small businesses through consulting, education and business information. This program received $89 million in fiscal year 2006.

It is my expectation that the small business incentives proposed by the Senate Finance Committee will ultimately become law in legislation which increases the minimum wage.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of a minimum wage increase that provides American workers a raise with no strings attached. It has been nearly a decade since the minimum wage was last increased. We can no longer afford to delay action, and millions of hard-working Americans deserve better.

The Federal minimum wage today is only $5.15 per hour. Someone who works at this rate for 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year takes home less than $11,000 annually far below the poverty line for families.

Increasing the Federal minimum wage to $7.25 per hour would impact nearly 13 million Americans, the majority of whom are women, 59 percent, and people of color, 40 percent. Eighty percent of those impacted would be adult workers, and most are full-time employees.

The consequences of nearly a decade of inaction are clear.

Almost 40 million Americans live in poverty, 13 million of whom are children.

Increasing the Federal minimum wage to $7.25 would add nearly $4,400 to a minimum wage worker's annual income, representing, for many families, the difference between self-sufficiency or living below the poverty line.

For most Americans, the choice is clear. In the last election, voters in six States Arizona, Colorado, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, and Ohio supported initiatives to increase their State minimum wages. In fact, 29 States, nearly 60 percent, have a minimum wage above the Federal level.

I am proud that my own State of California has one of the highest minimum wages in the country, at $7.50 per hour, increasing to $8.00 per hour next year. Many California cities and counties stipulate that workers must be paid a living wage, which in some cases guarantees an additional $3 or $4 per hour.

There are two options before the Senate today. This body can act swiftly and stand behind nearly 13 million workers, Or we can delay action, by modifying the legislation before us to include $8.3 billion in tax breaks for small businesses.

Packaging the minimum wage bill with these tax cuts is disadvantageous to businesses and minimum wage workers. Adding a tax package creates procedural hurdles that could significantly delay implementation of this wage increase.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce opposes linking these small business tax breaks to this legislation because many of the tax provisions are only temporary extensions. They do not provide the long-term relief that businesses seek.

Considering the package of small business tax cuts separately would facilitate a more robust discussion of how small businesses the primary job creators in this country can receive genuine relief from the rising costs of operations.

Many small business owners would suffer no adverse impact if the minimum wage were increased. A recent Gallup Poll in the Sacramento Business Journal showed that 86 percent of small business owners surveyed do not believe that an increase in the minimum wage would harm their businesses.

Nearly 75 percent of small business owners thought that a 10 percent minimum wage increase would have no impact on their businesses at all. More than half of those polled thought the minimum wage should actually be increased.

The evidence shows that increasing the minimum wage does not adversely affect the economy. In fact, in Los Angeles and San Francisco, raising wages added stability to many businesses and the local economy.

In San Francisco, turnover for home-care workers fell by 57 percent after the city implemented its living wage policies.

The average job tenure of workers in fast food restaurants increased by 3.5 months.

In Los Angeles, businesses affected by a living wage ordinance had one-third less turnover among low wage earners, and absenteeism declined.

Higher wages improve worker loyalty and increase employee retention, while decreasing employee hiring and training costs.

Let me be clear: I support many of the tax cuts for small businesses. I think they should be considered, with the proper offsets, as part of a separate revenue-neutral tax bill. But they should not be included in this must-pass minimum wage bill.

Ensuring that all American workers receive fair pay for a hard day's work should not be a partisan issue. The House overwhelmingly passed this legislation by a vote of 315 to 116, with more than 80 Republicans crossing party lines to support this cause.

Congress has increased the minimum wage nine times since the enactment of the Fair Labor Standards Act, under both Republican and Democratic administrations. Only once, in 1996, was a minimum wage increase paired with tax cuts.

The purchasing power of the minimum wage is at its lowest level since 1955. The cost of living is up 26 percent since the last minimum wage increase in 1997.

It is unfair to punish hard working people and make them wait for an increase. We must not delay. We must not bog down this bill with procedural tactics.

American workers deserve better. I urge my colleagues to do what is fair and just: Pass a clean minimum wage bill. Let's provide immediate relief to those who need it most.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OBAMA). The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I desire to address the Senate at this time. It would be my hope that my colleague, the Senator from Nebraska, could follow me and, indeed, following the Senator from Nebraska, the Senator from Maine. I put that in the form of a unanimous consent request at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. WARNER, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. SALAZAR pertaining to the submission of S. Con. Res. 4 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CANTWELL). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REQUEST FOR SEQUENTIAL REFERRAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter addressed to me dated January 24, 2007, from Senator LEVIN.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2007.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: Pursuant to paragraph 3(b) of S. Res. 400 of the 94th Congress, as amended by S. Res. 445 of the 108th Congress, I request that the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, as filed by the Select Committee on Intelligence on January 24, 2007, be sequentially referred to the Committee on Armed Services for a period of 10 days. This request is without prejudice to any request for an additional extension of five days, as provided for under the resolution.

S. Res. 400, as amended by S. Res. 445 of the 108th Congress, makes the running of the period for sequential referrals of proposed legislation contingent upon the receipt of that

legislation ''in its entirety and including annexes'' by the standing committee to which it is referred. Past intelligence authorization bills have included an unclassified portion and one or more classified annexes.

I request that I be consulted with regard to any unanimous consent or time agreements regarding this bill.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

CARL LEVIN,
Chairman.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I regret that I was unable to vote the evening of January 18 on a very significant amendment offered by my colleague from Utah. During consideration of S. 1 last week, I was concerned with section 220 of the bill, which would have severely undermined the ability of Americans to be informed about what is happening here in the Capitol and, thereby, to petition the Congress with their thoughts. I applaud Senator BENNETT for offering his amendment to strike these so-called grassroots lobbying provisions from the ethics reform bill, and I thank Senate Republican Leader MCCONNELL and Senator BENNETT for their leadership in ensuring this amendment's success. I ask that the RECORD reflect that, had I been here, I would have voted in favor of Senator BENNETT's amendment No. 20 last Thursday night.

