

evening because her family wanted to get her mind off of the recent passing of her grandfather. She had become consumed with sorrow over the passing of her grandfather. So as a treat her family brought her to the premier of this movie. She was going to start swimming lessons the following week.

James Holmes walked into that movie theater with an AR-15-style rifle, which we have heard talked about over and over and over—the weapon of choice in mass shootings in this country. But just as important, he was armed with 100-round drums of ammunition. Why on Earth does this Senate allow for the continued legal sale of 100-round drums of ammunition? What possible legal reason could there be for the possession of 100-round drums of ammunition that go into an automatic weapon other than to kill as many people as possible as quickly as possible? There is no reason a hunter or sport shooter needs a 100-round drum of ammunition. Yet we can't even get the votes to ban the sale of those deadly accessories to semiautomatic weapons.

I get it. These 6,497 people didn't die at the hands of an assault weapon, they didn't die at the hands of a 100-round drum, never mind a 30-round magazine, but these mass shootings are going to continue to happen. Frankly, the one that happened in Santa Monica not long ago barely made the headlines in this country. Three or four people dying at the hands of a semiautomatic weapon is nothing these days. Now there have to be 20 or 30 people die in order for it to be a big story. Expectations have changed because these shootings are becoming regular, normal occurrences. But we can't let this country become numb to mass shootings in the way I would argue we have become numb to the 6,500 people who have died since December 14.

I understand we tried and failed to get legislation passed through the Senate—supported by 90 percent of Americans—that would extend background checks to more sales of weapons, to make sure criminals don't have weapons, to make gun trafficking a crime in a way that it is not, to provide some more mental health resources, but we shouldn't give up. We shouldn't give up because there is going to be another Aurora, there will be another Sandy Hook if we do nothing, and 30 to 40 people will still die every day if we stand by and continue to allow this kind of regular, everyday gun violence to be the background noise of this Nation.

Maybe if the numbers don't move people, the stories of the victims will. Maybe that will be enough to finally prompt the Senate and the House of Representatives to action.

I yield the floor.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 4 years ago today, the Federal minimum wage increased to \$7.25 per hour. That was the final phase of a minimum wage in-

crease that Congress passed in 2007. After 4 years, it is time to evaluate where wages stand.

Since 1967, the Federal minimum wage has increased from \$1.40 to \$7.25. While at first glance this seems like significant progress, when adjusted to current dollars the value of the minimum wage has actually declined by 12.1 percent. Had the minimum wage kept pace with inflation, it would be \$10.74 an hour today.

But the minimum wage for tipped workers is even worse. The current minimum wage for tipped workers is \$2.13, and that has not gone up since 1991. Employers paying the tipped minimum wage now pay just 21 percent of what that employee would make at minimum wage. This forces workers to use more and more of their tips simply to make up the difference between the tipped minimum wage and the standard minimum wage.

Working 40 hours per week at \$7.25 per hour translates to just \$15,080 per year. That's about \$400 less than the Federal poverty level guidelines for a family of two. Last week, The Atlantic ran an article that showed a budget chart produced by McDonald's to help its employees better manage their finances. And while I commend McDonald's for trying to help workers better manage money, the budget tells a sad story.

According to the chart, someone making the minimum wage and working 40 hours a week at McDonald's would have to work a second job to make ends meet. But to be clear for this budget to be accurate, a worker must hold nearly two full time jobs. According to the Washington Post's Wonkblog, a worker making the minimum wage would have to work 75 hours a week to have the after-tax income in the McDonald's sample budget. Working 75 hours a week at minimum wage with no vacation days and limited benefits—if any—one can make \$24,720 a year, after tax.

How does a person do that if they are a single parent? They can't. There are not enough hours in the day to raise a family working that many hours. And there certainly aren't enough dollars in the income to provide child care.

The sample budget drawn up for McDonald's employees might as well include a line for Federal and State assistance. Families living on the minimum wage have few alternatives but to turn to programs such as SNAP, housing assistance, and Medicaid to survive. These are the same programs that are regularly attacked by the ultra-conservative for growing too quickly. For those who insist that working be a requirement for receiving public assistance, shouldn't they also insist that if you are working full time you shouldn't need public assistance? Wouldn't that be a good definition of a minimum wage?

