

### MINIMUM WAGE: MINIMUM OPPORTUNITIES

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I really wonder if the President and the Democrats are truly interested in raising the minimum wage or is it just that they want to score some political points? When they controlled Congress back in 1992 and 1993 with President Clinton in the White House, why was not an increase in the minimum wage on the agenda? Maybe they were too busy raising taxes on gas, on Social Security, on small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I have to look at this comment that the President made in 1993. President Clinton said, "The minimum wage," and I am quoting, "The minimum wage is the wrong way to raise incomes of low-wage earners." But then again, I guess we really cannot believe what the President says from day to day or time to time.

By the way, if my colleagues think 90 cents an hour is going to save working families, I say my colleagues' priorities are in the wrong place. We need to provide tax relief to our families, not 90 cents an hour. Lowering taxes will raise incomes.

### FAMILIES NEED TO EARN A LIVABLE WAGE

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, we are hearing a lot of excuses from the majority these days about why we do not need to increase the minimum wage. Mr. Speaker, I know firsthand why families need to earn a livable wage.

Over 28 years ago I was a single working mother with three small children, receiving no child support. Even though I was working, I was earning so little that I had to go on welfare to take care of my children. I tell my colleagues this, Mr. Speaker, because too many families today face the same situation.

In spite of what the majority whip has said about minimum wage and about earning \$4.25 an hour, almost 5 million Americans work for at or below minimum wage, and I am not talking about teenagers looking for extra cash. Rather, the average minimum wage earner looks a lot like I did 28 years ago, an adult woman supporting her family by herself. Today that mother is worse off because the purchasing power of the minimum wage has plummeted to a 40-year low.

Clearly, it is time to make work pay by increasing the minimum wage now.

### TRIBUTE TO THE LATE GILBERT MURRAY

(Mr. HERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Gilbert Murray, former President of the California Forestry Association. Today marks the 1-year anniversary of Gil's tragic death at the hands of the Unabomber.

Today, I will not dwell on the tragedy of Gil's death, but rather on the greatness of his life. Gil was a respected professional leader. He advocated good stewardship of our forests to keep them beautiful and productive for our children and grandchildren.

More importantly, Gil was a leader in his home. Despite his professional commitments, he always made his family his priority. He was never too busy for his wife and two sons.

In every way Gilbert Murray was an exemplary man. I speak for many in northern California in saying that we remember him fondly and miss him greatly.

### THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN: RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the American people have spoken. The latest polls show that 85 percent of Americans are in favor of raising the minimum wage.

I will say to my Republican colleagues, they have lost the battle in the court of public opinion.

So what does the Republican leadership now plan to do? Instead of following the will of the American people, they are following the will of corporate America and the fat cats who have funded their campaigns. That is immoral.

The latest Republican shell game will eliminate the earned income tax credit and then exclude workers without children from getting a raise. The rationale is to save \$15 billion and give more breaks to big, big business. This ridiculous proposal takes working families one step forward and knocks them two steps back.

My colleagues, if we want to help working families, we must insist on a clean minimum wage bill with no strings attached, and vote to raise the minimum wage without delay.

### RENEWABLE ENERGY EXPO 1996

(Mr. SCHAEFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAEFER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge Members to visit the Renewable Energy Expo 1996, taking place today from noon to 3 p.m. in the Cannon Caucus Room.

This exhibit, being sponsored by three dozen trade associations, industry groups, and businesses, offers you

the opportunity to inspect the latest American renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies. You can ask the groups' representatives questions about their projects throughout the country, including some which may be operating in your own district.

The renewable energy expo is being put on in cooperation with the House Renewable Energy Caucus, a bipartisan group I founded in February along with six other Members. This caucus has grown 10 times in size—to 70 members—in less than 3 months, demonstrating the broad support renewables enjoy in Congress and throughout the country, renewables for our children and their grandchildren.

I hope you can stop by the Cannon Caucus Room today to see vivid demonstrations of our country's energy future.

### REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP DENIES MINIMUM-WAGE WORKERS EVEN EXIST

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues are reaching new heights of desperation as they scurry to dodge a vote on raising the minimum wage, even though the minimum wage is at a 40-year low, even though a 90-cent increase would help over 10 million workers in this country, and even though the average minimum-wage worker brings home more than half of his or her family's income.

It might be interesting to note that Members of this Congress earned more during the shutdown of this Government during the Christmas holidays than a full-time minimum-wage worker makes in an entire year. But despite all that, the Republican leadership will go to any length to kill an increase in the minimum wage. They are not even afraid of resorting to fantasy.

Yesterday the House majority whip said, "Emotional appeals about working families trying to get by on \$4.25 an hour are hard to resist. Fortunately, such families don't really exist."

They do not believe that people do exist on the \$8,500 a year or are trying to exist on that amount of money. Tell it to the 300,000 families in this country who are minimum-wage workers. Let us go to a clean, straight vote on raising the minimum wage.

### LIBERALS REACHING NEW HEIGHTS IN DEMAGOGUERY

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, the liberals in Congress have reached new heights in demagoguery in the last few months, and with the help of the liberal media and the big special interests, AFL-CIO, they have been able to

label anything that Republicans attempt to do as extreme or radical.

