

Today, the House recognizes that 37 million people living in poverty is not acceptable. And this should mark a new beginning.

Toward concerning all—because a loving nation looks out for the health and wellness of all its people.

Today's a step towards a livable wage—not just a minimum wage.

Toward economic justice.

PASS FAIR MINIMUM WAGE ACT

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

Mr. LOEBACK. Mr. Speaker, the Fair Minimum Wage Act is aptly named because this legislation is about fairness, about shrinking the ever-widening gap between those who can afford to live in our society and those who struggle every day to make ends meet.

My constituents in Iowa and people across America are working harder, but they are not receiving the fruits of their labor, and many face daily financial hardships.

I am very concerned that while Congress has failed to raise the minimum wage for the past 10 years, the salaries of the Members of this body have risen dramatically. For the past 10 years, the minimum wage remains stagnant at \$5.15 an hour, but annual congressional salaries rose by more than three times what a minimum wage earner makes in a year.

I call on all of my colleagues today to promptly increase the minimum wage and show America that we are about fairness, about rewarding those who work hard day in and day out.

MINIMUM WAGE IS ARBITRARY NUMBER

(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, despite vastly overwhelming numbers, I rise to address the House, and I apparently represent the entire body on this side of the aisle.

I want to say this to my Democrat friends, and I understand the vote here and I understand the politics of minimum wage, but why \$7.50 an hour, \$7.15, whatever it is? Why not \$8? Why not \$9? It is an arbitrary number anyhow. Maybe \$15, maybe \$20 an hour. It is an arbitrary number. If we are command and control, central government planning anyhow, why is \$7 an hour sufficient?

In 1980, 15 percent of the workers in America were on minimum wage. Today, it is 2.5 percent. Who are they? Fifty-two percent are teenagers. Thirty percent are part-timers. And 40 percent have never held a job before.

Many studies show that when the minimum wage increases, small businesses who will be most affected actually decrease the number of jobs, thus hurting those whom we are supposed to be helping.

I would say to you that the reason most jobs do not pay minimum wage anymore is because the economy has moved the central government planning of Congress and the thinking of 1938 which set the law in motion to begin with. With that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the debate today.

PASS MINIMUM WAGE ACT

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007, and I am glad it will pass today in the House of Representatives, because for too long the disparity between the wealthiest and the poor has been going on and continuing to grow in America. And it is in no small part due to the Republicans not raising the minimum wage in almost 10 years.

Imagine this, you work for \$5.15 an hour. You work all year round, and not your take-home pay but your gross pay is \$10,700. That is \$6,000 below the poverty level for a family of three every year.

The minimum wage has not gone up. Real income, the buying power of the dollar has gone down for Americans. And the cost of health insurance, of gasoline, of home heating, of tuition at college has gone up by \$5,000 since the year 2000. So this is an important law to pass today.

SUPPORTING MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure that my first public words on this sacred floor address an issue of utmost importance to the citizens of this great Nation.

Today, we will be considering H.R. 2, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007, to give 13 million Americans a pay raise. This is legislation which I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of.

Increasing the minimum wage is necessary. It is a necessary step to help 38 million Americans living in poverty. Yet the Congress for almost 10 years has failed to assist this population by increasing the minimum wage to a decent wage. An increase in the minimum wage would help nearly 700,000 Georgia workers.

As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, the majority leadership of the 109th Congress felt it necessary to award themselves a pay raise despite the fact that they worked just over 100 days in 2006. Given that more than half of Americans will benefit from this wage increase, I am looking forward to Americans getting a fair wage today and have this bill pass.

Given that more than half of Americans who will benefit from this wage increase work a full

week every week, it is time for this Congress to increase the minimum wage and give America's hardest workers a fair wage for a fair day's work.

□ 1030

FAUX KLINGONS SENDING REAL AMERICANS TO WAR

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

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, 4 years ago, this administration took America to war in Iraq without adequate evidence. Since that time, the administration has not listened to the American people, it hasn't listened to our professional military, and it certainly hasn't listened to this Congress.

It was said of a prominent businessman in downtown Portland that he never listened to anybody and that if he was ever drawn in a cartoon he would be drawn without ears.

Now, this President has listened to some people, the so-called Vulcans in the White House, the ideologues. But unlike the Vulcans of Star Trek, who made the decisions based on logic and fact, these guys make it on ideology. These aren't Vulcans. There are Klingons in the White House. But unlike the real Klingons of Star Trek, these Klingons have never fought a battle of their own.

Don't let faux Klingons send real Americans to war. It is wrong.

ANSWERING THE CHALLENGE TO THE ESCALATION OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate an historic event that occurred in this Chamber 91 years ago during the middle of the Great War, the war to end all wars.

