

Utah gets one more electoral vote if they get a vote. Now, mind you, Utah is going to get that at some point anyway, probably in the near future. But there is some concern that Utah might get that vote now. And we have the kind of situation that people most fear ever since the 2000 election, that there would be some kind of tie or some kind of dispute; we would have no longer a tied number of electors from Democratic and Republican States; and then you would have Utah with one more vote.

Well, this is an issue that we asked a nonpartisan group about that doesn't think, that has a different view of how the present system operates in any case. The nonpartisan group is called Fair Vote, the Center For Voting and Democracy. It is not affiliated with the District of Columbia or with any party.

Apparently, it believes that the national popular vote plan for President is how we should proceed. So they certainly are not making a case for us in any particular way.

But it is important to note what they say about our bill and whether our bill could, in fact, result in a crisis based on the fact that Utah got one new electoral vote. And I am quoting: "Our estimation of the odds of the District of Columbia Fair and Equal Voting Rights Act directly contributing to a Republican victory in the 2008 Presidential race is," they say the odds are, "approximately 400-1," or, in other words, one chance in 1,600 presidential elections.

I want the Member to stand up who would, on this scintilla of a chance, prefer to see us go without the only chance we have to get a vote now or in the foreseeable future.

I want to thank the House for affording me this time, and the time of the Members who have been gracious enough to come and speak on this issue this evening. It is time that, for us, has been invaluable, simply to let the Members of the House know how deeply we feel that the time is on overtime to grant the people of the District of Columbia their House vote now, in this Congress, the 110th Congress.

Mr. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Fair and Equal House Voting Rights Act of 2007, bipartisan compromise legislation to finally allow the District of Columbia voting representation in the U.S. House of Representatives. This balanced legislation, introduced by my honorable colleague from the District of Columbia, would give her constituents a vote in this chamber while adding a House seat for the state of Utah.

Among the capitals of democratic nations around the world, the U.S. is the only country where its capital district citizens cannot vote in the national legislature. Washington, DC, while serving as the Nation's capital, also has many of the functions of a county or state. DC operates its own police force, school system, legal code, occupational licensure and vehicle inspections.

Today, the District of Columbia is home to 120 neighborhoods and a population of 572,000. According to the 2000 U.S. Census,

the population of Washington, DC is greater than that of the state of Wyoming (494,000) and is comparable to the states of Vermont (609,000), Alaska (627,000), and North Dakota (642,000).

Proximity no longer means influence in the District of Columbia. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports its unemployment rate is 6 percent, above the national average of 4.5 percent. DC's poverty rate is 17.5 percent, five points above the national average.

According to DC Vote, DC citizens pay higher per capita federal income taxes than any other state. DC citizens are subject to all our laws, serve on juries, fight our wars and pay taxes, yet have no voting representation in the U.S. Congress.

Not only does DC have no say in the governance of our Nation, they have diminished voices in the governance of their own city. The very Congress which holds the power of the purse regarding DC's budget, also has the power to repeal any DC law enacted by its city council.

It's time for fairness for the citizens of Washington, DC. As the representative of another great city, I am proud to support voting rights for the great city of Washington, DC, am proud to support the Fair and Equal House Voting Rights Act of 2007 and call for its swift passage.

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#### THE DEMOCRATIC AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is always a profound honor to come to the floor of the people's House and vent what is on my mind. I would point out that your organization and timing is impeccable. I thank the gentlelady from the District for ending exactly on the hour, so it is easy to keep track of the time as we unfold the next 60 minutes.

I also appreciate her remarks with regard to Abraham Lincoln. He is a hero for America, for all people of all kinds, of all colors, of all places, and a man that demonstrated profound and tremendous leadership. As I listened to the gentlelady speak about Abraham Lincoln's leadership, I reflect upon a great example of leadership that I would like to share here this evening to start out this discussion.

I will say that I have been assured that this is a matter of historical fact by a Washington D.C. historian, and that is as far as I verified it, but I liked the story so much, that I would just as soon not know if it shouldn't happen to be true. But I believe it to be true, and at least its consistent with the leadership in the spirit of Abraham Lincoln.

That is, in 1863, as Abraham Lincoln was considering whether to sign the Emancipation Proclamation, it was not an issue that was totally in favor with the Republican Party at the time. But as he deliberated on this issue, he called his Cabinet in, and said, I want to hear from each of you on this Emancipation Proclamation that is here, and that I am considering signing.

So he started his Cabinet on his left, and all around the table, and they were all men at that time, as we know, and the ones that had the right to vote back then. The first one, the Cabinet member said, Mr. President, my advice to you is, no, don't sign the Emancipation Proclamation, because after all, the blacks that are north of the Mason-Dixon line are free today, and it doesn't help them.

So the next Cabinet member chimed in, and he said, Those south of the Mason-Dixon line, you can't free them because they are in the Confederacy, so your jurisdiction doesn't reach there today. It is a gesture and a gesture only.

The third Cabinet Member said, But it is, it is an empty gesture, because on the north side of the line and on the south side of line there isn't anybody that you can free with the Emancipation Proclamation. It is simply a symbolic act. As this went around the table, around the Cabinet room table, and each Cabinet member said to President Lincoln, Mr. President, my advice to you is, no, don't sign it, because among other things, you will alienate some of the people in the north that are pro-slavery that are still fighting under the blue uniform, or the Union.

There was reason after reason why President Lincoln shouldn't sign the Emancipation Proclamation and not a single reason given by any member of the Cabinet as to why he should sign the Emancipation Proclamation. So it was nay, nay, nay, nay, Mr. President, all the way around that table, his best advisors.

President Lincoln took ahold of his lapels, and he said, Well, gentleman, the aye has it. That story is a story of leadership, and it is a story that I hope goes down in history for a long time. So I appreciate the remarks of the gentlelady from the District and the spirit with which you deliver them. I appreciate you being here tonight.

