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IT'S TIME TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE
THE SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP SHOULD DROP THEIR POISON PILL AMENDMENT
July 9, 1996

IT'S TIME FOR SENATE REPUBLICANS TO JOIN THE MAINSTREAM AND RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE. If we want to make work pay, we must make the minimum wage a living wage. President Clinton's minimum wage increase would ensure that -- along with his expanded Earned Income Tax Credit -- no parent who works full-time would have to raise their children in poverty. A bipartisan group in the House has done their part and voted to raise the minimum wage. The time for the Senate Republicans to do the same is long overdue.

MAIN STREET AMERICA DESERVES AN HONEST VOTE ON THE MINIMUM WAGE WITHOUT ANY POISON PILLS. The Senate should pass an increase in the minimum wage -- with no poison pills, no gimmicks, and no political games. That's the best way to help the American people make the most out of their own lives. As Republican Congressman Amo Houghton said: *"This is not a complicated issue. It should not be a partisan issue. It's timely. It's right, and I think we should do it."*

DON'T LET REPUBLICAN LEADERS FOOL YOU -- THEIR POISON PILL AMENDMENT TO A GOOD MINIMUM WAGE BILL WILL DENY A PAY RAISE TO MILLIONS OF WORKERS. The Senate Republican leadership offers the American people nothing more than a cruel shell game: claim that you are raising the minimum wage, but stick millions of first-rate workers with second-rate pay.

IF THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP INSIST ON INCLUDING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING POISON PILL PROVISIONS, THE PRESIDENT WILL VETO THE BILL:

- * **Workers In Two-Thirds Of All Businesses Would Be Denied The Benefits Of A Higher Minimum Wage.** The Republican leadership would deny workers in two-thirds of all firms in the United States -- all business with revenues of less than \$500,000 annually -- an increase in the minimum wage. For these workers, this provision would lock in, for an indefinite period, a minimum wage that will be at a 40-year low in real terms. It doesn't matter the size of your employer, you can't raise a family on \$4.25 an hour.
- * **Over 4 Million Hard-Working Americans Would Be Denied A Pay Raise.** The Republican's so-called "Opportunity Wage" provision would deny the opportunity of a higher minimum wage to the 4.1 million workers at or near the minimum wage who have been with their employer for less than six months. In industries with high turnover -- like retail -- this would create the opportunity for employers to drop workers after six months, so that they would never graduate from the sub-minimum wage.

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- * **Low-Wage Workers Would Have To Wait Until Next Year For Pay Hike.** As the real value of the minimum wage approaches a 40-year low, the Republican leadership wants to force America's lowest-paid workers to wait until next year to see any minimum wage increase. While President Clinton says now is the time to raise the minimum wage, the Republicans are telling America's workers to wait. The Republican's six-month delay will cost a full-time minimum wage worker \$878. When you're making only \$8,500 a year, \$878 makes a big difference.

EVERY DAY THE SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP DELAYS A HONEST MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE, ITS REAL VALUE MOVES CLOSER TO A 40-YEAR LOW. The American people want the minimum wage increased. A bipartisan majority in the Senate wants the minimum wage increased. If we truly value work and family, we should raise the value of the minimum wage now.