

providers and dangerous—possibly even deadly—to patients.

What is worse is that it is not just reproductive care. This administration is using stacked courts to dismantle the healthcare system that gives coverage to millions of Americans, including 60,000 individuals in my district, without even the vaguest plan to replace it.

My colleagues and I are working every day to lower the cost of prescription drugs and to ensure that we have a healthcare system that works for everyone, while this administration tries to rip coverage way. As Members of Congress, we owe it to our communities to fight back against these rollbacks at every step, and we will.

HOLLAND VIRTUAL TECH HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

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

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Holland Virtual Tech High School.

This program was brought to my attention by a gentleman named Louis, who talked about it and the positive impact it had on his family during one of my telephone townhalls recently. Since 2015, the program has served as an alternative credit recovery school on the campus of Holland High School in Holland, Michigan.

The fully accredited program offers a unique online learning environment designed for students who struggle in a traditional classroom setting or have fallen behind in their schoolwork due to unforeseen circumstances. Together, teachers, guidance counselors, and support staff at the school work with the students to develop an individualized graduation plan.

Through these efforts, nearly 400 students have graduated from the program. That represents countless lives positively impacted, even more doors opened, and endless opportunities created for these young men and women.

Upon completion of the program, students receive a Holland Public Schools diploma that meets all requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum. The program has played an integral part in increasing the overall Holland High School graduation rate by 5 percentage points over the last 2 years.

Students who graduate are equipped with the skills to successfully transition into their postsecondary lives, whether that be continued education, apprenticeships, or directly into the job market.

Mr. Speaker, I thank everyone who is involved with Holland Virtual Tech High School. Keep up the great work.

□ 1215

REMEMBERING THE PORT CHICAGO 50

(Mr. DESAULNIER asked and was given permission to address the House

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

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, on this day in 1944, at 10:18 p.m., a cargo vessel exploded at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine located in my district in California, resulting in the deadliest home-front disaster of World War II.

All of the men loading ammunition at the site that day were African American. When the surviving sailors, understandably, hesitated to return to those unsafe conditions of loading, 50 were discriminately convicted of mutiny.

Congress and the administration have repeatedly recognized the injustice these men suffered. Congress directed the creation of a memorial, the executive branch pardoned one of the 50, and the then-Secretary of the Navy said he strongly supported executive action in favor of the Port Chicago 50.

To commemorate this anniversary, the House of Representatives passed, just this week, our measure that directs the Secretary of the Navy to finally exonerate the Port Chicago 50.

On the 75th anniversary today of the explosion, let us remember the words of Thurgood Marshall when he traveled to San Francisco to defend these innocent men. The future first African American Supreme Court Justice said:

What is at stake here is more than the rights of the Port Chicago 50. It is the moral commitment stated in our Nation's creed.

HONORING H. ROSS PEROT

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, back home in Texas, 1,500 people gathered at the Highland Park United Methodist Church on the campus of SMU to honor the life and legacy of H. Ross Perot.

We lost Mr. Perot just a little over a week ago, at the age of 89. Mr. Perot had an outsized influence on our State and, indeed, our Nation.

Mr. Perot was remembered by his children in very touching tributes.

Mr. Perot's accomplishments were too numerous to go into in the space of a 1-minute talk, but I did want to acknowledge all of the work that he did on behalf of the United States prisoners of war and, certainly, his efforts to elucidate the cause and, yes, some treatment for what was then known as Gulf War Syndrome.

Mr. Perot was a driving force in that, and he should be remembered for all of the efforts that he put forward for our Nation's servicemembers.

FREE TRADE AMONG FREE PEOPLE

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, America's economic history is rooted in the

exploitation of labor. It is a lesson worth remembering, but its history is not one of yesteryears alone.

Our existing trade deals impose an economic model built on cheap labor, where profits matter more than people. This system undermines the rule of law with a global race to the bottom.

Trade is not just about goods. It is about people. It is about communities. It is about workers.

In the agriculture sector alone, one can argue that our continent has gone from slavery to serfdom. That is why, today, I am introducing the Independent Labor Secretariat for Fair Trade Deals Act.

We need a trade model that respects workers and holds employers and workers accountable, with strong mechanisms for labor enforcement.

My bill would establish an independent labor secretariat to monitor and enforce transnational labor issues, with a wages and standards working group with expert wage panels to study the impacts on wages, benefits, labor rights, working conditions, and inequality.

The bill also requires that any trade agreement eligible for expedited consideration include enforceable labor standards and protections.

Mr. Speaker, let us dignify the workers who sustain us.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 582, RAISE THE WAGE ACT

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 492 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 492

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 582) to provide for increases in the Federal minimum wage, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and Labor now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor; (2) the further amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the Rules Committee met and reported out a rule, House Resolution 492, providing for consideration of H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act, under a structured rule.

The rule provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Education and Labor. The rule makes in order one amendment, debatable for 10 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, the Raise the Wage Act gradually increases the Federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025, thereby fulfilling a promise to the American people that with hard work comes, at a minimum, a livable wage. Not a wage with eroded purchasing power or a wage that keeps workers from providing for their families, but a minimum wage that empowers Americans and gives them a fighting chance at economic mobility.

It has been over a decade, the longest stretch since the establishment of the Federal minimum wage, since this body voted to increase the minimum wage. This is a great disservice to the American people, and I am thankful to Chairman SCOTT for making a gradual increase of the Federal minimum wage a top priority of his Committee on Education and Labor, of which I am a proud member.

In my home State of New York, we have one of the highest minimum wages in the country. I was proud to support gradually increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour while I served as majority leader in the New York State Assembly, and I look forward to doing the same here today to ensure all Americans working full-time can live safely and sustainably above the poverty line.

The benefits of increasing the minimum wage have far-reaching impacts throughout our society. The Raise the Wage Act could increase wages for over 30 million Americans, people who get up every day to work toward their own version of the American Dream.

It empowers women, narrowing the gender wage pay gap through pay increases for nearly 23 million women across America.

It would also lift the families of at least 1.3 million Americans, 600,000 of whom are children, out of poverty. Let's just think about that for a mo-

ment: 1.3 million Americans who are working hard to make ends meet but struggle below the poverty line because, for years, Congress let the real value of their hard-earned dollars erode.

This isn't a handout for them. This is a fair and overdue adjustment for employees who deserve to earn a livable wage.

Recently, a friend of mine, who is the administrator at Temple B'rith Kodesh in Rochester, New York, where I worked to put myself through college, sent me a copy of my pay stub from 1976.

At the time, I made the minimum wage, \$2.30 an hour. People might argue or debate whether or not I was worth \$2.30 an hour, but that was the minimum wage in 1976. Adjusted for inflation, that would be \$10.35 in 2019 dollars.

Had the minimum wage kept pace with inflation, a worker who puts in 2,000 hours annually would make \$20,700 today, but because the Federal minimum wage is still at \$7.25, or more than \$2 an hour lower than if the minimum wage had simply been adjusted for inflation since that time, the same full-time worker today earns \$14,500, a more than \$6,200 erosion of purchasing power since 1976.

Even if you adjust for inflation since 2009 and look again at a 2,000-hour work year annually, the difference is \$2,800.