I would like to take up the issue that we had a discussion on yesterday, and that would be the discussion of the minimum wage.

Now, on January 11, which was yesterday, the House passed H.R. 2, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007, Mr. Speaker. This bill would raise the Federal minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$7.25 an hour, over about two or three increments in a period of 2 years and would arrive at \$7.25 an hour. This bill specifically applies the minimum wage rate and hike to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

I bring this to the floor, because as I spoke here earlier on the embryonic stem cell research mandate that was passed out of this Congress this afternoon, there was a question and an inquiry, I was asked to yield by the gentleman from Florida, who asked if I knew if there were any geographical carveouts or any special political subdivision carveouts or any, perhaps, university or laboratory carveouts that

would show preference that we should shine some sunlight on before the vote rather than after the vote.

Of course, I know of none, asking out there if there are any, and we will be looking through the bill to see more closely, now that we have had a chance to scrutinize it, if there are any carveouts of that nature. But what prompted the gentleman from Florida's inquiry was, as I went back and dug in to find out, was that there is a carveout in the minimum wage legislation that was passed yesterday.

So one of the things that is specific is the application of the minimum wage to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, happens to be some islands that my father set foot on when he spent his 2½ years in the South Pacific during World War II. So I paid a little bit of attention to that because that was part of the family lore as I grew up.

But the bill does nothing to foresee American Samoa to submit to the Federal minimum wage or this new hike. In fact, it specifically exempts the American Samoans from minimum wage. Now why would that be? The vote on this bill was 315–116, all Democrats voting "aye" and 116 Republicans voting "no."

But as reported in the Washington Times today that although the legislation specifically extends for the first time the Federal minimum wage to the U.S. territory of the Northern Mariana Islands, it exempts American Samoa, which is another Pacific island territory that would become, the only U.S. territory not subjected to the Federal minimum wage laws. The only territory, the only location in the jurisdiction of the United States of America exempted from Federal minimum wage law would be American Samoans.

This loophole pleases the tuna corporations that employ thousands of Samoans in canneries at a rate of \$3.26 an hour. It is an industry-specific rate that is set by the U.S. Department of Labor.

But the tuna industry has lobbied Congress for years arguing that imposing the Federal minimum wage on Samoa would cripple the economy by driving the canneries to poor countries that don't require a minimum wage.

Then one of the biggest opponents, though, of the U.S. minimum wage there is StarKist tuna, which owns one of the two packing plants that together employ more than 5,000 Samoans. Yet StarKist is about 75 percent of that, about 3,750 employees perhaps at StarKist. Chicken of the Sea would be the other 1,250 employees, totaling the 5,000. Chicken of the Sea is also California based.

But what is interesting, and I think what inspired the gentleman's inquiry this afternoon, was that StarKist's parent company, this company that has now an exemption from minimum wage law, their parent company is Del Monte Corporation, Del Monte Corporation, headquartered in San Fran-

cisco, which is the hometown, of course, of our new Speaker.

Now, a spokeswoman for the Speaker said yesterday that the Speaker had not been lobbied in any way by StarKist or Del Monte. That is interesting. I don't know that I could say that about any single company in my district, small company, large company. Trade associations represent multiple interests that might come into that. I am lobbied by individuals, I am lobbied by trade associations, I am lobbied by individual companies over and over again, hundreds and thousands of voices coming into my office.

I welcome them all, but I could not take an oath that there is a single company in my district that has not lobbied me in any way, or, let me expand that, even if that were true, there is no way I could take the oath that not a single company has lobbied any of my staff. There are decisions made by my staff that I take responsibility for. That reflects upon me.

So one could impute from this statement that the Speaker has not been lobbied in any way by StarKist or Del Monte. One can impute to that that also includes the Speaker's staff. I couldn't make that statement about a single company in my district, but this large company, larger than any company in my district, and domiciled in and headquartered in San Francisco, has had no contact with the Speaker's office or staff over any period of time, over, not just within the last week, but over the last 2 years, 4 years, 6 years or more? I think that deserves a little bit of scrutiny.

But as reported in The Washington Post on January 9, aides to the chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, the gentleman from California, and the sponsor of the bill said, and I quote, "The Samoan economy does not have the diversity and vibrancy to handle the mainland's minimum wage, nor does the island have anything like the labor rights abuses that the chairman found in the Marianas."

That is also interesting. It works good for a smokescreen for a short period of time, but here are the facts. In June of 2005, a U.S. court in Hawaii sentenced the owner of a sweatshop factory in American Samoa to 40 years in prison for what prosecutors called the biggest case ever of modern-day slavery. That isn't a small statement, and that is not a short sentence to prison, 40 years in prison for the biggest case ever of modern-day slavery in American Samoa.

The chairman, who has been tracking this research on the labor problems within the Marianas and presumably American Samoa, contends that he didn't find anything going on in American Samoa that would be comparable to the labor rights abuses found in the Marianas.

What would be worse than the biggest case ever of modern-day slavery of labor rights abuses? I don't know how

you would define that. I will challenge the chairman, come up with those cases, explain to us how this one that was worthy of 40 years in prison, the biggest case ever of modern-day slavery, somehow or another pales in comparison to the transgressions of the Marianas, of which I don't have a single case before me.

That is the argument made to the chairman and why he wrote into the bill the exemption for American Samoa where they are paid \$3.26 an hour, but in the Marianas, of course, they want to include them.

Well the difference is they have Republicans in the Marianas, and they have Democrats in American Samoa. But the individual in American Samoa, the labor right's abuser's name is Lee Soo-Kil, he held more than 300 victims as forced laborers in involuntary servitude at his garment factory in American Samoa.

