

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 27, 2006

Speaker J. Dennis Hastert
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Majority Leader John Boehner
H-107, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker and Mr. Leader:

We respectfully request that you refrain from bringing legislation increasing the federal minimum wage to the House floor this year—whether stand-alone or as part of other legislation.

The federal minimum wage is anti-capitalist, since it prevents an employer and a potential employee from engaging in free-market labor negotiations. For example, an employer may want to pay an entry-level employee \$5.00-an-hour, and a potential employee may want to agree to that wage (because it may be better than having no job at all), but the federal government does not allow it. This federal intervention in private markets harms employers and workers.

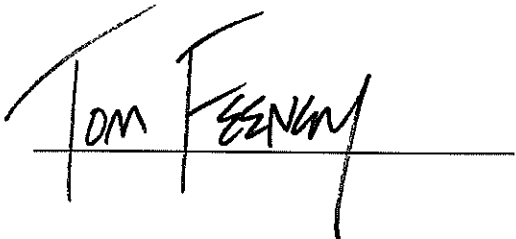
Proponents of a higher minimum wage argue that raising the minimum wage will not affect employment. But in reality, quickly-increased labor costs unrelated to business conditions will encourage or force employers to fire employees, reduce working hours for existing employees, and/or postpone plans to hire additional employees. Again, this harms employers and workers.

The federal minimum wage, by setting artificially high wages, prevents many people from getting their foot on the first rung of the economic ladder and from getting on-the-job training critical to socio-economic advancement. Thus, ironically, the federal minimum wage could delay—not accelerate, as critics on the left assert—the realization of the American Dream for entry-level workers.

The good news is that the market has pushed wages upward. Each year, fewer workers earn the federal minimum wage. In 1981, according to the Congressional Research Service, over 15% of hourly paid workers earned the federal minimum wage; while in 2005, only 2.5% of hourly paid workers earned the federal minimum wage. Of those who do earn the federal minimum wage, according to the Coalition for Job Opportunities, more than 65% receive a raise within one year, and the median raise is 14%—nearly three times that of all other employees.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and for all of your hard work to keep the American economy as free from federal government interference and as robust as possible.

Yours respectfully,



Tom Feeney



John Boehner

Phil Perry

Tom Cole

Joseph R Pitts

Patrick McHenry

Tom Wilson

Tom Flaherty

Chris Van

B. Marchant

Virginia Foxx

K. Michael

Gary Miller

Sam Johnson

Scott Garrett

Steve King

Virgil Goode

W. Sessions

John Culberson

Mark Souder

Wally Herger

Jim Sumner

Ann Myrtle

Al Burt

W. Codd Akin

Connie Wash

JH M.R.

~~John M.R.~~

Ron Paul

Frank Stranks