When you are living paycheck to paycheck, as many minimum wage workers do, an additional \$6,200, or at least \$2,800 annually, can make a significant difference in your financial stability.

Gradually raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour doesn't just benefit those earning minimum wage. It boosts the local economy in communities across this country.

A gradual increase to \$15 will accelerate economic growth by putting money in the pockets of workers who want—and now can afford—to spend money beyond their basic needs.

Whether it be at the community grocery stores or family-owned shops, by spending money back in their local economy, they contribute to a positive economic cycle.

From narrowing the gender pay gap and lifting families out of poverty to strengthening local economies, the Raise the Wage Act has clear benefits we should all get behind. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this significant piece of legislation and urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MORELLE for yielding the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we are considering H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act.

This legislation would raise the Federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour, a 107 percent increase over the current rate of \$7.25 an hour.

An increase of this magnitude could harm American businesses, could harm American consumers, and certainly will harm American workers.

The legislation does not consider the labor market, it disincentivizes job growth, and it has the potential to leave nearly 4 million workers unemployed.

Let us consider the data. The Congressional Budget Office recently released a report on the effects of mandating a Federal minimum wage in the United States.

The report explains how more than doubling the minimum wage would increase unemployment up to 4 million individuals. Four million workers would have to be laid off to increase wages for a little over 1 million people.

That means, for each person lifted out of poverty due to a wage increase, another three individuals will lose their jobs. Why?

I ask my colleagues: Is this a fair tradeoff? This bill creates false hope for low-wage earners who will be counting on a wage increase and keeping their job. But what if they don't keep their job? Then it is no wage at all.

In addition, those who are most likely to lose their jobs are likely to be minorities, women, and our young people.

Increasing the Federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour would have unintended secondary effects, particularly increasing the risk of inflation. As wages increase, the cost of doing business will rise as well. Businesses will be forced to pass on these increased costs by raising the price of their goods and services. As the costs are passed on to the consumer, who will be hurt the most?

It is those vulnerable populations at the lower wage scale that this bill supposedly helps: the Americans who live in poverty.

Congress cannot, in good conscience, pass this legislation, at least, without understanding the full effects.

In January, the American Enterprise Institute released a report detailing how the costs of goods have changed over the past 20 years, controlled for inflation. This study included everything from televisions to furniture to housing and more.

Unsurprisingly, the products with the most government involvement—let's use as examples healthcare and education—saw the most rapid increase in cost.

Is it the intent of the majority to increase prices of many consumer products and services beyond what would be natural economic inflation?

Congress must also consider how this legislation will impact different parts of the country in different ways.

Many urban areas have already raised their minimum wage to similar levels. By the end of this year, New York City and San Francisco will have minimum wages of \$15 an hour. Seattle's two-tiered minimum wage system goes even further by requiring small employers to pay \$15 an hour and large employers to pay \$16 an hour.

However, in many parts of the country, they simply cannot handle the burden of a \$15-an-hour minimum wage. Rural areas with small mom-and-pop businesses and significantly lower costs of living do not have the same needs or purchasing priorities as urban dwellers.

A Federal minimum wage should be a floor for all workers, not the floor for those working and living in the heart of the most expensive areas of the country.

Even the progressive think tank, The Third Way, lobbied for a regional minimum wage in place of an across-the-board increase.

If this legislation goes into effect as currently written, it should be renamed the “Rural Jobs Killer Act” because this one-size-fits-all policy would accomplish just that.

□ 1230

Another consequence of this legislation will be the pricing-out of individuals who seek to enter the workforce.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nearly half of low-wage earners are under 25 years of age. Increasing the Federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour will make it harder for these individuals to compete, meaning that many will not be able to find work.

As a teenager growing up in Denton, Texas, I worked a lot of different jobs. I bailed hay, delivered pizzas, and mowed lawns to earn money for my education. Passing this legislation will eliminate such opportunities for the young people of today.

With this concern in mind, I offered an amendment to the Raise the Wage Act to protect opportunities for entry-level workers. My amendment would ensure that those individuals with less than a year of work experience have the opportunity to compete in the job market by allowing an entry-level wage for workers with less than 1 year's experience.

The initial wage would be set at the current minimum of \$7.25 an hour for the first year. Following that year, the Secretary of Labor would be authorized to update the entry-level minimum wage using a market-based analysis. The Secretary would be tasked to update this wage every 5 years to keep up with the changing labor and business environment, instead of a heavyhanded government mandate.

Young Americans and new workers deserve a chance to gain experience without being priced out of the job market by more experienced job seekers.

The final downside of a significantly higher Federal minimum wage is the risk this action has on the rapid automation of many jobs throughout the economy. Automation in stores, vehicles, and assembly lines could make many of our everyday tasks more efficient and convenient. However, the new technologies will likely displace those who are not trained for other occupations.

There is a compelling commercial that one of our fast-food franchises has today that details the path of a young woman who gets her first job at one of these restaurants. Then, it sort of details her progress in every stage along the way. They say her name, and she gets the job. She gets promotions. She gets into school. She is the first in her family to walk across the stage at graduation.

But wouldn't it be ironic if, instead of that young woman's name, they would have a kiosk from the same fast-food franchise. The kiosk is actually advancing through the university, the artificial intelligence university. Eventually, the kiosk may sit in the Speaker's chair one day.

Look, that is not the future we want. We want to empower our young people. We want to be able to give them work experience and allow them to work and grow.

It is a beautiful commercial. I think they have done a wonderful job telling that experience. But ironically, I think of that now when I go into that same restaurant. I am able to order a cup of coffee off the kiosk, and I never have to interact with an actual human at all.

Increasing the minimum wage by 107 percent across the country will expedite this process quicker than the pace of innovation ever would.

My fellow Texas Representative, freshman Representative RON WRIGHT, brought this concern to the attention of his colleagues at the House Education and Labor Committee. During consideration of this bill, Mr. WRIGHT offered an amendment that required the Government Accountability Office to study the impact of the minimum wage on the loss of jobs due to automation and would stop the minimum wage hike if this job loss rose to half a million jobs. That seems reasonable.

Unfortunately, our colleagues on the other side of the dais in the Education and Labor Committee rejected his concerns and his amendment.

With that said, I commend my Democratic colleagues for their efforts to support the disability community with the inclusion of H.R. 873, the Transformation to Competitive Employment Act.

Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Department of Labor is able to grant employers 14(c) certificates. These certificates give employers the legal right to pay disabled employees' wages below minimum wage, officially called subminimum wages. This unfair policy enables individuals with disabilities to be exploited under the guise of integrating them into society.

However, a 2001 GAO report found that only 5 percent of disabled workers at workshops that used the 14(c) certificates found employment outside of these facilities. Little to no training took place, and there was minimal integration into our modern society. Some workers, unfortunately, were paid as little as 4 cents an hour.

This issue was brought to my attention by a constituent of mine, Blake

Pyron. Blake is a hardworking Texan. He owns his own business in Sanger, Texas.

Blake happens to have Down syndrome. He was the first person with Down syndrome in the State of Texas to start his own business, and he has been an advocate for those with disabilities for years. Blake is proof that being differently abled does not change the value of one's life or one's labor.

Congress should continue to allow real wage growth to take place through a thriving labor market. By avoiding burdensome Federal mandates, by reducing expenses, by reducing red tape, Americans will see gains in productivity and wages, allowing for more employment, not less.