He is accused of using arrests, forced deportations and brutal physical beatings to keep workers under control. The court was told, this is in the record of the court, that he ordered a worker to gouge the eye of another worker who dared to complain about her living and working conditions in the garment factory. That abuse would not be sufficient, apparently, in the judgment of the chairman to consider that it was something that should be brought underneath the minimum wage law and under some more scrutiny in American Samoa.

It is certainly an act that would exempt you from the minimum wage. Democrats said that their reign in the House would usher in a new era of transparency. Yet with the second bill they bring to the floor, eyebrows are raised at the thought of a lucrative carveout from a company with a parent company headquartered in the hometown of our new Speaker.

It didn't take very long for these things to start to pop up. Over and over again Democrats claim that the minimum wage needed to be raised as a matter of fairness and human decency. Yet, yet, apparently workers in American Samoa don't count in the Democrats' view.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, who is a representative of American Samoa, has said he doesn't believe his island's economy could handle the Federal minimum wage because of competition in the tuna industry from South America and Asian canning interests, a place where they are paying as low as \$.66 to \$.67 cents an hour.

We are going to cater to and let competition be affected by that kind of sweatshop labor that is taking place in South America and Asian canneries. But apparently the Democrats are under the impression that the laws of economic competition are only applicable to American Samoa and have no bearing on the goods and the countless business manufacturers elsewhere in the United States, and that also includes the Marianas, which are geographically close, similarly situated,

but not specifically exempted like American Samoa.

The United States needs to be competitive and be able to sell abroad. But while the small businesses in my district, who often pay more than the federally mandated minimum wage, I would say almost always pay more, they provide employment to countless hardworking Americans, and some of them struggle each month to make their payrolls.

Democrats have allowed employers in American Samoa to avoid this burdensome Federal mandate, but not those in the Marianas, not those anywhere else in the American territories, not anywhere under the jurisdiction of the United States of America, except American Samoa, where you have two large tuna companies, and one of them's parent company is domiciled in San Francisco.

I don't understand how Democrats see their economic principles make the minimum wage a bad idea for American Samoa, but not a bad thing for Main Street in small town USA. They pledge to bring transparency to the legislative process, and yet they refuse to submit their 100-hours legislation to the regular committee process. I may take that issue up a little bit later.

What I would very much like to do at this point in this conversation with you and the American people would be to yield to my friend, the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. MCHENRY, for his remarks on whatever issue he might have come to the floor to address.

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Mr. MCHENRY. I thank my colleague from Iowa for his leadership, and I wanted to echo what you were speaking of earlier. And it is interesting what we are experiencing right now in Congress, an interesting time.

The new Speaker comes to office with a new Democrat majority, and what the Speaker pledges is "respect for every voice," and another quote, "working for all of America." Well, all of America except American Samoa, a small island in the South Pacific where they have been exempted from the Federal minimum wage.

Now, NANCY PELOSI during the campaign, then-Minority Leader PELOSI said, "The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 will increase the Federal minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 over the next 2 years, providing families with additional funds to cover the increasing costs of health insurance, gasoline, and home heating and attending college."

There actually was a press release just a few days ago when the Speaker of the House issued this press statement. That is good. That is a high honor which the new Speaker had of increasing the Federal minimum wage, and it is a high honor for some politicians in Washington, D.C. to use other people's money to increase other people's wages. It is not coming from the pockets of D.C. politicians; it is coming

from small business owners across the America who are going to be impacted and perhaps lose jobs over this.

But the bad item in this is the Washington Times report from just today that "the Democrats' minimum wage legislation exempts American Samoa, another Pacific Islands territory, that would become the only U.S. territory not subject to the Federal minimum wage." That is from the report from the Washington Times today.

Now, it is peculiar. Why, I ask, would American Samoa be exempt from the Federal minimum wage? It seems an oddity, does it not, Congressman KING? It seems an oddity that a small island of all of our territories in this great Nation, of all the States in the Nation, that an island is exempt. One island. Why, I ask, would that island be exempt? It just seems perplexing to me. I mean, it seems like good news that the new Democrat majority and the new Speaker want to raise the Federal minimum wage to help people, to help families with their health insurance, gasoline, home heating, as well as attending college.

If it is not good for American Samoa, how could it be good for the United States to have an increase in the Federal minimum wage? And if it is good for the United States, if it is good for America, why is not American Samoa given the same benefits? It is America, too. Well, perhaps the new Democrat Speaker doesn't think so.

The question I raise, Congressman KING, is why could that be? We are just simply asking the question here tonight, why could that be the new Democrat Speaker would want to exempt a single island from a large piece of legislation? In fact, it is one of their six items in their 100-hour program. It is an amazing question to me, Congressman KING. It is an amazing question with perhaps a simple answer.

Well, going back to the Washington Times article, if I may quote from there: "The loopholes please the tuna corporations that employ thousands of Samoans in canneries there at \$3.26 an hour. One of the biggest opponents of the U.S. minimum wage is StarKist Tuna, which owns one of the two packing plants that together employ more than 5,000 Samoans or nearly 75 percent of the island's workforce. StarKist's parent company, Del Monte Corp., is headquartered in San Francisco, which is represented by—." Well, we will fill in the blank, that is, for someone else to fill in the blank.

But certainly something is fishy. Something is indeed fishy when the Federal minimum wage is good for all Americans as espoused by the Democrat majority, yet we exempt a small, in many terms economically struggling, island.

Now, I submit, Mr. Speaker, if it is good for us in this Chamber to vote to raise the Federal minimum wage, is it not good for all Americans, even in the territories? Is it not a matter of fairness to extend that to all the terri-

ties? It is an amazing happening, Congressman KING, in these opening hours that I would ask you, why could this be? I mean, if we are going to work for all America as the new Speaker said, why not all of America, even the territories?

