

U.S. Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick

Raising the Minimum Wage: America's Families Deserve an Honest Day's Pay for an Honest Day's Work

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In the Bush economy—marked by rising housing, healthcare, energy, and college costs and declining wages—America's working families are being forced to do more with less, while corporate profits continue to grow and the wealthiest Americans get even richer.

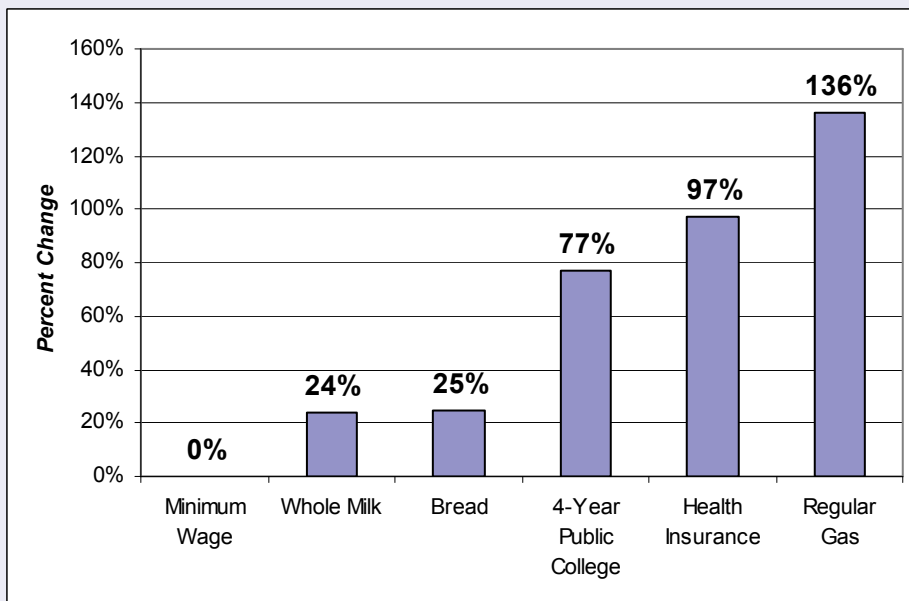
Congress has a moral obligation to ensure that America's working families earn a fair wage. An increase in the federal minimum wage is a matter of fairness and equity. No American who works full-time all year should live in poverty.

We must take America in a new direction, where working families receive an honest day's pay for an honest day's work and where working hard results in economic stability and security, a better life, and a brighter future. America's families deserve better. I will continue to fight for a fair wage for America's working families.

Carolyn

Economic Change During the Bush Administration

Although the minimum wage has not risen during the Bush administration, look what has:



Minimum Wage by the Numbers

\$5.15

Current minimum wage

\$10,700

Annual salary of a minimum wage worker

\$42,000

Average amount a CEO at a company with at least \$1 billion in annual revenue makes per day

50 years

Last time the minimum wage was this low (adjusted for inflation)

1997

Last time Congress raised the minimum wage

6.6 million

Number of people who would benefit from an increase in the minimum wage

760,000

Number of single mothers who would benefit from a pay increase

3.1 million

Number of children who would benefit from an increase in the minimum wage

75 percent

Percentage of minimum wage workers who are adults over the age of 20. Many are responsible for over half of their family's income

1 day

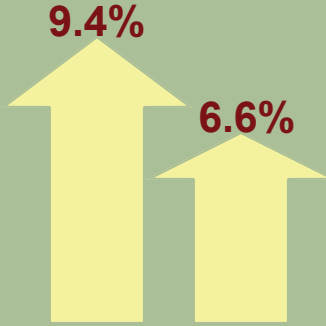
Amount of time it takes a minimum wage worker to earn enough money to buy a full tank of gas

Democrats want to raise the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 over the next two years. If the minimum wage was equal to what it was at its highest point (in 1968), it would be \$9.05 per hour.

What It Is	What Democrats Want	What It Would Be
\$5.15	\$7.25	\$9.05

Q: Will raising the minimum wage have a negative impact on job growth?

Opponents often claim that increasing the minimum wage will hurt job growth. However, there is no evidence of job loss following minimum wage increases. Employment in small businesses grew 9.4 percent in states with a higher minimum wages in comparison to 6.6 percent growth in states that observe the federal minimum wage.



Republicans Relieve Wealthy—Not Working—Families

Republicans continue to support the interest of a wealthy few instead of all of America’s families. They are opposed to an increase in the minimum wage, which would benefit 1.6 million families.

However, they supported the passage of an estate tax that will benefit 7,500 of the country’s richest families and add nearly \$800 billion to our national deficit.



MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

- MYTH: Low-income families do not work.
- FACT: Seventy-one percent of low-income families work.

- MYTH: Low-income families do not work hard.
- FACT: The average annual work effort for low-income families is 2,500 hours, equal to 1.2 full-time jobs.

- MYTH: Low-income families are headed by single parents
- FACT: Fifty-three percent of low-income working families are headed by a married couple.

- MYTH: Low-income working families are headed by immigrants.
- FACT: Seventy-two percent of low-income working families have American-born parents.

- MYTH: Low-income families have very young parents.
- FACT: Eighty-eight percent of low-income working families have a parent between 25 and 54 years old.

- MYTH: Low-income families are disproportionately minority.
- FACT: Forty-seven percent of low-income working families have white, non-Hispanic parents only; 28% have an Hispanic parent, and 20% have an African American parent.

Source: American Community Survey 2002, U.S. Census Bureau

More than
50%

of low-income working families spend more than 33% of their income on housing; more than 33% have a parent without health insurance.

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