We don't have to look very far to see an example of this. Over the past 2 years, the United States has seen unprecedented low levels of unemployment and record-high rates of wage growth. Due to comprehensive tax reform passed by the last Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, American companies have been able to reinvest in their employees and projects like never before.

Due to the Trump administration's effort to reform and rein in overbearing and obstructive Federal regulations, the economy is no longer being held back.

With 7 million unfilled jobs in the United States today, the best way to raise wages is to let the power of capitalism work and allow companies to compete for workers. I urge opposition to the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate hearing from my distinguished friend and colleague on the Rules Committee, Mr. BURGESS. There is a lot to unpack from what he said. Let me make a few points before I yield to my colleagues on my side of the aisle.

First of all, as it relates to the economic numbers, the picture that Mr. BURGESS painted is heavily overstated. What it doesn't take into consideration is the full picture here, which is the question of, if you are going to establish as a matter of public policy that there ought to be a minimum wage throughout this country, you do so recognizing that that minimum wage ought to continue to keep pace so that it doesn't get eroded over time. I will come back to that in a minute.

I want to remind the gentleman that this change alone would lift 1.3 million people out of poverty—600,000 of whom are children who live in poverty—even though they might work 2,000 hours a year, what we consider full-time, full employment.

It is extraordinary. The savings alone to the government for people who are no longer in poverty and who might rise out of the need for public programs will be significant. Thirty million people would benefit from this. Thirty million Americans benefit from the legislation that Mr. SCOTT has advanced.

I also note that this economy has been growing for a decade now, what I call the Obama recovery, which has continued. I also have the view that Presidents probably get too much blame and certainly take too much credit, perhaps, for economic growth.

This has been a sustained recovery. During times when there are labor shortages is exactly the time that we would want to raise the minimum wage. To do it during a labor market in which there was an excess labor capacity would be the wrong time, it seems to me, from an economics point of view.

Nonetheless, the point here is that the value of this has been agreed to since 1938, when the minimum wage was first enacted under Franklin D. Roosevelt.

I note, too, that in Mr. BURGESS' district in Texas alone, 26 percent of workers would see a raise of \$3,900 a year, on average. That is just in that district. That is a significant change in the economic well-being of people in his district in Texas.

I certainly don't ever doubt the sincerity of my colleague, but what would the minimum wage be?

Perhaps my colleagues could argue we get full employment at \$2 an hour. Unfortunately, people would make \$4,000 a year. So if we are going to be truthful to and have fidelity to the notion that a floor needs to be established—and that is what this is; States and communities are free to raise beyond the Federal minimum wage—then the question is, what do we set it at?

I note that in 2007, when the question was last before the House and when we raised the minimum wage that was at \$5.85 per hour, and it is now at \$7.25, Mr. BURGESS voted "no," as did many of his colleagues.

Should the minimum wage still be \$5.85? I think the question is, what do we value as Americans? What is the appropriate public policy for establishing the floor for what an individual works in America?

We feel very strongly about it. We feel lifting 30 million Americans' economic prospects make this the appropriate thing to do, particularly in an economy that is growing and an economy that can certainly not only afford it, but we believe there is a moral imperative to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL. Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of this very important legislation, the Raise the Wage Act.

Mr. Speaker, they are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your grandmothers. They are your childcare workers, your home health aides, your retail workers, your maids. They, too, have to pay rent, buy food for their families. By the time many retire, they live in poverty.

Women play an essential role in the economy of the United States of America yet make up two-thirds of min-

imum-wage workers. They are our mothers, our sisters, our grandmothers, our daughters. They deserve a raise, and they need a raise.

When women succeed, America succeeds.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes for the purpose of response.

The gentleman, Mr. MORELLE, was not here in 2007, the last time the minimum wage vote was taken.

The Speaker of the House was the same Speaker of the House that we have now. The minimum wage was raised. I don't know if the gentleman remembers what happened in the year and a half following that, but job losses in this country were staggering. I am not saying it was a one-to-one relationship, but it certainly set the stage. The economy may have already been softening, but it really did accelerate the job losses that occurred in the recession of 2008.

Now, the gentleman correctly points out that 1.3 million people would get a raise. That comes at the expense of 4 million people who would see their employment eliminated by raising the minimum wage. Is that really the direction we want to go?

His jurisdiction has raised the minimum wage. Any jurisdiction that I represent is free to raise the minimum wage to whatever level it wants. A city in my district may say that it is not going to negotiate with a contractor that pays less than \$15 an hour. That is fine. That is its job. That is its prerogative. It may do so, but it will find itself in competition with other jurisdictions that perhaps will not be so onerous.

Look, I was an employer not too terribly long ago, and I recognized, in the full-employment economy of the 1990s, that if I posted a job, the most entry-level job in my medical practice, for a minimum wage hire, I was wasting my money. No one was going to respond to that ad because no one worked for minimum wage in the late 1990s during the tech boom. Everyone had jobs that paid higher than the minimum wage.

That should be our aspirational goal, to have an economy that pays more than what a baseline economy would pay.

I sat on the Joint Economic Committee for the first several years of the Obama administration. It was a difficult time in this country. Christina Romer and Mr. Summers would tell us that the country's best days were behind us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself an additional 1 minute.

Now, we find ourselves emerging into a new area of our economy, a new area of economic freedom. Why don't we embrace that?

Look, if we really wanted to do something to help people at the lower end of the wage scale, we would be working seriously on border security. We

wouldn't have off-the-books labor competing with the lowest wage earners in this country. We would fix that problem as a United States Congress. That might have been a better effort than what we spent our day doing yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1245

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will admit I think this is the first time I have heard that the great crisis of 2007–2008 was caused by or a contributing factor was the increase in the Federal minimum wage from \$5.85. That sort of ignores the problems in the housing industry, credit default swaps, and a whole host of things in the financial community, not to mention what happened in the automotive industry. So this is the first time I have heard that theory promoted by anyone, and I think it varies dramatically from what history will write about 2007 and 2008.

Nonetheless, I do want to just correct a few things that I thought I heard my distinguished friend say.

First of all, the 1.3 million people who will receive a raise, that is not what I said nor is it what CBO said. 1.3 million people will be out of poverty. It will be a raise for 27 million Americans. So that is the right number. It is not 1.3 million; it is almost 30 million Americans.

I just note that nowhere in the CBO does it talk about 4 million people being displaced. What it says is that there will be zero to 3.7, a two-thirds chance that will happen. The median loss will be 1.3 million. So nowhere is there 4 million.

But, again, the point here that I think we should take from this is, using the logic that has been posited by my friend and colleague, you could argue that, using that logic, there would be no minimum wage. Just let the States do whatever the States choose to do, localities do whatever localities choose to do. That is not the public policy decision we made in 1938, and we continue to have fidelity to this day and this time and place.

Now, there may be people who disagree with that who think there ought not be a Federal minimum wage at all. I guess that is certainly their right to do that and make that argument. But the most important thing here is that, if we are going to establish this—which we on this side of the aisle certainly believe in the Federal minimum wage—if you are going to allow it to continue to function without the erosion of inflation and the loss of purchasing power, making adjustments—which I think is one of the things that most advocates for this bill is that there may be other changes in time to wage rates, et cetera, under law—this will establish, for the first time in Federal law, a wage inflation adjustor each year so that we will stop, for the first time since we initiated the minimum wage,

the erosion of purchasing power, and we won't need to wait 10 years.

