

INCREASE IN MINIMUM WAGE WILL MEAN 500,000 JOB LOSS

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, today the Democrats say goodbye to 500,000 jobs, according to the Federal Reserve, which is what the impact of increasing the minimum wage will be. That is no problem, though, because most of those folks will get on public benefits, which is exactly where the Democrats want them, right under the thumb of the Government so they can create dependency on the Government.

Do my colleagues know who is on minimum wage? Sixty-six percent of the people are part-time workers. Thirty-nine percent of them are teenagers. Two percent are over 30 years old. And those who start with a minimum wage are making \$6.05 an hour within 1 year. It is an entry-level wage.

I started at minimum wage when I was 16 years old. I have worked minimum wage in the restaurant and the construction business. I learned skills, and as I learned them, I was paid more. That is how the private sector, the capitalistic free enterprise system, works.

I am sorry there are so many people who lean with socialistic tendencies to government solutions to every possible problem that is out there. I say let the private sector get out there and compete. Let us save the jobs and cut out the talk about increasing the wage.

AMERICANS DEMAND A CLEAN MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to follow my colleague from Georgia talking about that. If he had his way, we would still be 25 cents an hour from 1938. That was the first minimum wage.

After months of blocking attempts to increase the minimum wage, the House Republicans are finally going to allow us to have a vote. But my colleagues should not be fooled by this sham. It is not an increase, it is actually a cut. It is exempting millions of workers from the minimum wage.

This bill only will attach special interest provisions to exempt those millions from minimum wage. Eighty percent of the American people support an increase in the minimum wage, but the Republicans want it without the gimmicks of the exemptions for restaurant workers, the exemptions for computer operators, the exemptions they are providing.

They are actually taking people off the minimum wage benefit. That is what this sham is about. They do not really want a minimum wage. Just continue to listen to them. They do not want an increase in the minimum

wage. They do not want a minimum wage. They want everybody to work for a quarter an hour.

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WELFARE REFORM

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, as I speak, literally millions of Americans are trapped in a cycle of dependence known as the modern welfare state. It is a system characterized by drug abuse, fatherlessness, violence, and the wholesale destruction of the family. The welfare state encourages teen pregnancy and destroys the work ethic.

People have literally lost their freedom and their self-respect because of the so-called compassion of Washington's liberals.

When he ran for the Presidency, Bill Clinton said that he would end welfare as we know it. Instead he vetoed commonsense welfare reform, not once, but twice. As we've seen in so many other instances, his word cannot be trusted. Bill Clinton is playing politics with the lives of millions of Americans. His broken word guarantees the survival of the failed welfare system.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to reforming welfare, our President is the great pretender.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

(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, today the House takes up increasing the minimum wage, and, in what amounts to little more than a political dance, the Republican majority has designed the debate to ensure that we take one step forward and two steps back. By coupling an increase in the minimum wage with an amendment exempting companies with less than \$500,000 annual gross sales, the Republicans have assured a minimum wage increase that is unfair and is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, if the amendment passes, 10 million hard-working Americans will be excluded from the increase, and millions more Americans already covered will lose their coverage.

The gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY] was not kidding when he said he would, and I quote, resist an increase in the minimum wage with every fiber of his being. By increasing the minimum wage and making it less available, the Republican leadership is dancing around an issue that 80 percent of the American people support. In words that DICK ARMEY can understand, a country music song goes: One step forward, two steps back; nobody gets too far like that.

AMERICANS WANT WELFARE REFORM

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, welfare reform is something that the American people want. Both parties have promised to reform our current broken-down system, but I believe Republicans have delivered. This Republican Congress sent a strong welfare package to President Clinton, and he vetoed it.

Today Republicans are going to try again. We are introducing a strong welfare reform bill that concentrates on family and individual responsibility. Our package lifts families out of the destructive welfare cycle of poverty and despair. It stresses work, and allows States the flexibility to design programs that fight their residents' needs.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that this time around the President keeps his promise and signs a strong welfare reform package. His record on this issue has not gone unnoticed by the American people. It is time to reform welfare. Let us do it now.

REPUBLICANS AND THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, finally, after months of prodding and pleading with the Republican leadership, we are going to vote on increasing the minimum wage.

Not too long ago, Mr. Speaker, members of the Republican leadership were saying things like, and I quote,

I will resist an increase in the minimum wage with every fiber of my being.

Or,

I'll commit suicide before I vote on a clean minimum wage bill.

While the vote on increasing the minimum wage will only be an amendment to another bill, the fact of the matter is that the votes that we're taking today are neither clean nor real. NEWT GINGRICH and the Republicans have found yet another way to feed the American people a pig in a poke. This Republican political sleight of hand will actually repeal the minimum wage laws and exclude workers from minimum wage protections.

Mr. Speaker, we all feared that the Republicans would go too far. We all feared that the Republicans would serve their rich fat-cat friends at the expense of the rest of us. But, by their offerings today, they've confirmed that our worst fears have indeed come true.

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND WELFARE REFORM

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

Mr. BARLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, it is an election year, so President Clinton is campaigning as a born again conservative, but talk is cheap.