Congressman KING, there are many questions here, but I raise the question, how could this be in the most ethical Congress in history?

Mr. KING of Iowa. As I am listening to this dialogue that we have going on here and I start to think about, you know, a lot of us see this broader economy, we see this multi-trillion GDP that we have, and we see the components of small businesses, large businesses, family farms, and these operations that are going on, the interrelationships of them. Some families run more than one business. And I have taken the position, and many of us have, that whenever you raise the minimum wage, ultimately you will lose jobs. We understand this, and we have made this argument and this debate, and we will continue to make this argument and this debate.

But I am going to say the people who voted for this minimum wage, at least the people who supported the idea of exempting American Samoa from the minimum wage, can only understand this law of supply and demand and this argument that is a fundamental, basic economic principle that when you mandate an increase in wages, the employer will have to make a decision as to whether to keep those employees or not or to lay them off and maybe move their operations elsewhere, or bring some machinery in to replace the labor. The inevitable result of raising a minimum wage is the loss of jobs.

But I am going to speculate this, Mr. MCHENRY. I am going to speculate that when it is addressed within the microcosm of a single business on a single island, then the chairman of the committee actually understood that equation and decided that he would draft in an exemption for American Samoa for that fishy business that you addressed. Because when it is a microcosm of a single island and a single company, maybe it was comprehensible the impact of a minimum wage there.

Mr. MCHENRY. It is also interesting that the parent company that employs 75 percent of Samoans, American Samoa, is headquartered in San Francisco. It is an interesting oddity in press reports that this is raised. And, like I said, Congressman KING, I believe it is just fishy. It is very fishy that this would happen in the opening week of a new Congress that espouses really high ethical standards which we all hope for and we strive for as individuals and as a collective body. It is a very strange happening in the Democrats' 100-hour provisions that they even go back on their campaign pledge to have the Federal minimum wage across America, not exempting certain areas or certain islands or certain peoples, but actually have a uniform standard. It is very

fishy that these things happen just at the beginning.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I pose a question back, and that is a statement has been released by a spokeswoman for the Speaker with regard to this, because this has been something that has been published across the country. And it says that the Speaker has not been lobbied in any way by StarKist or Del Monte.

Now, not lobbied in any way. That is a broad statement that a lawyer probably couldn't write it any more broadly than that. It may well have been a lawyer who said it. And I reflected moments ago about, I couldn't make that statement about a single company no matter how small in my district, because they either talk to me or my staff or maybe sent me a letter or called on the phone or sent me an e-mail, or maybe called in on a telephone while I was doing a talk radio show and I didn't know who they were. How could one make a statement that she hadn't been lobbied in any way? Could you make that statement about a single business in your district?

Mr. MCHENRY. I thank my colleague from Iowa for asking that question. It's an overly broad answer, it seems. Yet the other interesting avenue here on exempting a certain area of America with a certain business interest that is represented by a certain individual, well, it is interesting to me because in many ways what the Democrats promised was an end to earmarks. Earmarks, the American people know very well that earmarks are simply pork-barrel spending. Well, I will tell you something, this may be tuna, but it smells like pork. And this special provision, I would submit to you, should fall under this earmark reform that the new Democrat majority wants to pass on this House floor.

I think it is a high goal for us to have, that is, to have fundamental earmark reform so we eliminate pork-barrel spending programs. But this bill in the first full week of the Democrat majority has an earmark.

And my colleague from New Jersey has joined us, and Congressman GARRETT is very involved in the fiscal conservative agenda, as my fellow colleague from Iowa is, Congressman KING. Now, would you define this as an earmark, Congressman GARRETT?

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I would definitely define it as an earmark. And I rise now to ask either one of the gentlemen to elaborate on the comment the gentleman from Iowa is making, and as the gentleman also raised, that this has already pressed accounts as to where this exemption is drafted for. But as the gentleman from Iowa said, there was no explanation as to why it came about. That is to say, the press accounts from the Speaker's office, I believe the gentleman from Iowa said that they have not been lobbied at all by the industry from their district. Is that correct? They were not lobbied at all by that particular indus-

try from their district is what the press accounts say from the Speaker's office on this issue?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I would ask the gentleman if he could repeat his question.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I believe I am quoting you correctly that the press accounts from the Speaker's office on this is they have not been lobbied whatsoever from the respective industry in their State on this topic. And if that is the case, and it is hard to believe for the reason the gentleman from Iowa states that something that is so fundamentally important to that particular industry, you would think that the Speaker, if she is going to be responsive to their industry, would be hearing from them on these matters.

My question is, and perhaps you know the answer, why then does either the chairman or the Speaker say that they put this provision into the particular bill if not to protect those industries?

Mr. KING of Iowa. In response to the gentleman from New Jersey, I would have to say that there is no other way I can analyze that.

There are actually only two arguments. One of them is the argument that is put forth by the representative from American Samoa who says that the tuna industry can't withstand the competition if they have to pay a minimum wage. So something more than \$3.26 an hour would take those tuna companies out of business, and they would apparently leave the island. And they couldn't go to the Marianas because there is a minimum wage imposed there, so presumably they would go to South America or maybe Asia.

The other argument of course is this exemption will let those tuna companies that are there continue to make a lot of money off of cheap labor that is imposed there in American Samoa where it is exempted from, the only location in all of American territories and jurisdictions that is exempted from Federal law. That is what is in this legislation that is before us.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I appreciate that the gentleman is trying to conjecture what the potential answer is as to why this absurd language was put in the original bill. Neither one of them obviously stands on their own foot. The first one being that we are going to create such an exemption because we realize how dangerous imposing minimum wage on any particular industry can be. Well, if it is going to be dangerous for that particular industry, then the other side of the aisle should realize it can be harmful to others and they should broaden the exemption to others. That was the first explanation.