Mr. Speaker, truth always has a way of rearing its ugly head, and while the liberal Democrats were misleading Americans about the environment and while they were out demagoging about the balanced budget, the Medicare Program has incurred the largest losses in its history.

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In the first half of this fiscal year Medicare has lost \$4.2 billion, and I would just say it has got to be true because I am holding the Santa Barbara News-Press, owned by the New York Times, and here is the front page article from the April 22 issue: "Medicare Trust Fund Loses \$4 Billion. Clinton Administration Downplays Apparent Miscalculations." So as I said, even the liberal press is exposing that, and I would just say the President vetoed it and now we see his party's inaction on solving and preserving Medicare.

#### REPUBLICANS FIX MEDICARE BY CUTTING BENEFITS

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, here they go again. My colleagues on the other side, the Republicans, are now talking about how they want to fix Medicare essentially by cutting Medicare and using the money to pay for tax breaks for the wealthy. We had this all through 1995. Now they are trying to distort the information that came out in the New York Times about the Medicare trust fund, to go ahead with their radical plan to cut Medicare in order to pay for these tax breaks for wealthy Americans.

Well, let me tell the Members that this trust fund is not broke. We know now that it has \$126.1 billion in surplus. This small deficit that was incurred in the first 6 months of this year does not justify going ahead with this radical plan to cut Medicare and give back these tax breaks to wealthy Americans.

The Republican leadership has refused to sit down with President Clinton and try to work on a bipartisan basis to come up with an answer for Medicare to make sure it is solvent. We are not talking about today. We are not even talking about the next few years. This insolvency, if it occurs, is I think 2001 or 2002. Do not let it be an excuse on the part of the Republicans to give these tax breaks to wealthy Americans.

#### INTRODUCING THE REGULATORY FAIR WARNING ACT

(Mr. GEKAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, too often we hear stories about the small busi-

nessman who hires and employs three or four people, and then gets slapped with a legal action by a Federal agency on a matter on which the small businessman knows very little about its background or its effect. So what does a small businessman have as an option? One, he can hire a lawyer to try to defend against a wrong about which he did not know; or, in the second place, just pay the fine or other sanction that the agency requires because that is the easiest way to go.

I am today introducing the Regulatory Fair Warning Act, which would require the agencies to provide reasonable notice ahead of time of the change of a regulation or how it is to be enforced so that the small businessman, the employer, can try to comply with that without having been hit with a legal action, not knowing what he was supposed to do. This is a fair warning whose time has come.

#### REPUBLICAN MEDICARE CURE IS WORSE THAN THE AILMENT

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues who come here to sound an alarm on Medicare, even though this alleged shortfall has already been known by CBO and they have taken it into account, although almost every year we have been responding within Ways and Means to make sure the Medicare fund stays solvent.

The trouble with the Republican approach is that their cure has been far worse than the ailment, a heavy hit on seniors and providers to fund a tax cut for a very wealthy few. Their proposal gambles with the health of older Americans by excessive expenditure cuts and risky proposals.

In contrast, the President has proposed a plan that would extend the solvency of the part A hospital insurance trust fund through the next decade without hurting seniors.

What the Republicans are doing, sounding an alarm to put out a fire, they want to tear down the Medicare house. The public rejected it last year. They will reject it again this year.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S SOFT AND LIBERAL JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

(Mr. FUNDERBURK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, what the President does and what he says about judicial appointments are the mental equivalent of the great Joe Montana's play action, fake to the right and run to the left—and in this case, it is talking tough and acting soft. The President constantly talks about putting 100,000 cops on the beat but his judicial appointments are re-

leasing felons back on the streets where they can again prey on the unsuspecting American public. We need more than just laws against felons if the soft and liberal judges appointed by the President simply ignore the law and free them. What we really need are judges that will adhere to the spirit and letter of the law and punish violent criminals to the full extent of the law. We must not punish the American public again by allowing this disgraceful revolving door of justice.

If we want judges who are as concerned about the rights of law-abiding citizens and victims as they are about those of violent criminals, then we need a new President in the White House.

#### SUPPORT A CLEAN MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

(Ms. MCKINNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I sent this letter to my colleague from Georgia, Speaker GINGRICH, urging him to hold a vote on a clean minimum wage increase before the Memorial Day district work period.

And today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate on the floor of the House what I stated to Speaker GINGRICH in this letter.

In the letter I said:

The false link you are creating between a minimum wage increase and a reduction in worker protections, is little more than a cynical ploy to convince people earning \$8,400 a year that less safe working conditions are the price they must pay for a living wage. This Machiavellian approach is insensitive to the needs of thousands of working Georgians who struggle just to put food on the table. As of 1994, 11.9% of Georgia's workforce was earning between \$4.25 and \$5.14 an hour. A 90-cent increase would help these nearly 362,000 people make ends meet.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleague from the Sixth District of Georgia to permit a vote on a clean minimum wage increase.

#### CAMPAIGN REFORM

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, during the 104th Congress, we have made some very positive changes in how we do business around here. We have legislated more stringent lobbyist registration requirements, disclosure requirements of their activities. We have passed a new House rule that prohibits Members and staffs from accepting any gifts, including meals or event tickets, from lobbyists or any other individuals other than family and close friends.

This is a good start, but it has not changed the persistent perception across our country that special interest groups have an edge over individual contributors when it comes to election time.