

get a dollar raise in minimum wage. These are working mothers who have to pay child care, shelter, food, transportation. Most do not even have health care, so we have to pay that as taxpayers. I cannot believe this Nation ought to be outraged that we are debating whether or not we are going to raise minimum wage by one dollar, just one dollar, over a 2-year or a 3-year period. That is unconscionable. I do not know anyone in any State that can live on minimum wage and take care of all of their responsibilities. Their responsibilities become ours.

AID FOR COLOMBIA

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, there are those who compare providing aid to Colombia to providing aid to Vietnam. This is an expected but faulty comparison.

Unlike Vietnam, the consequences for failure in Colombia will not be another fallen domino in a far-off land. It will be more drug-related deaths in our own streets among our own children. Without immediate action on the proposed aid package to Colombia, the drug lords will continue, largely unimpeded, to produce and distribute their deadly drugs which kill almost as many American kids and young adults each year as died in Vietnam. That, Mr. Speaker, should be a wake-up call.

Because Colombia is right here in our own hemisphere and not halfway around the world, what happens there will affect us more profoundly than what happened in Vietnam. The fact that Colombia is only 4 hours away by plane and can be reached by a car or truck, it becomes that much more important for us to help the country fight the narco-terrorists. The drugs which enter the United States each day from Colombia are far more of a threat to our national security than any Communist regime in Southeast Asia.

MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last week the Republican majority and the Democratic minority passed with no negative votes the removal of caps on the Social Security earnings. But it seems the Republican majority did not learn how to pass legislation on a bipartisan basis. Today we have a Frankenstein piece of legislation. None of the parts fit together. Even the names do not fit. Bipartisan legislation should be what is on this floor, but instead we have a budget-busting tax cut that does not even help small business.

I support a minimum-wage increase. The Republican proposal falls short of meeting the needs of the American family. The Republican leadership is

more willing to push a budget-busting, debt-increasing \$123 billion tax cut that will go to the top 1 percent than to help American small business with a reasonable tax cut.

We are presently enjoying one of the strongest economies ever, but the benefits are not flowing fairly to both the working people but also to the small business. We need to bring legislation to this floor that provides a real pay increase and a tax package that is sensible and responsible, not one that is just going to increase our debt. Hopefully, we will see the error of our ways and reject this Frankenstein piece of legislation.

KILL THE DEATH TAX

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, we have all experienced the loss of a loved one. It is a time when family and friends come together to console each other in an effort to ease the sorrow. Unfortunately, it is also a time when the callous Federal tax collector comes knocking. Today when someone dies, the Federal Government assesses a tax of up to 55 percent on the value of their estate. As a result, approximately 70 percent of family-owned businesses and small farms are not passed on to the next generation, another loss that the grieving family and American society as a whole must endure.

But today, Mr. Speaker, we have the opportunity to ease this unfair burden. The Wage and Employment Growth Act reduces the top estate tax from 55 percent down to 50 by 2002 and will further reduce all rates by 1 percent in the years 2003 and 2004. Mr. Speaker, 77 percent of the American public believes the death tax is unfair and should be repealed. This will be one loss that the American family will not grieve for.

LEAVE "TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL" ON TELEVISION

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, hundreds of thousands of Americans signed petitions to have the popular TV show "Touched by an Angel" removed from television. They want it canceled. They said, quote-unquote, "It refers too much to God." Unbelievable. But just turn on the TV. Murder, rape, terrorism, graphic depiction of sex. Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Mass murder is okay, but God is offensive? I think it is time, ladies and gentlemen, for Congress to tell these petitioners to leave God and "Touched by an Angel" alone. Leave it on TV.

I yield back all the sex, drugs, and murder on television.

RELIEF FROM THE DEATH TAX

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, when someone in a family dies, the whole family necessarily goes through a very painful experience. Losing a loved one is difficult enough, but unfortunately the Government makes it even tougher. This is because of the death tax. Today when someone dies, the Federal Government assesses a tax of up to 55 percent on the value of his or her estate. This makes it nearly impossible for farmers to pass on the family farm to their children or for a small business owners to pass on their life's work to their children. This is ridiculous. Mr. Speaker, Americans should not have to visit both the IRS and the undertaker on the same day. We need to give Americans relief from the death tax. This week we are voting on the Small Business Tax Fairness Act which would lessen the tax bite families feel when a loved one passes away. This is the right thing to do. I hope my colleagues will join me in helping give the American people relief from the death tax.

SKYROCKETING FUEL PRICES

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, fuel prices are skyrocketing through the roof while Congress and the administration sit and twiddle their thumbs mumbling platitudes about waiting for the free market to work. I have got a news flash for the President, the Secretary of Energy and my colleagues that do not want to do anything.

There is no free market in oil. The huge oil conglomerates secretly conspire against consumers to drive up oil prices and the OPEC countries openly collude to reduce production and create an artificial shortage. The Justice Department should vigorously investigate and prosecute the price fixing and anti-competitive actions by the major oil companies. And the President as a big supporter of the WTO and rules-based trade should file a complaint against the OPEC nations.