On January 10, 1918, this House passed a constitutional amendment granting women the right to vote by a vote of 274 to 136. Representative Jeanette Rankin from Montana, the first woman to serve in this body, whose statue appears in Statuary Hall and who became the first woman to serve in Congress in 1917, asked her male colleagues this important question in asking them to support that amendment: "How shall we answer the challenge, gentlemen?"

Her question is worth repeating today as President Bush prepares to escalate the war in Iraq. We need to repeat her question: How shall we answer this challenge?

SUPPORT THE STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT ACT

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, today, we will have the

chance to grant relief to millions of Americans toiling under an unjust minimum wage, but later this week we will also have the opportunity to grant relief to the millions of Americans who are suffering from debilitating and life-threatening diseases by passing the bipartisan Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act.

In Connecticut, I was proud to have overseen passage of the Nation's first law investing State funds in life-saving stem cell research. But our \$100 million success story in Connecticut was a bit-sweet one, since our effort was made necessary only by the Federal Government's failure to act.

Mr. Speaker, I will be even prouder to join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle this week to support legislation that will buttress the hopes of millions of Americans with the tangible support and resources of their Federal Government, and I hope that this unprecedented show of support here in the people's House will give our President cause to reconsider his unfounded and unpopular decision to oppose this life-saving initiative.

WAR IN IRAQ OF BENEFIT TO NO ONE

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States is going to urge a troop escalation in Iraq. I must protest this for the following reasons:

This war was wrong from the beginning. Our focus should have been Afghanistan. We had a real opportunity to bring freedom and change to Afghanistan. Instead, we diverted our attention to Iraq with disastrous results.

More troops will not bring the United States more support from the Iraqis, but it will bring our troops and the people of Iraq more misery, more fighting, more injuries and more death.

We are spending our children's future in this war.

There are no benefits to either the United States, to Iraq or to the world.

RIGHTING A WRONG FOR OUR WORKING FAMILIES

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that what will be going on today is righting a wrong for working families in America, and that is raising the minimum wage.

It has been a full 10 years since President Clinton was able to raise the minimum wage to help the people who work for us on a daily basis. With all the increased costs we have today, of housing, of health care, it is just impossible for people to be able to make it. In Ohio, we have seen people suffer because the minimum wage has not been relevant to what is going on in their life.

Many years ago, Henry Ford was criticized for saying that he paid his workers better than others, and his logic was his workers would be able to buy the cars that they manufactured. We want the people today to be able to have the right to be able to buy the things that they need, certainly for their families. So raising the minimum wage is the right thing to do.

DEMOCRATS MAKE GOOD ON THEIR PROMISE TO TAKE AMERICA IN A NEW DIRECTION

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, Democrats promised that if the American people trusted us with control of Congress, we would take America in a new direction. So far, we have made good on our promise to break the link between lobbyists and legislation, and we reinstituted pay-as-you-go budgeting.

But our work is not done. We are now in our first 100 hours of legislation, and already we have passed legislation that will make America more secure by implementing the independent 9/11 Commission recommendations.

Today, we will give Americans a much-needed pay raise by increasing the minimum wage; later this week, we are going to begin making health care more affordable by giving the Federal Government the ability to negotiate for lower prescription drug prices; and tomorrow we are going to give hope to millions of Americans by allowing stem cell research. Next week, we will also move down the path to energy independence by ending subsidies to Big Oil and investing in renewable energy.

Democrats promise to deliver so we can take America in a new direction.

ELECTION OF MINORITY MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 45) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 45

Resolved, That the following named members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.—Mr. Everett, Mr. Lucas, Mr. Moran of Kansas, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Johnson of Illinois, Mr. Graves, Mr. Bonner, Mr. Rogers of Alabama, Mr. King of Iowa, Mrs. Musgrave, Mr. Neugebauer, Mr. Boustany, Mr. Kuhl of New York, Ms. Foxx, Mr. Conaway, Mr. Fortenberry, Mrs. Schmidt, Mr. Smith of Nebraska, Mr. McCarthy of California, and Mr. Walberg.

(2) COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES.—Mr. Saxton, Mr. McHugh, Mr. Everett, Mr. Bartlett of Maryland, Mr. McKeon, Mr. Thornberry, Mr. Jones of North Carolina, Mr.

Hayes, Mr. Calvert, Mrs. Jo Ann Davis of Virginia, Mr. Akin, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Miller of Florida, Mr. Wilson of South Carolina, Mr. LoBiondo, Mr. Cole of Oklahoma, Mr. Bishop of Utah, Mr. Turner, Mr. Kline, Mrs. Miller of Michigan, Mr. Gingrey, Mr. Rogers of Alabama, Mr. Franks of Arizona, Mrs. Drake, Mrs. McMorris Rodgers, Mr. Conaway, and Mr. Davis of Kentucky.