The second explanation you conjectured was because they were doing it as an earmark specifically for one industry, to protect that industry. And in this area of ethics, I am sure that could not be the reason.

So as we stand on the floor tonight, I am sure that while we are here to

speak on this matter, the Members on the other side of the aisle are back at their offices listening to this debate, the Speaker is probably back in her office right now, the sponsor of the bill is back in their office right now.

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I would extend an invitation to any or all of them to come and join us to give us a logical explanation. Was it the first reason that they were just creating one exemption because they realized how harmful minimum wage can be, or was it that they were crafting something specifically as an earmark to protect one of their own industries outside of all others?

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I thank Congressman GARRETT for proffering that. I think it is a wonderful thing because we know that our colleagues perhaps, Mr. Speaker, would be watching this debate and perhaps they could join us and answer some of these questions that we are trying to wrestle with on this important piece of legislation that the House took up just yesterday and passed under a closed rule, under martial law, not allowing any dissenting voices to offer any amendments to perfect it, perhaps extending the Federal minimum wage to even American Samoans or, in fact, change the bill so that it helps small businesses transition with this increase in the Federal minimum wage.

We have many questions, and I would love for our colleagues to join us here on the floor to answer these questions because we need the answers from the Democrat majority who control this place. And I would dare say, if the Madam Speaker would like to come before us here tonight, we would be happy to yield plenty of time for her to explain these actions of this new Democrat majority. We would love to have some input from our other colleagues on the other side of the aisle. In an air of bipartisanship, let's share our time, Congressman KING, during this leadership hour and make sure that we have an open dialogue and we answer questions.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Will the gentleman from Iowa yield?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I just wish to take this moment to commend you, Mr. MCHENRY, on this issue because just as the other side of the aisle has said that they want to have input from the other side of the aisle, and as you know, we have been precluded from giving that input in the form of amendments on this and just about every other bill that has come before us, I commend you for taking the time now to open up the floor to the other side of the aisle and give to them what they will not give to us. You were giving to them the opportunity to give input to our side of the aisle.

And when I say, our side of the aisle, this is not just a partisan issue. This is

not just something just for us here in this room or Republicans or what have you. We are really extending a hand to the other side. We are offering them to give input to the American public to explain themselves. Was it an issue of them trying to carve out something for one particular industry in their home State, or was this something even less nefarious than that, simply that they realized that raising the minimum wage can have the harmful impacts that it does?

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I would take a stab at that and submit off of Mr. MCHENRY's remarks as well that when you have a closed process and in fact it is not necessarily a closed process; it is a no process, no process for hearings, no process for subcommittee, no process for full committee, no process for Rules Committee and no process on the floor that allows for any amendments, then there is no way to go back and really identify who is going to get the credit for this brilliant exemption that has been drafted into the minimum wage bill. So we can only then rely on the open press, the press accounts, and I am grateful that we do have a first amendment because they have gone back and reported and have publicly not been refuted remarks made by the chairman of the committee, who has gone to the Pacific and examined the labor circumstances there and found that the labor circumstances in American Samoa justify exemptions, but those in the Marianas do not justify exemptions, just to draw a real close comparison there, even though the worst example of a sweat shop that prosecutors had ever seen was the perpetrator that was sentenced to 40 years for abusing 300 employees in American Samoa. And so the exemption, then, is admitted publicly by the chairman of the committee as being drafted into the bill under his advice and his request, and that is the closest thing we have, but there is no opportunity to amend it in or out or to add to or detract from.

And the people I feel the most sorry for are not Mr. GARRETT from New Jersey or Mr. MCHENRY from North Carolina. My sympathy lies with the large number of freshmen Democrats who have arrived here in this Congress under the belief and having committed to their constituents that they are going to add to this cause, that they are going to add to this process, that their voice will be heard, that they will be bring representation from their district to Washington, D.C., where a lot of them allege they did not have representation, and they are the ones shut out of the process without a voice, without an opinion, without a forum, without an amendment, without any opportunity for amendment, after having made all those promises, shut out of this. All that wisdom shut out. A handful of people, maybe not even a handful of people, makes a decision like this. It is a closed process, and this is what you get with a closed process is an earmark, as Mr. MCHENRY said.

And if the gentleman from New Jersey has more to say, I would be happy to yield.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I appreciate the gentleman's yielding. I would like to just step back for just a moment from this overall issue that we are narrowly focussing on, this exemption, perhaps nefarious, that was in the legislation, and commend the gentleman from Iowa for your comments just yesterday when the overall bill of minimum wage was being discussed and you waxed eloquent as to the problems that the legislation that the other side of the aisle presented as far as what a raise in the minimum wage can do to the people that they suggest that they are going to help. And I commend the gentleman for the comments that you make on that.

And if I could just maybe elaborate and give one other example. Perhaps the most difficult part of understanding from whence they come on this issue of raising the minimum wage in the manner that they did is that they, in fact, hurt the very same people that they claim they are going to try to help by raising the minimum wage. That is, they are going to hurt the very people who are low skilled and lack experience because, generally speaking, it is the low skilled and the people lacking experience who are entering into the entry level type jobs out there. And it does a disservice to them for them to report a bill such as we had yesterday of raising the minimum wage, which we know statistically will shut out so many people who are seeking to enter the workforce.

Just as we did a moment ago where we asked others to take a look at this issue that we were speaking about a moment ago and come down here to explain themselves, perhaps, if they are not going to come down here, the constituents at home can call the Members and ask, can they explain themselves on the exemption of the bill? But also maybe people listening to this program at home right now can also call the Members on the other side of the aisle who purported to support this raise in the minimum wage and ask this: Have any of them on the other side of the aisle ever while a Member of Congress had people working for them right down here on Capitol Hill, working for them in a legislative capacity basically, alongside other members of their staff, and not paid them the full minimum wage? That would be a curious question.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind the Members to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to the television audience.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Sure. I appreciate that. Have any of them had anyone working on their staffs and not paid the full current minimum wage? That is an interesting question. I bet the answer to that question would be yes. And we know those people in those offices are entry level people, many of

them in college right now, who come to Washington to try to get their first job.

