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Minimum Wage

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SENATOR DOLE AND THE MINIMUM WAGE: WHAT A DIFFERENCE 7 YEARS MAKES

Yesterday, Senator Robert Dole -- in his first official act as the Republican presidential nominee -- blocked a vote to increase the minimum wage and provide a pay raise for 10 million hard-working Americans. As Congress continues to delay, the real value of the minimum wage continues to fall toward its lowest level in 40 years.

Inflation adjusted → With the five-year anniversary of the last minimum wage increase next Monday, now is the time to put politics aside, raise the minimum wage, and help lift the lives of 10 million workers. Sixty percent of these workers are adults and many are trying to raise their children on \$4.25 an hour. President Clinton's proposal to raise the minimum wage is the same one supported by Senator Dole in 1989 -- a 90-cent increase in two equal steps over two years. This proposal would provide an additional \$1,800 in earnings -- enough money for the average American family to buy groceries for seven months.

1989: Congress passes a 90-cent increase in the minimum wage -- in two equal steps over two years -- with overwhelming, bipartisan support.

NOW: President Clinton proposes to increase the minimum wage by 90-cents, in two equal steps over two years.

1989: **Senator Dole** votes for a 90-cent increase in the minimum wage.

NOW: **Senator Dole** calls current 90-cent minimum wage increase "very controversial" and said "there are going to be a lot of young people who lose their jobs, and a lot of them will be black teenagers." [Source: Elizabeth Shogren, "Dole Gains Upper Hand, Avoids Vote on Raising Minimum Wage," *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1996; and Adam Clymer, "Dole Blocks Move To Vote On A Rise For Minimum Wage," *The New York Times*, March 27, 1996..]

1989: **Senator Bob Dole**, said in 1989: "Unfortunately, some Democrats would rather score a penny's worth of political points instead of giving working men and women the healthy 90-cent (an hour) increase President Bush has been trying to give them." [Source: Robert Green, "House Fails To Override Bush's Veto Of Minimum Wage Hike," *The Reuter Business Report*, June 14, 1989.]

NOW: Senator Dole will not allow a vote on President Clinton's proposal to give working men and women a healthy 90-cent an hour pay increase "today, not tomorrow, and not next week." [Source: Adam Clymer, "Dole Blocks Move To Vote On A Rise For Minimum Wage," *The New York Times*, March 27, 1996.]

1989: **Senator Bob Dole:** "[T]his is not an issue where we ought to be standing and holding up anybody's getting a 30 to 40 cents an hour pay increase, at the same time that we're talking about capital gains." [Source: *Congressional Quarterly Almanac 1989*]

NOW: Senator Dole is talking about a capital gains tax cut. Indeed, he voted for a budget plan that included one that cost \$77 billion over ten years, 75 percent of which goes to people with six-figure salaries. Yet, Senator Dole is "standing and holding up" 10 million workers earning less \$5.15 an hour from getting a pay raise.

1989: **Senator Bob Dole:** "I never thought the Republican Party should stand for squeezing every last nickel from the minimum wage." [Source: *Congressional Quarterly Almanac 1989*]

NOW: **Senator Bob Dole** "blocks move to vote on a rise for minimum wage" as the last nickel is squeezed from the real value of the minimum wage and it approaches a 40-year low. [Source: Adam Clymer, "Dole Blocks Move To Vote On A Rise For Minimum Wage," *The New York Times*, March 27, 1996.]

1989: The real value of the minimum wage is at its lowest level since 1955.

NOW: If it is not increased this year, the real value of the minimum wage will hit its lowest level since 1955.

1989: The majority of recent studies show that a modest minimum wage increase -- like a 90-cent raise -- would cost jobs.

NOW: The majority of recent studies show that a modest minimum wage increase -- like a 90-cent raise -- would not cost jobs. In fact, in the fall of 1995, 101 economists -- including 3 Nobel Prize winners -- signed a statement of support for a minimum wage increase that said: "[T]he evidence from recent economic studies of the effects of increases in federal and state minimum wages at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s -- as well as updates of the traditional time-series studies -- suggests that the employment effects were negligible or small."