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[Folder 8] [Minimum Wage]

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**Row:**

**30**

**Section:**

**3**

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**4**

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**2**



# Daily Talking Points

Today's Contact: Ted Zegers PHONE (202) 224-3232 • FAX (202) 228-3432

## **GOP Holds Gas Tax Cut Hostage to Stop a Raise in the Minimum Wage**

Thursday, May 9, 1996

*[Republicans want to load up the bill] "to make sure I will veto it, so they can pretend it's not just the poison pill I'm against, but the bill itself... There is only one fair way to break this logjam,...if we want to raise the minimum wage, do it without the poison pill of undermining workers' rights."*

— President Clinton, May 8, 1996.

**President agrees to sign gas tax cut.** Yesterday, President Clinton said he would sign a temporary reduction in the gas tax, if Congress sent it with an increase in the minimum wage. But he also warned Republicans against adding provisions designed to provoke a veto in order to generate TV commercials for the GOP's presidential campaign.

**Republicans prefer political games.** Unfortunately, Republicans are so eager to deny working families a raise that they are willing to sacrifice a proposal to temporarily reduce the gas tax. They could pass a bill cutting the gas tax and raising the minimum wage. Instead, Republicans are insisting on also attaching a bill to end safeguards against company-run "sham" unions. That will guarantee a veto.

**And doing nothing.** Republicans insist on tying together the gas tax, minimum wage, and their proposal to allow company-run unions. This all-or-nothing approach is guaranteed to produce nothing. Unfortunately, a do-nothing Congress is what Republicans want. Instead of working to improve Americans' lives, Republicans are working to improve their own political prospects as they conduct their presidential campaign from the Senate floor. Doing their jobs—the people's business—would give Republicans less time for politics.

**Democrats have a plan for America.** Republicans have a plan to elect Senator Dole as President, and spend much of their time making speeches attacking President Clinton. Democrats are spending their time pushing for enactment of an action agenda that will put more money in Americans' paychecks, improve access to health insurance and pension plans, and protect retirees' pensions. Democrats and the President want to balance the budget, reform welfare, and protect American families' economic security, health security, and pension security. Republicans want to run campaign commercials saying they tried, but President Clinton stopped them.

Democratic Policy Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510-7050

Tom Daschle, Chairman  
Harry Reid, Co-Chairman





# Daily Talking Points

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## **GOP's Minimum Wage Shuffle Denies Working Families**

Tuesday, May 7, 1996

**GOP wasting time.** Senate Republicans continued their minimum wage shuffle today. They once again used procedural gimmicks and political stunts to block action on a Democratic proposal to increase the minimum wage. They would rather create a gridlock and waste time than allow a vote on increasing the minimum wage.

**Presidential politics drives GOP agenda.** The driving force behind the Republican actions is clear. Republicans want the needs of the GOP's presidential campaign—not the needs of the American people—to dictate what happens in Congress. The GOP will waste the Senate's time to block action on the minimum wage. But when it comes to something on Senator Dole's campaign agenda, like the gas tax, Republicans want to short-circuit the process and act without debate or a vote.

**Help for working Americans.** Democrats are fighting to increase the minimum wage. It's been more than five years since minimum wage workers got a raise. If Congress doesn't act this year, a minimum wage worker's purchasing power will be at its lowest level in 40 years. The higher minimum wage would put more money in a worker's pocket in three days than Senator Dole's gas tax cut would do in an entire year.

**A real difference for families.** The Democratic proposal would give a raise to about one out of every nine Americans in the work force, 73 percent of these are adults. Nearly 40 percent of all minimum wage workers are their families' sole breadwinners. Most of the remaining workers' families depend on their income to make ends meet. It's tough to raise children on the minimum wage. But too many Americans have to try. They deserve some help.

**Valuing politics or valuing families?** While Republicans try to advance their political interests, Democrats fight to help all Americans. A higher minimum wage is one piece of Senate Democrats' action agenda to improve American families' paycheck security, health security, and pension security. A gas tax cut may help consumers weather a temporary rise in gas prices, unless oil companies manage to hijack the benefits. But a higher minimum wage, better access to health care, and protecting pensions would do a lot more for working families.

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