Now, the Members on the other side of the aisle will say, wait a minute, the reason we are not paying them the full minimum wage right now and we have done so for the last several years despite the Federal minimum wage is because these are entry level people. They are young people. They don't have a full education yet. They don't have all the experience they need as other people on the staff. And yet the people sitting right next to them on the staff are being paid the minimum wage, and you have to ask them, why are they doing that? The other reason they would give to you, and they do it in perhaps a dismissive sort of way, is to say these people whom we are not paying minimum wage to are interns.

Wait a minute now. This young person sitting over here doing the exact same thing as this person sitting over here, the exact same sort of job; this person is being paid a full salary, and this one is not getting a full minimum wage salary doing the exact same thing. Is it right that they do not meet that level? And yet they were the ones who sponsored this legislation to raise the overall standard of pay for everyone else in this country. So I think it is important that we ask them why, on the one hand, they speak out of the mouth of raising the standards for everyone, but at the same time, in their own offices, they have people working for them who are not making the full minimum wage.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey. And it occurs to me that perhaps one's own house is not in order before the presentation of the legislation that seeks to put everyone else's house in order, and I am confident this will not be the last time that these circumstances are created here nor that they will exist when one finds themselves in a position of conflict of judgment. And these are the kinds of things that can be debated and discussed and deliberated if we have an open process.

But I would point out to the gentleman from New Jersey that we are closing in perhaps, perhaps, on an open process. When we gaveled in here this morning, this 100 hours pledge was that this legislation, about six pieces of legislation, was to be passed in the first 100 hours, and that became the promise that trumped all other promises. The promises of an open system, bipartisanship, dialogue, the most open and the most ethical Congress in history, all of these things, many of them have been compromised already because you can't have an open Congress and get these things done, apparently, in the first 100 hours. So the 100-hour promise is the one that is sacrosanct, and the rest of their promises are being broken in an attempt to try to pass this legislation in the first 100 hours.

Well, my report tonight, Mr. Speaker, is to bring everyone up to date on

how far we are. And we have tried objectively to produce a legitimate 100-hour clock. And I know there is from, the other side of the aisle, a stopwatch put on that. Well, we don't want to count, after we gavel in for the 110th Congress, the time that it takes to swear in because that is not really legislative time, and we don't want to count the time it takes to vote for the Speaker, Mr. Speaker, because that takes also away from our legislative time. We really only want to start this 100-hour clock when it is convenient to do so, and we are going to count time in our own way, and the 100 hours is not going to be up until we get this legislation that we promised we would do in the 100 hours. That is the measure. So keep changing the definition on what the 100 hours is until you get things accomplished. Then you say, yes, we did. We kept our promise.

Well, this was a promise that was purely a political promise. The American people have waited for this legislation for over 200 years. To hurry up and rush it through and set aside an open dialogue, set aside the amendment process, shut down and not allow subcommittee, committee or Rules Committee or floor amendments, do all of that so you can keep a 100-hours promise. So, anyway, the least we can do is have a legitimate clock on the 100 hours. I produced this legitimate clock, Mr. Speaker, and this morning when we gavelled in with an opening prayer and a pledge, when we did so this morning, we were sitting at 42 real hours. This is the hours here on the floor from the time we gavel in until the time we gavel out. How could anyone argue that that is not legitimate? We are not counting 24 hours a day. We are counting the real time that there is someone sitting in the Speaker's chair and the clock is ticking.

So to bring you up to date, we are now at 52 hours when this began. It will be 53 hours here in about 18 minutes. Now we are halfway. We have been further than we have to go, and my recommendation would be just throw this idea away. Suspend this idea of 100 hours because it is what is usurping the open dialogue, the appropriate process, the most ethical Congress in history, the most sunlight on everything we are doing.

As I listened to the news over the weekend, the gentleman from Tennessee, when asked the question, Mr. Speaker, about the 100 hours, he said: Well, no, we really can't comply with the open bipartisanship. Just give us a little break on that. Let us get our 100 hours done, and when the 100 hours is over, I believe we are going to go to this open process, this bipartisanship, and actually use the committees and the expertise of the Members here, hopefully the freshmen, especially the Democrat freshmen, giving them a chance, Mr. Speaker. So that was his plea. Give us a break and let us go ahead, and we will go, not in regular order, but we will go in a special order

so that we can get done in the first 100 hours.

Well, I do not agree with that. I think we ought to set this argument aside. But at least we can suspend, then, this suspension of open dialogue when the 100 hours is up. We are at 52. We will soon be at 53. It also says the cost to the country. Well, I have not done very well, Mr. Speaker, because I do not have a staff that can keep up with the cost to the country or maybe I do not have an adding machine that allows for that. And as I look at the legislation that has passed through piece after piece, some of it just can't be calculated. I didn't have a symbol on the word processor to go to infinity, so we just kind of stuck a bunch of dollar signs in here because the cost to the country is impossible to calculate.

It is impossible to calculate when you pass legislation, for example, to inspect every piece of cargo that comes into our ports and the authorization becomes, and I quote from the legislation, "such sums as may be necessary." Well, when we are doing legislation with authorization of "such sums as may be necessary," that is more money than we can calculate. We can't put a dollar figure on that. That goes on piece after piece. How much does it cost to raise the minimum wage? How many jobs are lost? How much of our production goes overseas? What is the real effect on the American economy when and if that happens, when and if the Senate takes it up? It can't be calculated, but it is a lot of money. We will soon be at 53 hours and counting. That will take us down to 47. We have been further than we have to go. We are over the top. We are going to narrow this thing down. And when we get to the 100 hours, the real 100 hours, I am hopeful that this Congress will then wake up and say, we have another promise we want to keep rather than one we want to break, and that is going to be to bring the freshmen into this process.