If we increase the minimum wage to \$10.10, more than 30 million workers would receive a raise. And while some

of these workers are teenagers, 88 percent are adults. For many of those adults, these are not part time jobs or stepping stones to their next job, but the full time job they rely on for a living.

That is why 4 years after the last minimum wage increase, it is time to act again. I am a cosponsor of the Fair Minimum Wage Act introduced by Senator HARKIN in the Senate and Representative GEORGE MILLER in the House. The Fair Minimum Wage Act will increase the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 per hour in three, 95-cent annual increments, and index it to inflation annually thereafter. The bill will also gradually raise the minimum wage for tipped workers from the current \$2.13 per hour to a level that is 70% of the regular minimum wage.

If we pass the Fair Minimum Wage Act that same full-time worker being paid minimum wage I mentioned earlier that makes \$15,080 a year—will make \$21,000. That can be the difference for a family that is getting by and one that is living in poverty. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me in cosponsoring the Fair Minimum Wage Act.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, 4 years ago today, July 24, 2009, was the last time the minimum wage was increased. It rose from \$6.55 an hour to \$7.25 an hour. And it has been stuck there ever since. Four years is too long. It is time to raise the minimum wage.

To that end, I have introduced legislation along with Rep. GEORGE MILLER in the House. The Fair Minimum Wage Act will gradually increase the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour in three annual steps. Our bill will also link future increases in the minimum wage to the cost of living, using the Consumer Price Index, so that people who are trying to get ahead don't fall behind as our economy grows. Finally, our bill—for the first time in more than 20 years—will raise the minimum wage for workers who earn tips, from a paltry \$2.13 per hour, today, to a level that is 70 percent of the regular minimum wage. This will be gradually phased in over the course of 6 years, which will give businesses time to adjust while providing more fairness for hard-working people in tipped industries.

While millions of workers have been without a raise these past 4 years, costs have continued to climb. Between 2009 and 2012, rent has gone up 4%, auto repair costs have climbed 6%, food is 8% more expensive, child care costs 9% more, and public transportation takes a 13% bigger bite out of workers' wallets.

I do not need to tell you that when you are taking in \$1,000 a month, even a few dollars more at the grocery checkout line is a hardship. The tens of millions of working poor and low-wage Americans and their families know this. They know that the minimum wage, for many, is a poverty wage; it pays \$3,000 less per year than what is needed to lift a family of three above

the poverty line. They know they can not survive on such meager wages. They know it because they live it.

Unfortunately, the McDonald's corporation does not seem to understand. Last week, a budgeting brochure that McDonald's provides its workers went viral on the Internet. It seems that, as the folks at The Atlantic said, "McDonald's can't figure out how its workers survive on minimum wage." Let's talk about McDonald's.

McDonald's is the third-largest employer of low-wage workers in the country, with 860,000 U.S. workers. According to Glassdoor, the average wage for a cashier is \$7.72 and for a crew member is \$7.68. That is just pennies above the minimum. Even managers only make around \$9.50 per hour, sometimes less.

The McDonald's budget brochure shows workers how to add up their monthly expenses to determine their monthly household budget. But wages at McDonald's are so paltry that its sample budget had to assume that its employees work two full-time jobs to earn \$2,000 a month. Never mind that most fast food jobs are part-time, and finding two jobs would be very difficult in today's economy with so many unemployed and part-time workers looking for full-time jobs.

On top of requiring two jobs, this budget's estimated costs are either out of sync with reality or simply missing. It estimated rent at \$600 a month, when in reality rent costs \$783 for a one-bedroom apartment and \$977 for a two-bedroom, according to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition. Those are national figures; rent is much higher in many parts of the country. The McDonald's budget also doesn't include necessities like child care or food. And I don't know where someone is going to get health insurance for \$20 a month. Even McDonald's charges \$54 a month for its most basic plan for one employee with no dependents, and that is after a year of working there. With just one dependent, it is \$140 a month. And that basic plan still has deductibles and copays on top of the premium.

This just shows how difficult it is for tens of millions of people—folks who do some of the most demanding work in our country—to make ends meet. But it's not just low-wage workers who are hurt when they can't keep up with costs. This hurts our communities and our local businesses as well. When our neighbors can't afford to go to the grocery store or the auto repair shop or the hardware store, all of those businesses suffer. They lose customers and sales.