Take welfare reform. In his Saturday radio address, the President said: "Four years ago, I challenged America to end welfare as we know it."

Something funny happened to welfare reform after candidate Clinton became President Clinton. For 3 years—nothing. Then President Clinton vetoed comprehensive bipartisan welfare reform not once, but twice.

The President bragged that he has approved 38 waivers for State welfare reform.

The President neglected to mention that 27 States are still waiting for waivers or that the average wait for the President's approval is 210 days.

The President singled out Maryland's welfare reform for praise.

The President forgot to say that Maryland's Governor Glendening boasted that his personal friendship with the President reduced the waiting period before Maryland's waiver was approved to only 6 months.

It's outrageous for President Clinton to insist that Washington retain its grip on a failed national welfare system.

REPEAL OF THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, a few of the previous spokespersons on the other side talked about welfare reform. If we are going to reform welfare, we have to pay a livable wage for work.

Today, after months of prodding, we are finally going to get an amendment to raise the minimum wage. Only the Republican leadership could, under the guise of raising the minimum wage, actually repeal the minimum wage for millions of American workers. You see, currently those companies that do less than half a million dollars gross per year do not have to pay minimum wage if they are involved in interstate commerce. The Republicans think that is a mistake. So today, they say they are going to fix that.

What they are really going to do is to open the door for garment industry sweatshops, for industrial piecework. This is done in the home for sheltered workshops, for farm workers across this Nation who support their family, not to make a minimum wage. They are going to try to lower wages, see that there is no overtime pay, see that we are returned to long work hours, that we get rid of child labor abuses, protections. We have a situation where they are concerned about computer operators making a livable wage, waiters and waitresses, but they are not concerned about ECO's making 220 times what their workers make.

DEVICE FOR SELF-EXAMINATION OF BREASTS

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

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if I asked the Members of the House what this simple device is, I doubt that very many of my colleagues could tell me what it is. It is actually a breast sensor pad which is designed to be used by women to self-examine their breasts to see if they have breast cancer lumps.

Mr. Speaker, it took the FDA 10 years to approve this simple device for limited use under a doctor's prescription for women to self-examine their breasts. The gentlewoman from Nevada [Mrs. VUCANOVICH] and myself are introducing today a bill that would make this device, which literally could save thousands of lives each year, available over the counter so that millions of American women can go into their drugstore and purchase this and in the privacy of their home self-examine their breasts to see if they have cancer lumps. We desperately need to get this device available.

Nancy Brinker, whose sister, Susan B. Komen, died of breast cancer, and who has established a breast cancer research center in her sister's name, has told me that this simple device is very, very useful and should be available to every American woman who wishes to purchase it. Please join Congressman VUCANOVICH and myself in sponsoring this bill.

EXPLOITING PEOPLE

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today we are going to get a vote on the minimum wage, but unfortunately under the amendments offered by Speaker GINGRICH and the Republicans, they will repeal and take away the benefits of the minimum wage for up to 10 million American workers. For the students who work while going to school, for people who work all day in the sun to put food on our table, for the people who work in sweatshops, for people who wait on us in restaurants and for the disabled who are trying to earn a living and support themselves with their disabling condition, 10 million American workers will find that they will no longer have the protection of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the minimum wage.

NEWT GINGRICH is once again going to bring back the ability of employers to exploit children in the workplace, to exploit women in sweatshops, to exploit the disabled in sheltered workshops. This is not what the American people want. The American people want an increase in the minimum wage so those individuals who have chosen work over welfare will have the ability

to support their families, not to exploit those people.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN AMERICA

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, last night on the national news it was reported that Americans who have lost their jobs in the 1990s have had to stay out of work much longer than those who lost jobs in the 1980s.

In addition, those who have lost jobs in the 1990s have almost always ended up having to take jobs paying much less than the ones they lost, paying much less than the ones they lost. One and one-half million people have lost good jobs due to corporate downsizing in the last 3 years. We lost 3 million jobs last year due to our trade deficit with other countries. Our unemployment rate is relatively low, but our underemployment rate is terrible.

Most college graduates cannot find jobs in their degree fields, and we are ending up with the best educated waiters and waitresses in the world, yet our Federal Government continues to overtax and even worse overregulate our economy.

Today Government regulations and redtape are making it extremely difficult for small businesses and small farms to survive. We hear about economic insecurity, but many have been lulled into a false sense of complacency, primarily because the stock market is high.

THE POISON PILL IN RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, by now it is abundantly clear that the Republican leadership wants to kill the minimum wage with a poison pill. Let me explain. Right now 80 percent of the American population wants a raise in the minimum wage. There is bipartisan majorities in both Houses who support an increase in the minimum wage. Today we will have a bill to increase the minimum wage. So what is the problem? Where is the pill?

Well, in this bill there is an amendment that would exempt two-thirds of the companies from the requirements of the bill. That is to say, two-thirds of the companies would not have to pay the minimum wage, which means up to 10 million workers would not get the minimum wage. So we are witnessing today a sham, a minimum wage bill that the people want, that the majorities in Congress want, but that the Republican leadership refuses to bring forward.

They will not bring forward a clean minimum wage. They would rather perpetrate this sham and undermine real minimum wage increases.