This is the longest period of time, as I mentioned in my opening comments, the longest period of time since the establishment of the Federal minimum wage, that we have waited to make those adjustments.

I would just note that, while I was not here and I was laboring in the State legislature in New York creating what I think was good economic policy, I noted that the Committee on Education Labor, during the intervening time while my friends were in the majority, not only did they not attempt to raise the minimum wage, they did not hold a single hearing on the erosion of the purchasing power of the minimum wage, which at the time was \$7.25 and remains, to this date, \$7.25.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, corporate America and Wall Street are awash in profits and cash, but American workers haven't had the benefit of a Federal minimum wage increase in over a decade, while the prices of everything have gone up—medicine, housing, food, cars. A recent study found there isn't a single congressional district in our Nation where a full-time minimum wage worker can afford a two-bedroom apartment.

While many States and cities have raised their own minimum wage requirements, millions of Americans are stuck at \$7.25 an hour.

What does this really mean? A person working full time for minimum wage takes home an annual salary of just a bit over \$15,000 a year. With inflation, these workers have effectively had their wages cut by an astonishing 17 percent.

That is why I rise today in support of the Raise the Wage Act, a bill that will gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2025, lift 27 million American workers out of poverty, give roughly 40 million Americans a raise—nearly a third of our workforce—and stimulate local economies as Americans have more money to spend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from Ohio an additional 15 seconds.

Ms. KAPTUR. Such a raise would put \$3,200 in the pockets of more than 128,000 workers just in northern Ohio.

Mr. Speaker, the Raise the Wage Act will dramatically improve the lives of millions of hardworking people and families and communities across our country. Let's come together and really help the American people who are working and pass this much-needed legislation without delay.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds just to read from the Congressional Budget Office report.

The paragraph that says, “Effects of the \$15 option on employment and income,” ends with the sentence “a reduction of 3.7 million workers.” And

there is also the little item of an \$8.7 billion loss in family income.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS).

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, socialist Democrats support open borders. Open borders mean a literal tsunami of illegal alien labor that artificially inflates the labor supply and suppresses American wages. This is economics 101. If the supply goes up, everything else being constant, the price goes down.

The way to raise wages is simple: America must stop importing cheap foreign labor that takes American jobs from American workers and suppresses the wages of hardworking Americans who need that money for their families.

The question is: Do we care enough about American family incomes to secure our borders and stop the flood of illegal alien labor that suppresses American wages? Of course not. Instead, there are those who seek an imperial decree for a \$15-per-hour minimum wage.

Well, that all sounds fine and good. Socialist policies always have a cost, and according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, that cost is a loss of as many as 3.7 million jobs.

You heard right. The policies being advocated today really are advocating the firing of as many as 3.7 million American workers from their jobs. That is like firing the entire population of the State of Oklahoma.

Mr. Speaker, if the advocates of this legislation really cared about American workers, they would not fire them; rather, they would help secure our borders, save American jobs, save American incomes, and, as an added bonus, help prevent the deaths of over 30,000 Americans who die each year because of America's porous southern border.

But that is not what the advocates of this legislation prefer. Rather, out of a lust for political power, they prefer open borders and the firing of 3.7 million American workers.

Mr. Speaker, I say yes to border security; I say no to killing jobs; and I say no to this job-killing socialist legislation.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I note that using that logic, people might have said the same thing about my grandparents who came over from Italy at the turn of the previous century, who came to work in this country as carpenters and bricklayers and pipefitters.

What we really need, if the gentleman is serious, is a path to citizenship to allow people, as we did a century ago, to come and fulfill and be a part of the American Dream.

The truth is it also avoids what is happening, which is we have a shortage of workers in the country. Every week I try to visit employers in my community and get a sense of the pulse of what the challenges are that they face

in continuing to seek economic growth and more opportunities. Repeatedly, I hear the same thing over and over again: We need good workers. Send us more workers. Do whatever you can.

This is the time while our economy continues to grow following the policies of the Obama administration, continuing today, economic growth is now at a 10-year sustained path, but we need workers. You see this all the time.

We can talk, and I am happy to talk about the impacts of automation and robotics and AI, but the truth is that, even among some of the biggest technology companies in the United States, there are thousands and thousands of openings for jobs. This is hardly a job killer. This is rewarding people who put in long hours, who look to climb that ladder of success in the American economy.

I just note, also, for my colleague, Mr. BROOKS, that 34 percent of the workers in his district in Alabama would receive an average raise of \$3,700 a year by implementation of this wage increase.

And I would also remind my colleagues, 65 percent of Americans, when asked, believe that increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2024 is the right policy for Congress to take.

So this has the backing and support of the American public. It has a clear path to making sure that there isn't erosion of income in the United States by people at the lowest end of the economic scale. It is an opportunity for us to think about a path to citizenship, to end the challenges faced by so many employers who seek good, hardworking workers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), my good friend and a distinguished gentleman.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act. It has been more than a decade since working people got a raise in this country. Americans are working harder than ever, and labor productivity is overperforming expectations.

However, the profit of this increased productivity is not being felt in the checkbooks of working people. In fact, American workers have experienced a 20 percent pay cut in real income due to inflation and the government's failure to raise wages.

It is unconscionable that people working full time in the wealthiest nation in the history of the world are unable to afford basic essentials or live in poverty. That is why it is critical that we pass the Raise the Wage Act.

Here are the facts: The bill will increase wages for nearly 34 million American workers. About 28 percent of workers in my district in Rhode Island will get a raise of about \$2,100 a year. It will lift 3.1 million Americans out of poverty, including 600,000 children, and it will stimulate economic growth. And

we know that when workers earn more, they spend more money.

While the top 1 percent of Americans continue to amass Gilded Age amounts of wealth, working men and women have been left behind. It is time to reaffirm our commitment to hard-working Americans and pass this critical legislation. Americans deserve a raise, and that is what this bill does.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter signed by many LGBTQ organizations and human rights organizations in strong support of this legislation.

JULY 16, 2019.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: We, the undersigned organizations, write to express our strong support for the Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 582). As lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) and allied organizations, we believe raising the minimum wage is a critical LGBTQ issue. Raising the federal minimum wage would benefit LGBTQ people by helping to reduce poverty and increase stability and economic security for LGBTQ people and their families.

Because of discrimination in employment, housing, education, and other areas, LGBTQ individuals are more likely to be jobless, homeless, and poor than the general population. Nearly 40 million workers, including LGBTQ people, would receive increased wages from the Act. In light of the disproportionate rates of poverty among LGBTQ people, passing this measure is a critical priority for our community.

The Raise the Wage Act would raise the federal minimum wage to \$8.55 this year and increase it gradually over the next six years until it reaches \$15 an hour in 2025. After 2025, the minimum wage would be adjusted annually to keep pace with growth in the typical worker's wages. In addition, the Act would phase out the outdated subminimum wage for tipped workers, which has been stagnant at \$2.13 since 1991. It would also sunset the ability for employers to pay a subminimum wage to workers with disabilities and phase out the subminimum wage for workers under the age of 20.