The WTO charter, article 11, says that they cannot do this. They cannot artificially depress production. We should file a complaint and collect hundreds of millions of dollars in damages levied through the WTO organization. If the administration is willing to use the full force and credibility of the Government on behalf of a single banana exporter with no export production in the United States, then they should certainly act on behalf of U.S. consumers who are being gouged by OPEC and other oil-producing nations.

ADDRESSING THE DEATH TAX

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, with the economy strong and our government

taking in budget surpluses, the time has come to address some nagging fairness issues in our Tax Code. The House has already done that twice this year by passing relief from the marriage tax penalty and voting to end the Social Security earnings limit.

Now the time has come to address another unfair provision in our Tax Code, the death tax. Today, when a person dies, the Federal Government assesses a tax of up to 55 percent on the value of his or her estate. Thus, many Americans, small business owners and farmers, are unable to pass on their life's work to their children. This is totally unfair. Today, the House will be voting on the Small Business Tax Fairness Act which will deliver relief from the death tax. This commonsense legislation will make it easier for Americans to pass on a small business to the next generation. We should all support this bill that will help restore the American dream to American families. In fact, we ought to get rid of the unfair death tax altogether.

TIME TO INCREASE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of increasing the minimum wage for America's workers. In West Virginia alone, at least 5 percent of the hourly workforce makes the bare minimum wage, but by raising it from \$5.15 an hour to \$6.15 an hour over 2 years, at least 106,000 workers would get an increase. That would also mean 50,000 full-time workers in West Virginia would see an increase in their wages. Who are they? It is the senior citizen who is cooking the biscuits in a convenience store. It is the mother who is working full time at a health care center. Today in West Virginia, a full-time minimum-wage worker with two children earns \$10,700 a year, or \$3,200 below the Federal poverty line. I hear the argument that the minimum wage only goes to students. I was one of those students working my way through college on the minimum wage, and the only wage increase I ever got was when this Congress raised the minimum wage. It is time to give workers an increase.

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THE PRESIDENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in his comments about giving China MFN, the President said, "I believe the choice between economic rights and human rights, between economic security and national security is a false one."

If that is the case, Mr. President, why is the Chinese Government continuing to persecute the Catholic Church? Why is the Chinese Government persecuting the Protestant Church? Why is the Clinton administration going against its own human rights report and not speaking out for those who are being plundered and killed in Tibet? Why is the Chinese government persecuting the Muslims in China? Why, if one reads today's Washington Times, are we allowing the Chinese Government to increase its spying activities in the United States?

Mr. President, if you really believe that there is no connection, then you have not read your own human rights report.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair would advise Members to address the Chair and not the President.

INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTION OF CHILDREN MUST BE STOPPED

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell the story of Tom Sylvester and his daughter Carina. Her story is the fifth account in my series of one minutes on the more than 10,000 American children who have been abducted to foreign countries.

Carina Sylvester was born in 1994 and was abducted by her mother Monika in 1995 and was taken to Austria. An Austrian trial court found Monika Sylvester to have violated The Hague Convention, but she refused to comply with the court order and did not voluntarily return Carina. Carina is now 5 years old and has lived in the home of her maternal grandparents in Graz, Austria; and since 1995, Tom has seen Carina only occasionally and only under strict supervision.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation has an enormous problem with children who have been abducted internationally and Congress must be part of the solution. These one minutes are about families and reuniting children and parents. They are just the first steps in our ongoing dialogue with the American people and my colleagues in an effort to bring our children home.

THE TRAFFICKING OF BABY BODY PARTS

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, last night ABC's 20/20 brought something very important to the public's attention, the trafficking of babies'

body parts and organs. Even today the House Subcommittee on Health and Environment is holding a hearing on this issue.

As a physician and a Congressman, I find this practice disturbing, disgusting, and, of course, highly immoral; but the truth of the matter is that this is currently going on in our country. Evidence has shown us that private companies and even public universities buy and sell baby organs for the sole purpose of experimentation. It has been brought to my attention that they pay as much as \$150 for skin, \$990 for a brain, and \$325 for a spinal cord.

To make it worse, companies are making special syringes for abortion doctors so that they can prolong the abortion procedure itself and keep the baby alive long enough to get more money for these parts.

This practice is illegal. It is against the law. It is outrageous, and it boils down to human exploitation and death. I encourage my colleagues to oppose it.

THERE SHOULD BE AN INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of working families across America. I am speaking in behalf of a \$1.00 increase of the minimum wage over the next 2 years and opposing the passage of tax provisions of the Republicans' H.R. 3081.

The minimum wage proposal would benefit 11.8 million families and allow some comfort and economic dignity. Forty percent of minimum-wage working families are the sole bread winners in their families.

Raising the minimum wage would not cost additional jobs. It is our responsibility to allow everyone, I state everyone, a chance in America to have that dream, that opportunity, to enjoy life, an opportunity of quality of life by earning wages that are so important to a lot of us.

Raising the minimum wage, increasing it from \$5.15 an hour, is our responsibility. We have the responsibility to assure that people can afford a decent living. We have individuals who cannot afford to pay for food to put on the table. We have the responsibility to make sure that America enjoys life a lot better. Let us increase the minimum wage.

SELLING OF BABY BODY PARTS MUST BE STOPPED

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

Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the health risks to women that the sale of body parts represents. The evidence that these parts have actually been