But imagine if the lowest wage workers all got raises. They would take their car in for that long-needed repair. They would pick up a few extra items at the store. They would buy a new pair of shoes for their growing son or daughter. And those local stores would all benefit.

And when we see that 30 million people across the country will get a raise

thanks to the Fair Minimum Wage Act, all that extra spending really adds up. The local grocery might even have to hire new people to keep up with rising demand. In total, my bill will add \$33 billion to our GDP over its 3 years of implementation. And it will create 140,000 new jobs over that same period.

It's simple: more money in consumers' pockets means more spending, which means more economic activity, which means more jobs.

In fact, the financial and economic experts know this already. I have seen article after article, interview after interview from financial experts saying that we need more consumer spending in order to get our economy really going. Just last month, the Wall Street Journal interviewed the president of Naroff Economic Advisors. He analyzed a recent consumer spending report and said, "We're in a situation where we need much stronger increases in wages and salaries if households are going to have the money to spend and the economy's going to grow faster." He added:

We need wages to grow significantly faster. They're coming up from where they have been, but we need them to really begin to pick up. We need stronger job growth, but more importantly we also need average salaries and hourly wages to grow faster. Those have been largely flat and that's the problem. Right now, income's growing because we're creating more jobs, not because people are making more money. We need the average person to see their salaries go up before they can spend more and drive this economy forward.

Well, we can raise wages in this country, and we can provide those raises to the people who need it most—not to CEOs but to the people serving our food, watching our children, helping us when we call customer service, and assisting us at our local stores. These are the people who are earning wages so low, they work two jobs and still can't make ends meet. And these are people who will go out and spend just about every dime in their local stores, boosting their local economies.

Minimum wage workers want to support themselves. Ninety percent of the people who would benefit from my legislation are adults, not teenagers. They are often parents. In fact, one in five working parents in this country will get a raise under my bill, and a third of single parents. A total of 18 million children have parents who would get a raise. Think about that. All of those millions of families with a little more money to spend. What a help that will be to those growing kids.

We owe it to millions of low-wage families struggling to just have a glimpse of the American Dream, to make sure that they get a raise and can support their families. But we also owe it to ourselves, to our economy. Our system works best when everyone has the opportunity to support themselves, to be productive, and to participate in our larger economy.

Raising the minimum wage is a simple and effective way to do this. And

we know we can do it in a responsible way, with no unintended consequences. My bill would phase in an increase in three steps, giving businesses time to adapt. And because the minimum wage will apply to all businesses, no single business will be at a competitive disadvantage.

Also, my proposal is in line percentage wise with previous increases in the minimum wage. Decades of solid economic research shows us that these increases have not caused job losses. In fact, businesses stand to benefit from increased wages, because raises result in significantly lower turnover rates, which in turn saves those businesses money.

Four years without a raise is 3 years too many. We have to make sure that working families can keep up with the economy. That is why linking future increases in the minimum wage to the cost of living is so crucial. Small annual increases will be easy to absorb, but will make a big difference to American families. And it will help our businesses on Main Street as well as our national economy.

Mr. President, it is time to raise the minimum wage and link it to inflation for the future. It is the right thing to do, and it is the responsible thing to do. And it will give a much needed boost to both local economies and our national economy. I urge my colleagues to support this long-overdue legislation.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK J. SAMMARTINO

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise along with my colleague, the Ranking Member of the Budget Committee, Senator SESSIONS, to pay tribute to Frank J. Sammartino, who is retiring this week after 33 years of distinguished Federal service, including 26 years serving the Congress at the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Economic Committee.

Mr. Sammartino began his Federal career in 1978, working in the office of the assistant secretary for planning and evaluation at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where he worked until 1985. He left HHS for the Tax Analysis Division in the Congressional Budget Office, where he has worked for most of his remaining career. While at CBO, Mr. Sammartino has risen up through the ranks to his current position of assistant director for Tax Analysis, the director's top person on all tax policy and budget matters. In addition to his work at CBO, he has also served Congress as the chief economist and deputy director at the Joint Economic Committee.

As head of the Tax Analysis Division at CBO, Mr. Sammartino has worked tirelessly to ensure the Congress has quality and timely analysis of tax policy and budget issues. He has directly contributed to and overseen numerous baseline projections, policy studies, and cost estimates. In fact, early on at