immediately, and which I support, is to raise the minimum wage.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

The minimum wage was established in 1938 in an attempt to assist the working poor, usually non-union workers with few skills and little bargaining power. The wage has been increased 17 times, from 25 cents per hour in 1938 to \$4.25 per hour in 1991. Currently some 5 million people work for wages at or below \$4.25 per hour, and most of them are adults rather than teenagers.

I support a proposal to increase the minimum wage 90 cents over two years, from its current level of \$4.25 per hour to \$5.15 per hour. The first 45 cents of the new increase would not even restore the buying power the minimum wage has lost since the last increase five years ago. Inflation has already eaten away 81% of that increase. If we do not act to increase the minimum wage this year, it will fall to a 40 year low in terms of purchasing power.

WHO EARNS MINIMUM WAGE

The typical minimum wage worker is a white woman over age 20 working in the service sector or the retail industry. About 60% of the minimum wage earners are women, and about 70% of the 12 million workers who would benefit from a minimum wage increase—since their wages are less than \$5.15 per hour—are 20 years of age or older. The average minimum wage worker brings home half of the family's earnings, so an increase in the minimum wage can make a real difference.

An increase in the minimum wage would benefit over 315,000 Hoosiers, or 12.4% of the Indiana workforce, and would mean an additional \$1800 in earnings each year.

EFFECT ON JOBS

Opponents of a minimum wage increase claim that it will wipe out jobs. But the weight of the evidence today supports the conclusion that a moderate minimum wage increase would not have a significant impact on job levels, because it would help boost productivity and lower employee turnover. Over 100 economists, including several Nobel laureates, have urged the President and Congress to approve a minimum wage increase and have affirmed that it would not have a significant effect on employment.

Opponents of a minimum wage increase also criticize it as being an inefficient way to alleviate poverty. In a sense they are right. A minimum wage increase is not as well targeted as the earned income tax credit, which directly benefits low-paid workers either by cutting their taxes or, if they owe no tax, giving them a check from the Treasury. The credit is structured to encourage the poor to go to work without hitting their employers. My view is that the best anti-poverty strategy is probably to mix minimum wages with tax credits.

There are limits, however, to how much higher Congress can push the tax credit. The problem, of course, with increases in the earned income tax credit is that it costs the government billions of dollars that it does not have, and won't for many years. I do not, however, support efforts by Speaker Gingrich to reduce the earned income tax credit.

A MATTER OF FAIRNESS

Surely we want to help ensure that people who work hard can get ahead. Raising the income of America's lowest paid workers is part of meeting that challenge. If we value work, we ought to raise the value of the minimum wage. Most people believe that somebody who works a 40-hour week ought to make a wage they can live on. It is hard to believe that people can oppose that notion.

I have been particularly troubled by growing income inequality in this country, and the declining value of the minimum wage only contributes to that problem. For most of the past four decades the minimum wage averaged between 45% and 50% of the average hourly wage in the economy. After a small gain in 1990 and 1991, the minimum wage has now dropped to 38% of the average hourly wage.

My view is that the minimum wage should be increased as a simple matter of fairness to unskilled workers. These workers are not protected by unions. They cannot and do not

lobby Congress. The minimum wage offers a margin of security to those who want a job rather than a handout. For a rich country like America, that's not too much to provide.

I have been frustrated in Congress in recent weeks when we were even denied an opportunity to vote on a raise in the minimum wage. It is unfair to refuse to allow a vote on the increase in the minimum wage, which is supported by 75% of the American people.

CONCLUSION

I don't for a moment think that an increase in the minimum wage is ultimately the cure for low working wages in this country, but until we find an answer to that broader question fundamental decency requires us to increase the income of the lowest-income working Americans.

I talked to a person earning minimum wage the other day. When pay day comes, she is several days late on the rent, the fuel tank on her automobile has to be filled, she is unable to buy enough food, her family is not healthy and needs medical help, and the utility companies are about ready to shut the power off. She is faced with miserable choices. But she said she was proud to be a working person, and only wished she could make a living for her family.

An increase in the minimum wage would help families get by. It would reward work, giving 12 million workers a direct increase, and it would be good for the American economy.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 159, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT RELATING TO TAXES

SPEECH OF

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 15, 1996

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to House Joint Resolution 159. This constitutional change is unnecessary and misguided, and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

This initiative strikes at the very heart of our constitutional democracy, eroding the principle of majority rule. The Constitution requires a supermajority only in extraordinary circumstances, such as a veto override or impeachment of a President. This resolution would give a small minority of this House the power to block critical bills—even responsible legislation designed to balance the Federal budget—if you contain a tax increase. If Congress can declare war by a simple majority vote, surely we can pass a tax bill by the same margin.

I also foresee difficulties defining a tax increase. Earlier this year, the Republican House majority passed a bill reducing the earned income tax credit, a tax credit for our Nation's working poor. That measure effectively increased low-income Americans' taxes by reducing their credit. However, the GOP did not consider that bill a tax increase. It is likely we will see similar controversies. If Congress eliminates an unjustified tax deduction, thereby resulting in a tax bracket change for an individual or a corporation, does that constitute a tax increase? Would it require a supermajority to right this hypothetical wrong? The answer is uncertain as this legislation is currently written.

The resolution's provision waiving the two-thirds requirement for de minimis tax increases is also troublesome. By failing to define a de minimis increase, the resolution abdicates responsibility for developing this guideline and turns it over to the Federal courts. The courts will undoubtedly spend many years and thousands of taxpayers dollars delineating precisely what is meant by this term.

There are other technical difficulties with the measure. It does not define the time period over which a tax increase must be estimated in order to trigger the two-thirds requirement. Similarly, this amendment does not address situations where bills projected to decrease tax revenues actually increase taxes. Closing loopholes in the Tax Code could also be almost impossible if these efforts were subject to a two-thirds vote on the House.

Mr. Speaker, I would also note that the Republican-controlled House has not even been able to live under its own rule that income tax increases must be passed by a three-fifths vote. This rule has been waived three times in this Congress, allowing income tax bills to pass by a simple majority. If the GOP violates the spirit of its own rules, what will prohibit it from circumventing a constitutional amendment in a similar way?

House Joint Resolution 159 is the fourth attempt by this Republican Congress to amend the "Constitution—the most ever since the post-civil war period. I urge my colleagues to vote against this resolution.

A PROCLAMATION REMEMBERING SHELLY McPECK KELLY

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 1996

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I commend the following article to my colleagues:

Whereas, Shelly McPeck Kelly, a United States Air Force Technical Sergeant that died in the plane crash along with Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, and

Whereas, Shelly McPeck Kelly, was a loyal and devoted wife, and loving mother of two; and,

Whereas, Shelly McPeck Kelly, served faithfully as an airplane stewardess in the United States Air Force achieving the rank of Technical Sergeant, and

Whereas, Shelly McPeck Kelly, should be commended for her service to the United States of America during the Bosnian Peace-keeping Operation; and,

Whereas, the residents of Eastern Ohio join me in honoring Shell McPeck Kelly for her brave and loyal citizenship to the United States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 1996

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I inadvertently voted "no" on H.R. 842 the truth-in-budgeting bill, thinking that I was voting on an amendment. Had I known that I was voting on final passage, I would have voted "yes."