□ 2045

We will give the freshmen an opportunity to go to a subcommittee and sit down at a hearing and begin to get informed so they can make informed decisions on behalf of their constituents. We need that kind of process. The Constitution envisions that kind of process. In fact, it requires it.

I am for an open system, and I am for sunlight on all of this. I am for sunlight even on StarKist, and even on Chicken of the Sea and even on San Francisco and even on American Samoa. And I am for sunlight on the Marianas as well. I am for sunlight on everything that we can provide, and I am for real-time reporting.

Every American has access to the Internet today. Whether they own a computer at home or go to the library, they can sit down to a computer. And I believe all of the records, the records of the lobbyists' contributions to Members of Congress, maybe contributions

that came from Del Monte or StarKist or Chicken of the Sea, we can look where those contributions went and be able to track that.

If we had an open system here, if those Federal election campaign dollars were real-time reported and available on the Internet so that they were downloadable in a searchable and sortable format, we would have somebody right now sitting at home in America who would have flicked those keys and zeroed in on that and they would have by now probably e-mailed my office a summary of, a detailed list of all those campaign contributions. Probably the bloggers out there would have sleuthed out why it is that American Samoa is exempted from this minimum wage law. We know if you track the money, you can find a pretty good motivation.

I didn't hear from Mr. McHENRY that he could name a business in his district that had not lobbied him during his time here. I know that Mr. GARRETT has been here a good 4 years and starting on the fifth year. I didn't ask that specific question, but I would ask you to respond.

Mr. GARRETT, is there a single business in your district that you could swear an oath had not lobbied you or your staff in any way, any form of communication that might have influenced your judgment or decision?

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I would say no. I would say we are a responsive office, as is your office, to the constituents' needs in our district. So, no. That is why the statement released by the Speaker on this is difficult to comprehend.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey.

I wanted to make a few remarks about the minimum wage itself and just to go on record. We need to understand something. This is a free enterprise economy. What has made America great is because if you go back 150 years, we had a dream called manifest destiny. We had a continent that needed to be settled and developed. Individual personal capital was invested. Banks grew because they could make money off loaning, and entrepreneurs could borrow money.

They were going into an environment within the continent, within the borders of the United States, in a low-tax and sometimes a no-tax environment and often no regulation, but certainly a low-regulation environment. So they invested their money.

This country was settled and developed in lightning speed by historical standards because we had a very positive environment here for economic growth.

Then as this society began to get a little older and began to develop, they began to take protection. So the older we get, someone would decide that they needed to have some influence and so they would want to advocate in Congress and in the State legislatures for taxes and more taxes and regulation and more regulations. That is how this



has grown into this situation. But a prosperous, dynamic economy has got to be one with the least amount of regulations possible and the lowest amount of taxation necessary to keep a government functioning to provide the necessary services.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, one other point that the gentleman from Iowa did not raise but I think would concur with is what is the underpinning of this Nation. The other side of the aisle would probably agree with this if we were speaking on another topic, that led to the great formation of the wealth and the value of this Nation, from our moral upbringing as well as the development of this Nation, is in fact the diversity of this Nation. The fact that living in New England is different demographically than living in the far west. That living in New Jersey where I come from is different from where the gentleman from Iowa lives. Whether we are talking about the weather or the price of housing or the energy costs that we may have in New England and New Jersey as far as heating versus the energy costs in the southern portions of the country, and the transportation costs, and the educational level.

New Jersey is proud of the fact that we are a highly educated State, and for that reason we have a number of biotech firms and pharmaceutical firms in our area. Other portions of the country may have more farming. Or in the New York area where it is the financial services mecca for this country. Or western portions where it is high tech on the West Coast. That is where we are today, but that is also where we came from. We were a diverse Nation. It was because of that diversity and the freedoms and liberties that we had at that time that this Nation was able to grow economically, as the gentleman said.

The problem with the legislation that we passed yesterday, however, it does not realize nor appreciate nor value that diversity of this Nation that we have. What that legislation says is that we are going to treat everyone alike uniformly. When you do that, you treat certain people unfairly.

How does that come about? In the examples I gave yesterday, you can come up with a list of these things. If you treat an individual who is a teenager who is in school right now and trying to get a job after school and make some money, maybe he wants to work in the fields bringing in hay in the Midwest, we are going to treat him the same as we might treat the parent of some children who has some experience in the tech field and has an entry-level position in the Northeast where they have high-tech industry. We are going to treat that person the same as perhaps a second-career individual, perhaps in the financial service markets just over the river, the Hudson River in New York City.

Perhaps we are going to treat them the same as someone in Florida in the

citrus crop industry. So whether it is the fields of Iowa or Florida, the high-tech industries on the west coast or the financial industry on the east coast, the legislation we had yesterday setting a uniform minimum wage says they are all going to be treated exactly the right, regardless of the person's age, experience, regardless of the person's skills, regardless of their attributes that they bring to that employer who is looking for somebody to add to the value of the product that they are producing, and regardless of the demography of the particular area, traveling costs, housing costs, or the cost of living.

Coming down to Washington, D.C., we realize this is an extremely expensive place to live versus other places in the country where you can buy a house for maybe \$100,000. Regardless of all those variables, they are going to mandate and say we are going to treat everybody in all of these situations the same. That is unfair because the demographics and the situations differ.

The result is this: those individual in these other high-cost areas are going to be put at a greater disadvantage in certain circumstances. In other circumstances, that individual in Iowa trying to get a job after school, they are going to be put at a disadvantage because the employer is not going to see the value added to the product exactly the same. And so some of those individuals who may need those jobs will not be able to get the jobs that they actually have to have to support their family.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman.