An increase in the federal minimum wage would help the LGBTQ community, especially its most marginalized members. Incomes would rise above poverty level for nearly 30,000 people in same-sex relationships. Raising the minimum wage to \$15 would decrease poverty by almost 50% among female same-sex couples and by 35% among male same-sex couples.

Transgender people would be particularly impacted by this bill. Almost one-third of transgender people live in poverty, which is more than twice the rate of the U.S. general population.

The bill would also have a profound impact on LGBTQ youth, who make up between 30% and 40% of homeless youth. 47% of these LGBTQ homeless youth are persons of color. Since 55% of homeless LGBTQ youth were forced out by their parents or ran away because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, more than 50% of LGBTQ homeless youth remain homeless for longer periods of time than non-LGBTQ homeless youth. Raising the wage and phasing out the subminimum wage for workers under age 20 will help reduce homelessness among LGBTQ youth by helping them afford housing and achieve economic security independent of their families.

Additionally, the Act will have enormous impacts on LGBTQ people of color and LGBTQ women. 37% of the LGBTQ community identify as people of color. Under the Act, 40% of Black workers and 34% of Latino/

a workers will benefit. Women account for nearly 56% of the workers benefiting from an increased minimum wage. Women also account for 3% of the country's tipped workers, who are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than the rest of the workforce. LGBTQ women are more likely than their non-LGBTQ counterparts to receive public assistance, be unemployed, and be near or under the poverty level.

Critics of the bill have argued against raising the federal minimum wage, proposing instead that minimum wages should be established by region. However, a minimum wage of \$15 by 2025 is not unrealistic in any part of the U.S. In addition, rural communities have a strong incentive to support the Act because they are experiencing a housing affordability crisis in part due to flat incomes for low- and moderate-income workers in those communities.

Additionally, the Act's plan to phase in the \$15 wage over six years allows for lower-wage states and regions to adjust to the new wage. Opponents of the bill also contend that small businesses do not benefit from raising the wage. However, 61% of American small business owners support raising the minimum wage.

For these reasons, we support the Raise the Wage Act and urge you to consider the enormous benefits the bill will bring to the LGBTQ community. LGBTQ workers need jobs that allow them to have security and take care of themselves and their families.

Sincerely,

9to5, A Better Balance, AIDS Action Baltimore, AIDS Alabama, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, AIDS Legal Referral Panel, AIDS United, Alaskans Together For Equality, Albany Damien Center, American Association of University Women (AAUW), Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), Athlete Ally, Black AIDS Institute, Cascade AIDS Project, Center for American Progress, Center for Black Equity, Center for Disability Rights, CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers, Coalition on Human Needs, DC Fights Back.

Equality California, Equality Federation, Equality Illinois, Equality North Carolina, Equality Utah, Fair Wisconsin, Family Equality, Family Values @ Work, Howard Brown Health, In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda, Interfaith Worker Justice, Lambda Legal, Latinos Salud, LGBTQ Allyship, Modem Military Association of America, MomsRising, Movement Advancement Project, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF), National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Center for Transgender Equality.

National Coalition for the Homeless, National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), National Employment Law Project, National Equality Action Team (NEAT) National LGBT Cancer Network, National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund, National LGBTQ Workers Center, National Women's Law Center, National Working Positive Coalition, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, New York City Anti-Violence Project, Oasis Legal Services, Open Health Care Clinic, Oxfam America, PathWays PA, People For the American Way, PFLAG National, Positive Women's Network-USA, Poz Military Veterans USA INTL, Pride at Work.

PROMO, Reframe Health and Justice, Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), Shelter Resources, Inc., Shriver Center on Poverty Law, Silver State Equality-Nevada, Southerners On New Ground, The DC Center for the LGBT Community, The National LGBTQ Workers Center, The Well Project, Thrive Alabama, TRANScending Barriers, Transgender Law Center, Treatment Action

Group (TAG), UCHAPS, United States People Living with HIV Caucus, United We Dream, US People Living with HIV Caucus, Voices for Progress, Workplace Fairness.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I, first, just want to remark that—I think, the last 11 months are the last figures I saw—over the last 11 months wage growth in this country has increased more than at any time in recent memory.

Wage growth is a lagging indicator, but it is happening, and that is a good thing, and we should celebrate that. There would be no reason to put the brakes on that that I can see.

I think we should be encouraged that that is happening, and I don't think we should be doing things to the economy that would be detrimental and reverse that trend.

But let me just say at this point, if we defeat the previous question, Republicans will amend the rule to immediately bring up H.R. 748, the Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act, or Cadillac Tax Repeal Act, and include the text of H.R. 1398, the Health Insurance Tax Relief Act, and H.R. 2207, the Protect Medical Innovation Act, or the medical device tax repeal.

Legislation in previous Congresses to repeal the Cadillac tax has gathered strong support and brought employers and labor unions together in their efforts to eliminate this tax.

Since the Cadillac tax is calculated only based on insurance premiums, it could unfairly target those already struggling with higher healthcare costs and affect middle-income workers, including teachers and nurses, due to the continuing rise of health insurance costs.

H.R. 748 would repeal this tax in its entirety.

I would also like to note my support for the repeal of the medical device tax and to delay the health insurance tax.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI), my good friend.

□ 1300

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to vote down the previous question.

If we defeat the previous question, Republicans will amend the rule to include the repeal of the medical device tax and the health insurance tax as part of H.R. 748, the Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act of 2019.

H.R. 748 is an important piece of legislation that would permanently repeal ObamaCare's 40 percent tax on employer-provided health insurance, commonly referred to as the Cadillac tax. Ending the Cadillac tax will provide important relief to both employers and employees and ensure employers can remain leaders in utilizing new technologies to reduce healthcare costs and ensure better patient outcomes.

However, this bill doesn't include repealing other burdensome taxes, like the medical device tax and the health

insurance tax. We all know that Americans are facing rising costs and fewer healthcare options. Raising taxes on health coverage would only make matters worse for families, small businesses, and Medicare Advantage enrollees. That is why we should also include a bipartisan provision to provide seniors relief from the burdensome health insurance tax.

Hoosiers are proud to be leaders in medical innovation, with more than 300 medical device manufacturers in my State that support nearly 55,000 good-paying jobs. However, after ObamaCare's medical device tax took effect, the medical technology industry lost almost 29,000 jobs nationwide from 2012 to 2015, according to the Commerce Department's data.

Medical devices have changed the way we think about healthcare. New technologies diagnose illnesses earlier, lowering the impact of care on a person's daily life. All these notable gains will be wiped out if the medical device tax is reinstated. By defeating the previous question, we can repeal this job-killing tax as well.

It is critical that we repeal all three of these burdensome taxes before they go back into effect. Doing so will help lower premiums, improve access to care, and boost American manufacturing jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against the previous question.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, although the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI) did not actually talk about the minimum wage increase which is before us, I do note that about 40 percent of the workers in her district would be affected by this, with annual average raises of \$3,200 a year.

Before I just make a couple of other points, Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following letters: The first letter is from the Service Employees International Union, SEIU, and the second is from the Communications Workers of America, both sharing overwhelming support for H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act.

