

## **Democrats Create Minimum Wage Momentum**

**June 13:** An amendment offered by then-Whip Hoyer, based on a bill by Ranking Democrat on the Education and the Workforce Committee George Miller (H.R. 2429, The Fair Minimum Wage Act), passes 32-27 during the Appropriations Committee markup of the FY07 Labor-HHS spending bill. The amendment would gradually increase the federal minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 over 2 years. Seven Republicans on the committee vote for the Hoyer Amendment. This amendment focused attention and debate on the minimum wage, and set off a chain of events that led to the first House vote on an increase in years, followed by a Senate vote.

**June 15:** The House Republican leadership pulls the Labor-HHS bill from the floor schedule indefinitely.

**June 20:** Republicans on the Appropriations Committee defeat an Obey-Hoyer-Mollohan amendment to raise the minimum wage in a markup of the Science-State-Justice-Commerce Appropriations bill. Five Republicans, C.W. (Bill) Young (FL), James Walsh (NY), Don Sherwood (PA), Mike Simpson (ID), and Ray LaHood (IL) switch their votes from the Labor-H markup and vote against the minimum wage amendment. Two Republicans, Jo Ann Emerson (MO) and John Sweeney (NY), leave the room in order to avoid voting on the amendment, which they also supported during the Labor-H markup. Majority Leader John Boehner says he will "probably not" allow a vote on the minimum wage.

**June 21:** Ray LaHood tells reporters that he and other moderate Republicans approached Majority Leader Boehner after Boehner said he would likely not allow a vote on the minimum wage. According to LaHood, Boehner switched positions and told them "we will vote on a minimum wage increase."

**June 22:** Republicans vote against increasing the minimum wage by refusing to defeat the Previous Question on the Estate Tax bill. Defeating the Previous Question would have allowed consideration of the Fair Minimum Wage Act. (Roll Call #308)

**June 22:** Republicans vote against increasing the minimum wage by refusing to appeal the Ruling of the Chair on a Rangel motion which included an increase in the minimum wage. (Roll Call #313)

**June 27:** Republicans vote against increasing the minimum wage by voting for the Rule on the FY07 SSJC Appropriations Bill, which blocked the Obey-Hoyer-Mollohan minimum wage increase amendment from consideration. (Roll Call #319)

**June 29:** Republicans vote against increasing the minimum wage by voting for a 4<sup>th</sup> of July recess adjournment resolution without consideration of a bill to increase the minimum wage. (Roll Call #353)

**July 11:** House Republicans vote against increasing the minimum wage by refusing to defeat the Previous Question on the Rule on the Internet Gambling Prohibition Bill. Defeating the Previous Question would have allowed consideration of the Fair Minimum Wage Act. (Roll Call #360)

**July 11:** Republican Chris Shays (CT) signs on to the Barrow discharge petition to force consideration of the Fair Minimum Wage Act. As of 7/14/06, 190 Democrats have signed the discharge petition.

**July 12:** House Republicans vote against increasing the minimum wage by refusing to defeat the Previous Question on the Rule on the Credit Rating Agency Act. Defeating the Previous Question would have allowed consideration of the Fair Minimum Wage Act. (Roll Call #364)

**July 12:** 64 House Republicans indicate support for increasing the minimum wage by voting for a Democratic Motion to Instruct Conferees to S. 250, the Vocational Education Improvement Act. The Motion instructed Conferees to accept the bill's purpose as creating high-skilled and high-wage jobs, which the Fair Minimum Wage Act defines as jobs paying more than \$7.25 per hour. (Roll Call #366)

**July 13:** 28 House Republicans send a letter to Majority Leader Boehner asking for a vote on the minimum wage before the August recess. Democrats have vowed to block increases in Congressional pay until the minimum wage is increased.

**July 19:** House Republicans vote against increasing the minimum wage by refusing to defeat the Previous Question on the Rule on H.R. 2389, the Pledge Protection Act of 2005. Defeating the Previous Question would have allowed consideration of the Fair Minimum Wage Act. (Roll Call #382)

**July 24:** 48 House Republicans send a letter to Majority Leader Boehner asking for legislation increasing the federal minimum wage.

**July 29:** House Republicans play a cynical political game linking an increase in the minimum wage with a virtual repeal of the estate tax, therefore holding a wage increase that would benefit 6.6 million Americans hostage to a huge tax cut for the country's 7,500 wealthiest estates. Republicans pushed this scheme knowing it would pass the House and give vulnerable Republicans political coverage while dooming it for failure in the Senate. (Roll Call #425)

**August 3:** Senate Republicans continue House Republicans' political games with the minimum wage by trying to hold it hostage to the estate tax. Senate Democrats block this cynical ploy, and along with House Democrats, demand a fair up-or-down vote on increasing the minimum wage. (Vote #229)

**September 26:** House Democrats, led by Reps. Hoyer, Miller (CA), and Boswell, send a letter to the 48 House Republicans who signed a letter in July asking their leadership to schedule a vote on the minimum wage. The letter urged those members to "back up their word with action", by signing the minimum wage discharge petition.

**September 27:** House and Senate Democratic Leadership hold a press conference to highlight Republicans' failure to increase minimum wage as one of their many misguided priorities.

**November 11:** Eighty-nine percent of the American public supports an increase in the minimum wage, according to a Newsweek poll.

**December 2:** Marks the longest period in history that Congress has not raised minimum wage since the it was established in 1938.

**January 5:** Chairman Miller (CA), on behalf of 207 Democrats and 7 Republicans, introduces H.R. 2, which will raise the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25.

**January 10:** H.R. 2, which will increase the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25, passes the House by a vote of 315-116 with the support of 82 Republicans.