As I listened to that discussion, it brings to mind some of my history. I recall I started back working for 75 cents an hour helping a farmer in the neighborhood. I think he would have paid me a dollar, but I didn't think I was worth more than 75 cents an hour. If you were to ask him today, he would probably say that would be right, you were not, STEVE.

I did that and I learned about machinery and the work that we were doing that was different from my home. After that I went to work in a grocery store, and there the wage was \$1.20. And I stocked shelves and carried out groceries and learned about the grocery trade. So I worked there when school was out, and then it was summertime. I realized that the butcher was making pretty good money. That was before we had the kind of packing plants that we have today. So there was more demand for people who could cut meat.

I thought I might as well learn a trade. First I talked to the butcher, and he said he would take me on. And then I went to the manager and asked the manager. The manager said, yes, you can work in the meat department but that is not where I need you, so I can't pay you. Well, I want to learn a trade. Fine, you can go back there and work. And so I agreed to work in the

meat department for nothing. So I would work 40 hours a week in the grocery store, and then I would work 20 to 40 hours a week in the meat department with no pay.

It would have been in violation of this minimum wage law, but I did it for no pay because I wanted to learn a trade. And I did learn a trade. It is not one I have ever been paid a dollar to do. In fact, it puts me into the business sometimes of being the one who does cut up the meat at whatever family gathering we have.

But that is the kind of thing that used to happen on a regular basis. I am not an odd thing. I am not an anomaly when it comes to that.

But it is a subject that each time the government interferes, whenever the government passes some of these child labor laws that say that, well, if you are 17 years and 364 days old and you would like to work in the gas station, you can run the cash register, but you cannot cut the grass on the riding lawn mower until you are 18. That is an example of a child labor law.

Another example is you cannot wash the pizza dough maker or you can't make french fries. All of these things you can do at home, a lot of these things we allow younger people to do at home, a 17-year-364-day-old person cannot because of our child labor laws.

You couple that with minimum wage laws and ask the question is there any place in your community where, let's just say an older lady who doesn't get around very well can pull her car into the gas station and be confident that the windshield will be washed and the oil will be checked and her gas tank will be filled, and somebody will bring her credit card in and out and make sure that all she has to do is sit there and wait for that service. Where does that happen in America? Some places, not many. And the biggest reasons are minimum wage laws and child labor laws.

So instead, we give them the keys to a car that goes 140 miles an hour and they can drive on the highway. It is safe enough for them to drive a car at 16, 14 with an adult with them, but not safe enough for them to ride a riding lawn mower around a gas station.

This is what happens when decisions don't get opened up to public scrutiny, and not opened up for debate and opportunity for amendments to be offered.

So here we are with this fishy thing going on in American Samoa where they are the only territory in all of the territories of the United States of America by this legislation that has passed the House that would be exempted from minimum wage laws. And I have to believe that is not for the people of American Samoa; it is for the people making profit off the sweat of their brows.

And if it is good enough for the goose for the rest of America, it is good enough for the gander in American Samoa.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. First of all, I commend the gentleman for coming to the floor to raise this important issue.

As we conclude this hour worth of discussion and debate on this very important topic, I would just remind the gentleman that it has been an hour that we have been debating and discussing this issue. We have extended our hand to the other side of the aisle. We have extended our hand to the Speaker and to the sponsor of the legislation to come forward and to engage with us here on the floor and with the American public, as well, to explain whether there is a nefarious reason behind this inexplicable reason for treating certain people in the country different than other people in the country.

We will welcome an opportunity in future times for them to join us to explain themselves.

Mr. KING of Iowa. As I conclude here, Mr. Speaker, no one has come to the floor to defend a position like that. It was not part of the dialogue, the debate and the discussion.

While we have taken the floor here an hour ago, there were 52 hours used up of the 110th Congress of the 100. Now 53 hours. So 47 hours are left, Mr. Speaker.

And when that time comes, it will be time to open up so that we don't have these kinds of circumstances. It needs to be open to the public.

I appreciate the privilege to address you tonight, Mr. Speaker.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HASTERT (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of personal reasons.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. McDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CARNAHAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LANGEVIN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STUPAK, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ELLISON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TAYLOR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOLT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KUCINICH, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. ADERHOLT, for 5 minutes, today and January 16.

Mr. ROHRBACHER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHUSTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KUHLMAN of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, January 16 and 17.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HALL of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HONDA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ROTHMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, for 5 minutes, today.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, January 12, 2007, at 9 a.m.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

128. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-482, "Omnibus Public Safety Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

129. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-437, "People First Respectful Language Conforming Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

130. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-473, "Targeted Historic Preservation Assistance Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

131. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-474, "Emerging Technology Opportunity Development Task Force Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

132. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a

copy of D.C. ACT 16-475, "Technical Amendments Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

133. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-476, "Fiscal Year 2007 Budget Support Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

134. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-485, "Child and Family Services Grant-making Temporary Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

135. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-486, "Health-Care Decisions for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Temporary Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

136. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-489, "Metro Bus Funding Requirement Temporary Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

137. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-493, "Health Insurance Coverage for Habilitative Services for Children Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

138. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-494, "Separation Pay, Term of Office and Voluntary Retirement Modifications for Chief of Police Charles H. Ramsey Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

139. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-495, "Wisconsin Avenue Bridge Project and Noise Control Temporary Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

140. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-496, "Square 2910 Residential Development Stimulus Temporary Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

141. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-502, "Crispus Attucks Park Indemnification Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

142. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-503, "District of Columbia Poverty Lawyer Loan Assistance Repayment Program Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

143. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-504, "Domestic Violence Amendment Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

144. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 16-505, "Uniform Disclaimers of Property Interests Revision Act of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.