SEIU,

Washington, DC, July 16, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the two million members of the Service Employees International Union ("SEIU"), I write to urge you to vote YES on H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act of 2019, and oppose any Republican Motion to Recommit. For years, working people and allies have taken to the streets to call for a \$15 an hour minimum wage and to have their voices heard in the workplace. By ensuring a path to \$15 in every part of our country, Congress will make sure

that everyone—no matter where they are from or what the color of their skin—is closer to having what they need to get by. This is one of the most important changes we can make in this country. Airport workers, home care workers, child care providers, and all SEIU members are proud to stand with the Fight for \$15 and a Union and support this legislation.

It has been more than ten years since Congress raised the federal minimum wage—the longest stretch in history. While wealthy corporations have been handed tax cut after tax cut, working families have been forced to scrape by with less than they need. As a result, one in nine of our nation's full-time workers struggle to support themselves and their families on wages that leave them in poverty. There is currently no place in America where a full-time worker making the federal minimum wage can afford the basic essentials.

A \$15 federal minimum wage would be life-changing for tens of millions of working families, lifting an estimated 1.3 million Americans out of poverty, and helping to create an economy that works for everyone, not just the wealthy few. It is no surprise that poll after poll confirms widespread support among Americans for this proposal.

The overwhelming share of low-wage earners would unambiguously benefit from a \$15 minimum wage, but enactment of this bill is particularly critical for women who make up nearly two-thirds of the workforce earning the federal minimum wage or just above it, as well as Latinx and black workers. Currently, black workers are significantly overrepresented in states where the minimum wage has stayed at \$7.25 an hour. Many of the same states with low minimum wages also have so-called "Right-to-Work" provisions that weaken collective bargaining and the voice of working people. These same jurisdictions are also places where voting rights are under attack. Medicaid has not been expanded, and pre-emption laws block many localities from raising the minimum wage. Underpaid people in these regions and across the country are depending on Congress to take immediate action to raise the wage.

People like Terrence Wise, a worker at a McDonald's in Kansas City, Missouri, have been on the front lines fighting for a \$15/hour minimum wage knowing it would be transformative for him and his family. In his own words: "Just like me, a lot of folks in fast-food work two or more jobs because pay is so low. What if every U.S. worker just had to work one job, and that was enough to make ends meet? I want to know that when I get my paycheck, it'll be enough to pay the rent, feed my kids and keep the lights on—and maybe even a little extra, like enough to take my girls out to ice cream. It's not a lot to ask of Congress, and it would change the lives of millions of workers like me. It would give us a fair shot at the American dream we all hear so much about."

We urge Congress to heed the call to action from workers like Terrence Wise, and raise the wage so that millions of working people can be paid enough to lead a decent life, provide for their family and build a better future. SEIU strongly urges you to vote for H.R. 582, and to vote NO on any Republican Motion to Recommit. We will add votes on this legislation and the Motion to Recommit to our legislative scorecard. If you have any questions, please reach out to Jaya Chatterjee.

Sincerely,

MARY KAY HENRY,
International President.

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA,

July 11, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the officers and 700,000 members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), I am writing to urge you to vote in favor of H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act of 2019, and against any amendments that undermine the bill. At a time when wage stagnation and income inequality hold back our families and our economy, the Raise the Wage Act will begin to reverse that cycle and raise pay broadly across the bottom of the workforce.

It's been a decade since the federal minimum wage has increased. Meanwhile, the cost of living has continually increased for working Americans. For many Americans, working 40 hours or more a week is not enough to support themselves and their families. Airline employees, call center workers, retail store employees and bank workers are among those who work full time for some of the most highly profitable corporations, but still earn poverty level wages. It's time for an economy that works for working families and especially for the people who work full time but who earn poverty level wages.

If enacted, the legislation will raise the federal minimum wage to \$8.55 this year and increase it over the next five years until it reaches \$15 an hour in 2024. Raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour will give roughly 40 million workers a pay increase, which is nearly 30% of the workforce. After 2024, the minimum wage will adjust each year to keep pace with growth of inflation. In addition, the legislation will phase out the subminimum wage for tipped workers, individuals with disabilities and workers younger than 20 years old.

All workers deserve to earn a living wage so they can live with dignity and respect. It is time Congress takes action to raise the wages of these low income workers and ensure the economy works for everyone, instead of those in the 1%. Therefore, I urge you to support H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act of 2019. CWA will include votes on this bill and any amendments that would undermine the bill in our Congressional Scorecard. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

SHANE LARSON,
Director of Legislative,
Political and International
Affairs,
Communications
Workers of America
(CWA).

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters from the American Association of University Women, the Patriotic Millionaires, the National Education Association, and the NAACP, all in support of H.R. 582.

AAUW,
July 15, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the more than 170,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I urge you to vote for the Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 582) when it comes to the House floor for a vote and oppose any harmful amendments and any possible motion to recommit. The Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 582) is critical legislation which would gradually increase the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 per hour and then require that the minimum wage increase be based on changes in the median wage. It would also eliminate the tipped minimum wage and prohibit the use of sub-minimum wages for employees with disabilities.

Today, millions of women live in poverty because our federal minimum wage is inadequate for ensuring the economic well-being

of workers and their families. The federal minimum wage is currently only \$7.25 per hour and just \$2.13 per hour for tipped workers. Women comprise a majority of the low-wage workforce, and African American women and Latinas are significantly overrepresented in the low-wage workforce. Nearly two-thirds of minimum wage workers in the United States are women, as well as two-thirds of workers in tipped jobs. Some workers with disabilities are paid a subminimum wage through certificates issued by the Department of Labor. This is not even close to a living wage, which is necessary to lift workers out of poverty. A woman with two children working full-time at minimum wage earns a yearly salary of \$14,500, \$5,000 below the poverty line.

Congress must take action to increase the minimum wage by passing the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 (H.R. 582). If enacted, this legislation would raise the federal minimum wage to \$8.55 this year and increase it over the next several years until it reaches \$15 an hour, phase out the outdated subminimum wage for tipped workers, and also sunset the ability of employers to pay workers with disabilities a subminimum wage.

Women's overrepresentation in low-wage jobs is a significant factor contributing to the gender pay gap. Currently, women working full-time, year-round are typically being paid only 80 cents for every dollar paid to men. The pay gaps have grown even wider for women of color. African American women and Latinas make, respectively, 61 and 53 cents on the dollar as compared to non-Hispanic, white men. Women make up nearly 58 percent of the workers who would benefit from a \$15 minimum wage, making this bill instrumental for helping to close the gender wage gap. According to recent estimates from the Economic Policy Institute, increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15 by 2024 would give more than 31 percent of all working women a raise, including 41 percent of African American working women, 38 percent of working Latinas, 29 percent of white working women, and 18 percent of Asian working women. Even the Congressional Budget Office's analysis of the impact of the bill shows that workers overall will be better off and have higher annual earnings on average.

Raising the minimum wage is one action that Congress should take to ensure the economic security of families across the country. I urge you to vote for the Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 582) when it comes to the House floor for a vote and oppose any harmful amendments and any possible motion to recommit. Cosponsorship and votes associated with this bill may be scored in the AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record for the 116th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Anne Hedgepeth, Director of Federal Policy, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

DEBORAH J. VAGINS,
Senior Vice President,
Public Policy and Research.