Additionally, I applaud the Senate's careful consideration and passage of S. 1, the Legislative Transparency and Accountability Act. Although I was unable to attend the vote on final passage of S. 1, I support the bill and hope that a conference to resolve differences between the House and Senate passed bills is convened soon. Scandals involving lobbyists and members of Congress from both sides of the aisle have shaken the American public's confidence in Congress's ability to do business objectively and judiciously. Although S. 1 fails to address transparency for so-called 527 organizations and fails to provide the President the authority to veto wasteful pork projects, passage of this bill is an important step toward broadening transparency in the legislative process, and I look forward to sending a balanced bill to the President's desk. I ask that the RECORD reflect that, had I been here, I would have voted for the bill, just as I voted for a similar ethics reform bill on March 29, 2006.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CAPTAIN BRIAN FREEMAN

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, a month ago, I traveled to Iraq to meet there with our men and women in uniform. One soldier in particular stood out to me, a bright young West Point graduate, CPT Brian Freeman. Our conversation lasted for no more than 5 minutes, and yet I was immediately struck by his outspoken intelligence. ''Senator, it is nuts over here. Soldiers are being asked to do work we're not trained to do,'' he told me. ''I'm doing work that State Department people are far more prepared to do in fostering democracy, but they're not allowed to come off the bases because it's too dangerous here. It doesn't make any sense.''

Now those words have taken on a tragic resonance. Four days ago, according to media accounts, 30 gunmen disguised as U.S. officials penetrated an Iraqi checkpoint in Karbala. Once inside the Army compound, the reports say, they opened fire and mortally wounded five American soldiers.

On Sunday, Charlotte Freeman was visiting her family in Utah when she found a message on her cell phone. Army chaplains had been to her house in California. The daily e-mails from her husband Brian had stopped. I imagine that few things have more anguish in them than waiting, in suspended fear, for the news of a loved one's death. Late that afternoon, the news came.

So I rise to honor Captain Freeman and to add my voice to his family's prayers. His giving spirit and his self-sacrifice embodied all the best of our Armed Forces, whether he was working to take the son of a Karbala policeman to America for heart surgery or fighting to secure death benefits for the family of his murdered interpreter or organizing a charity to fund medical care for Iraqi children. In his duty as a liaison between the Army and the Government of Karbala Province, he proved every day his dedication to the Iraqi people; the Governor of Karbala praised him as ''a soldier and a statesman.''

But the virtues we saw in Brian shone through even clearer to those who loved him: Charlotte, his wife; his 3-year-old son Gunnar and his 14-month-old daughter Ingrid; his father Randy and his stepmother Kathy; his mother and his stepfather, Kathleen and Albert Snyder. ''Brian is a beautiful man,'' his mother-in-law, Ginny Mills, wrote to me shortly after his death.

''He is loving, funny, and intelligent. He had a spirit in him that saw the good in life. A man who put his life on the line to help those less fortunate than himself. A man who was a loving husband and a devoted father. A man whose daughter will never know him first-hand.''

In the place of a husband and father who will never see his children grow up, Brian Freeman's young family will have to live on with the warm memories of the man who loved them and who risked his life in the service of his country. Memories and words of comfort are so insufficient, so small, next to the flesh and blood. But there is nothing else to put in their place.

I have nothing else to add—except to note that the scenes of grief and comfort in the home of Charlotte Freeman have played themselves out, in some form or another, 3,000 times, in 3,000 families, for 3,000 lives. ''Each story is the same,'' wrote Ginny Mills. ''A wonderful, beautiful soul sacrificed.''

''I cannot understand that this war goes on and on,'' she wrote. ''It has to stop. It has to stop now and I need to know how to do that.''

May God send comfort to her and to all of Captain Freeman's family and to every family that is bereaved. And may we remember, in every hour of our deliberations, the young lives that bear the burden of the choices we make in this Chamber.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, in accordance with rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I submit the rules governing the procedure of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, which the committee adopted earlier today, for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I ask unanimous consent that they be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

RULES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

GENERAL RULES

Rule 1. The Standing Rules of the Senate, as supplemented by these rules, are adopted as the rules of the Committee and its Subcommittees.

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

Rule 2. (a) The Committee shall meet on the third Wednesday of each month while the Congress is in session for the purpose of conducting business, unless, for the convenience of Members, the Chairman shall set some other day for a meeting. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairman as he may deem necessary.

(b) Hearings of any Subcommittee may be called by the Chairman of such Subcommittee, Provided, That no Subcommittee hearing other than a field hearing, shall be scheduled or held concurrently with a full Committee meeting or hearing, unless a majority of the Committee concurs in such concurrent hearing.

OPEN HEARINGS AND MEETINGS

Rule 3. (a) All hearings and business meetings of the Committee and all the hearings of any of its Subcommittees shall be open to the public unless the Committee or Subcommittee involved, by majority vote of all the Members of the Committee or such Subcommittee, orders the hearing or meeting to be closed in accordance with paragraph 5(b) of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

(b) A transcript shall be kept of each hearing of the Committee or any Subcommittee.

(c) A transcript shall be kept of each business meeting of the Committee unless a majority of all the Members of the Committee agrees that some other form of permanent record is preferable.

HEARING PROCEDURE

Rule 4. (a) Public notice shall be given of the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be held by the Committee or any Subcommittee at least one week in advance of such hearing unless the Chairman of the full Committee or the Subcommittee involved determines that the hearing is non-