(3) COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR.—Mr. Petri, Mr. Hoekstra, Mr. Castle, Mr. Souder, Mr. Ehlers, Mrs. Biggert, Mr. Platts, Mr. Keller, Mr. Wilson of South Carolina, Mr. Kline, Mr. Inglis of South Carolina, Mrs. McMorris Rodgers, Mr. Marchant, Mr. Price of Georgia, Mr. Fortuño, Mr. Boustany, Ms. Foxx, Mr. Kuhl of New York, Mr. Bishop of Utah, Mr. David Davis of Tennessee, and Mr. Walberg.

(4) COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE.—Mr. Hall, Mr. Hastert, Mr. Upton, Mr. Stearns, Mr. Deal of Georgia, Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Norwood, Mrs. Cubin, Mr. Shimkus, Mrs. Wilson of New Mexico, Mr. Shadegg, Mr. Pickering, Mr. Fossella, Mr. Buyer, Mr. Radanovich, Mr. Pitts, Mrs. Bono, Mr. Walden of Oregon, Mr. Terry, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Rogers of Michigan, Mrs. Myrick, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Burgess.

(5) COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES.—Mr. Baker, Ms. Pryce of Ohio, Mr. Castle, Mr. King of New York, Mr. Royce, Mr. Lucas, Mr. Paul, Mr. Gillmor, Mr. LaTourette, Mr. Manzullo, Mr. Jones of North Carolina, Mrs. Biggert, Mr. Shays, Mr. Gary G. Miller of California, Mrs. Capito, Mr. Feeney, Mr. Hensarling, Mr. Garrett of New Jersey, Ms. Ginny Brown-Waite of Florida, Mr. Barrett of South Carolina, Mr. Renzi, Mr. Gerlach, Mr. Pearce, Mr. Neugebauer, Mr. Price of Georgia, Mr. Davis of Kentucky, Mr. McHenry, Mr. Campbell of California, Mr. Putnam, Mrs. Blackburn, Mrs. Bachmann, and Mr. Roskam.

(6) COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM.—Mr. Burton of Indiana, Mr. Shays, Mr. McHugh, Mr. Mica, Mr. Souder, Mr. Platts, Mr. Cannon, Mr. Duncan, Mr. Turner, Mr. Issa, Mr. Marchant, Mr. Westmoreland, Mr. McHenry, Ms. Foxx, Mr. Bilbray, and Mr. Sali.

(7) COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY.—Mr. Smith of Texas, Mr. Shays, Mr. Souder, Mr. Tom Davis of Virginia, Mr. Daniel E. Lungren of California, Mr. Rogers of Alabama, Mr. Jindal, Mr. Reichert, Mr. McCaul of Texas, Mr. Dent, Ms. Ginny Brown-Waite of Florida, Mrs. Blackburn, Mr. Bilirakis, and Mr. David Davis of Tennessee.

(8) COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.—Mr. Smith of New Jersey, Mr. Burton of Indiana, Mr. Gallegly, Mr. Rohrabacher, Mr. Royce, Mr. Chabot, Mr. Manzullo, Mr. Tancredo, Mr. Paul, Mr. Flake, Mrs. Jo Ann Davis of Virginia, Mr. Pence, Mr. McCotter, Mr. Wilson of South Carolina, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Barrett of South Carolina, Mr. Mack, Mr. Fortenberry, Mr. McCaul of Texas, Mr. Poe, Mr. Inglis of South Carolina, and Mr. Fortuño.

(9) COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.—Mr. Sensenbrenner, Mr. Coble, Mr. Gallegly, Mr. Goodlatte, Mr. Chabot, Mr. Daniel E. Lungren of California, Mr. Cannon, Mr. Keller, Mr. Issa, Mr. Pence, Mr. Forbes, Mr. King of Iowa, Mr. Feeney, Mr. Franks of Arizona, Mr. Gohmert, and Mr. Jordan.

(10) COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES.—Mr. Saxton, Mr. Gallegly, Mr. Duncan, Mr. Gilchrest, Mr. Calvert, Mr. Cannon, Mr. Tancredo, Mr. Flake, Mr. Renzi, Mr. Pearce, Mr. Brown of South Carolina, Mr. Fortuño, Mrs. McMorris Rodgers, Mr. Jindal, Mr. Gohmert, Mr. Cole of Oklahoma, Mr. Bishop of Utah, Mr. Shuster, Mr. Heller of Nevada, Mr. Sali, and Mr. Lamborn.

(11) COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.—Mr. Sensenbrenner, Mr. Smith of