PATRIOTIC MILLIONAIRES,
July 15, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I am writing on behalf of the Patriotic Millionaires organization to urge you to support the Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 582). Our members are deeply committed to raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and we hope that you will take this opportunity to show your commitment to ensuring that all working Americans are able to afford their basic needs.

We understand that you may have some hesitations about supporting the bill, but I believe that this letter should adequately address those concerns.

While we understand that legislation is always changeable until it is voted on, for us this policy has a few "red lines" as follows: \$15 per hour by 2024

One Fair Wage (no sub-minimum for tipped workers or anyone else)

Indexing

"No" on the vote to recommit

Within that framework, we will gladly support whatever piece of legislation you all decide to advance.

Our members believe that current levels of economic inequality pose an existential threat to the nation, and that wealthy Americans have an inescapable responsibility to engage in the fight for an inclusive economy. That is why we were such an early adopter of the \$15 wage, first endorsing it in 2013. We will fight urgently and publicly for this critical policy until it becomes law. Once the House passes the bill, we will formally launch a robust public education and advocacy campaign that will continue through next year and into the 117th Congress.

As business leaders and investors, our members are well acquainted with building profitable business models and plan to spend quite a bit of our public education efforts on outreach to the business community, particularly owners of small and medium sized companies. A few thoughts to share with business owners in your district:

First, because every business in the country will be required to raise wages, no establishment will gain or lose a competitive advantage based on wages as the cost "input" will change at the same rate for each of them simultaneously.

From a macroeconomic point of view, 70% of the American economy is based on consumer demand. It is only logical that putting more money in the hands of more consumers will be a net positive to the economy. Picture a bar on a Saturday night filled with patrons. Should the owner of the bar be more concerned about how much money all of those potential customers have to spend, or the higher wage he is paying the single bartender who is serving them? It's simple math.

And to the small (but very vocal) group of business owners who insist their businesses will go under if they are required to pay a living wage, we have a simple message. If you cannot afford to pay someone a livable wage, you cannot afford to hire an employee.

You may have concerns that a higher minimum wage will lead to greater automation. To that, we say that automation is coming no matter what—in fact it is already here—and rather than speeding that inevitable process, a livable minimum wage will ensure that the jobs that cannot be automated pay enough. The fact is that companies will automate to the extent that they believe the capital outlay of automation will be offset by higher future profits. In that sense, as technology advances, automation is inevitable regardless of the minimum wage.

If you've been in a McDonald's recently, you've likely seen that truth in action. McDonald's pays many of its workers minimum wage, yet it has already heavily invested in automation technologies. Raising the minimum wage will not speed up automation, but will instead ensure that as the process unfolds, people who are working will be stable enough (because of the higher wages) to have the time and energy to do the extra education or training necessary for other positions.

There is real urgency to our efforts on this policy. June 16th marked the longest period in American history—since the minimum wage was first implemented in 1938—that the federal minimum wage has not been raised by Congress, just shy of a decade. Because the wage was not indexed, that means we've

spent nearly ten years where each passing day marks another decrease in the purchasing power of millions of working Americans, adding up to the wage being worth nearly 15% less than it was in 2009.

Every day that Congress does not act is another day where millions of paychecks decline in real value. Clearly it is time to act. Unfortunately in the political dynamic we are currently suffering under, bipartisan action is difficult to come by (despite the bipartisan popularity of this issue). The only way to force the Senate to act is for the House to act first, and to act decisively. Keep in mind, this issue polls incredibly well, with 83% of registered voters believing we need to raise the minimum wage, and 55% of registered voters, including 53% of independents and 37% of Republicans, supporting a \$15 federal minimum wage.

Senators MITCH MCCONNELL and ALEXANDER LAMAR clearly have no interest in passing a minimum wage bill. To force their hand, we need to change the perceived consequences of their inaction by pushing this issue into the public debate and keeping it there.

To be clear, the choice is not between this bill and some other more perfect bill, the choice is between this bill and no bill. While there is another minimum wage bill that has generated support, it will not reach the threshold of support required to pass. Nor should it. With all due respect to Third Way and other "centrist" think tanks, the so-called regional approach will not solve the problem.

First, there already is a regional approach to this issue in that states and localities are reasonably free to set wages higher than the federal wage if their economies and politics support it. The purpose of federal legislation is to set a floor for the entire country, to ensure that at a minimum everyone is ok. That floor for everyone should be \$15. A study by the Economic Policy Institute shows that by 2024, there will be no county in the country where a person can support themselves on less than \$15 an hour.

In terms of expecting different things from different localities, \$15 is already not enough in several areas of the country, but we are not demanding \$25 or \$30 an hour in these areas. To say that \$15 is "too much" in some places while not being equally as concerned that \$15 is "far from enough" in many others challenges the credibility of the argument.

Furthermore, the regional approach puts the \$15 figure for rural counties off to 2033. Frankly, a 14 year timeline is absurd on its face.

Lawmakers in the House have a simple choice to make—do something, or do nothing. Move the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, or keep it at \$7.25. The Raise the Wage Act has 203 voting cosponsors, and needs 218 votes to pass the House. This simple policy will help stabilize the economic lives of 40% of working people. And it is supported by a bipartisan majority of Americans. This is a no-brainer.

We recognize that you might disagree with our assessment, that there might be other approaches you think are more appropriate. But as I stated before, the choice before you is this bill or no bill. You might not believe that \$15 an hour for the entire country is the best option, but surely you must see that it's better than \$7.25 an hour. We've reached a critical point where inaction is simply no longer an option.

The Patriotic Millionaires believe that a fair minimum wage is a fundamental building block of an economy that works for all Americans, not just the ultra-wealthy. We also believe that every member of Congress who stands with working Americans will ultimately recognize the importance of this

bill, and will vote to support it. We hope that you will be one of them.

Thank you so much.

MORRIS PEARL,
Chair.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
July 11, 2019.
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, I urge you to VOTE YES on H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act. Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 116th Congress.

This legislation will benefit working people across our nation, including NEA's education support professionals—the school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, and other members of school communities who are the first ones to arrive in the morning, and the last to go home at night. Their work is tremendously valuable, and the support they provide students often goes well beyond their job titles. Yet, they struggle to make ends meet.

The Raise the Wage Act would:

- benefit all low-wage earners, not just teenagers or restaurant workers;
- benefit nearly one-third of manufacturing workers, one-fourth of health care workers, one-fifth of construction workers, and one-sixth of educators;
- reduce poverty and income inequality by raising the total annual income of the lowest-paid workers; and
- help to close racial earnings gaps.

As you know, the federal minimum wage has not increased since 2009. During that decade, many working families have lost ground, and lost hope. Several states have raised their minimum wages in the past 10 years, but it is time for the federal government to act. Doing so will improve the circumstances not only for the workers themselves, but for their family members and communities. Please VOTE YES and Raise the Wage.

Sincerely,

MARC EGAN,
Director of Government Relations,
National Education Association.

NAACP WASHINGTON BUREAU,
July 8, 2019.

Re: NAACP strong support for H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act

U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the NAACP, our nation's oldest, largest and most widely-recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization, urge you to vote for and support through passage H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act. People of color, women, families and too many others have been left behind by our economy and our policies far too often, for far too long. Adopting the Raise the Wage Act would mark a crucial step toward ensuring we can all work towards greater equity, dignity, and a living wage.

The Raise the Wage Act will make significant contributions in the economic security of millions of American women, men, and families by raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 an hour by 2024, then indexing it so that it continues to rise along with wages overall. H.R. 582 will also end unfair current exclusions for tipped workers, people with disabilities, and youth so that they too, can benefit from a decent minimum wage.

The NAACP has a long and strong history of supporting federal laws that improved the lives of hard working Americans, and ensur-

ing that all people are covered. From the Fair Labor Standards Act to the very first federal minimum wage bill in 1938, we were active supporters of a fair day's wage for a hard day's labor. We continue to advocate for an increase in the buying power of the minimum wage to keep up with the cost of living in the United States, and that minimum wage earners, who by definition are working men and women, are able to keep their families out of poverty.

Thank you for your consideration of our position; the NAACP is proud to endorse H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act. Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

HILARY O. SHELTON,
Director, NAACP Washington Bureau &
Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, one additional point that I wanted to make listening to my friend and colleague who talks about, during the last several years, the income and the wages of the lowest earning Americans have gone up. I do note with some irony that the reason for that, largely, is due to the increases in the minimum wage at the State levels: California, New York, many places around the country, Missouri. The list goes on and on.

About half of the States in the United States have now raised the minimum wage beyond the Federal number. That is the signal significant reason for wage rates going up for the lowest earning Americans. That is exactly the point of doing this, so that all Americans at the lowest end of the economic scale, the lowest wage earners, will see a significant increase in their earning power.

That will expand further the number of people at the lowest end in terms of increases in their wages. That will benefit their families—those families benefit—and make stronger neighborhoods and stronger communities and, ultimately, a stronger nation. That is why this needs to get done.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) pointing that out because I think it helps make our case.

Mr. Speaker, can I ask the gentleman whether he is prepared to close.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, with this bill, the Democrats seek to increase wages for millions of low wage earners, but the Congressional Budget Office estimates that it will also result in nearly 4 million lost jobs. These job losses will disproportionately impact entry-level workers and students.

That is why I offered an amendment to allow a market-based entry-level wage for workers with less than a year of experience, but Democrats on the Committee on Rules rejected that amendment during the Rules meeting. There was no reason not to make the amendment in order; they just rejected it.

A \$15 Federal minimum wage is a one-size-fits-all Federal mandate that does not consider differences in cost of living or employment patterns across the country.

Federal assistance is meant to be a temporary hand up to aid individuals on the path to a better economic future, but rather than pulling people up, this bill will leave more Americans reaching for assistance.

Republican concerns with this bill are not partisan; they are American.

If the majority is serious about increasing the wages of all Americans throughout the country, they should work—they should work—in a bipartisan manner to draft a bill that has a chance of passing in the Senate and making it to the President's desk. Unfortunately, this bill is another partisan political priority that really has no chance of becoming law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a “no” vote on the previous question, on the underlying measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to spend some time on the floor with my distinguished colleague from Texas, though we disagree strongly about this.

I would just once again reiterate that the CBO estimate on this is nowhere near 4 million jobs lost. That is not mentioned anywhere in the CBO report. It talks about a range from zero to 3.7 million. The median is 1.3 million.

But, again, this is as much a question of values and what we stand for and a moral imperative as it is for statistics, because the statistics would argue for it.

1.3 million Americans would be lifted out of poverty the moment we pass this and this becomes law. Nearly 30 million Americans would see their annual wage increased, in some cases dramatically.

And this, as I indicated earlier, makes certain that, as a matter of public policy, we make certain that there is no erosion of the purchasing power of the minimum wage because of the indexing on this.

I really feel, Mr. Speaker, that those are the statistics that we ought to be mindful of, not just the worst possible, which is overstated by my colleague and friend.

There should be, Mr. Speaker, no place in this great Nation where a minimum wage employee working full-time cannot afford the basic essentials.

The work we are doing here today does not dictate a one-size-fits-all model for every State. It simply creates a floor, but a floor that is important, a Federal standard that says, if you work full-time in this country, if you put in the effort to earn for yourself and your family, you will achieve, at a minimum, a wage that lets you afford the basic necessities of life.

I believe this bill is just; I believe it is moral; I believe it is long overdue;

and I look forward to supporting its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues for their words of support for H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act. I would especially like to thank Chairman SCOTT for his leadership and his commitment to this effort, and Chairman McGOVERN of the Rules Committee for his work to move this significant legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a “yes” vote on the rule; I urge a “yes” vote on the previous question.

The material previously referred to by Mr. BURGESS is as follows:

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

Sec. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall proceed to the consideration in the House of the bill (H.R. 748) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the texts of H.R. 748, H.R. 1398, and H.R. 2207, each as introduced, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Sec. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 748.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 17, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on July 17, 2019, at 11:33 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 375.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON.

COMMUNICATION FROM DISTRICT DIRECTOR, THE HONORABLE CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Traci Couture, District Director, the Honorable CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
July 8, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I, Traci Couture, have been served with a subpoena for testimony in a criminal trial issued by the United States District Court for the Western District of New York.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

TRACI COUTURE,
District Director.

COMMUNICATION FROM LEGISLATIVE AIDE, THE HONORABLE STEVE SCALISE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Fred Trowbridge, Legislative Aide, the Honorable STEVE SCALISE, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I, Fred Trowbridge, have been served with a subpoena for testimony in a criminal trial issued by the United States District Court for the Western District of New York. This criminal trial is in relation to alleged threats made against Congressman Steve Scalise and his family, received through Congressman Scalise's official government office.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

FRED TROWBRIDGE,
Legislative Aide.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED TRANSFER TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 491, I call up the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 36) providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Italian Republic of cer-

tain defense articles and services, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 491, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 36

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the issuance of a manufacturing license, technical assistance license, or export license with respect to any of the following proposed agreements or transfers to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Italian Republic is prohibited:

(1) The transfer of the following defense articles, including defense services and technical data, described in Executive Communication 1427 (EC-1427) submitted to Congress pursuant to subsections (c) and (d) of section 36 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2776) and published in the Congressional Record on June 3, 2019:

(A) Coproduction and manufacture in Saudi Arabia of Paveway Pre-Amp Circuit Card Assemblies (CCA), Guidance Electronics Assembly (GEA) CCAs, and Control Actuator System (CAS) CCAs for all Paveway variants.

(B) Coproduction and manufacture in Saudi Arabia of Paveway II Guidance Electronics Detector Assemblies (GEDA) and Computer Control Groups (CCG).

(C) The transfer of up to 64,603 additional kits, partial kits, and full-up-rounds.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. McCaul) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include in the RECORD extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the three measures the House will now consider are extraordinary, extraordinary but necessary, because they respond to what I view as an extraordinary abuse of power by the Trump administration, using a phony emergency to override the authority of Congress and push through \$8 billion in arms sales.

Each of these resolutions would prohibit a specific license for the export of precision-guided munitions, or smart bombs, and related components. We are focusing on these three licenses because the weapons would be the first ones shipped.

Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that Congress has serious concerns about the Saudi-led coalition's war in Yemen. The Saudis and their partners and, for that matter, the United States do have legitimate security concerns about the