

How Are New Jersey Workers Doing This Labor Day?

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Rep. Rothman Highlights Economic Challenges that Working Families Face

(Hackensack, NJ)— This Labor Day, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) renews his call for smart federal policies that help—rather than hurt—working families. He is appalled by new U.S. Census Bureau data released last week which show that 14,000 more New Jerseyans live below the poverty level than did in the year 2001 when President George W. Bush took office.

"Working parents should not have to forego health insurance and worry about how to send their kids to college. Yet, that's what is happening as a result of the failed policies of the Bush Administration and Republican Majority in Congress—policies that offer a windfall tax benefit for people making over \$1 million and nothing for the typical worker," said Rothman. "Instead, House Republicans refused to allow a fair vote on a minimum wage increase and federal student aid programs were cut by \$12 billion."

In addition to the Census Bureau findings, other data show that over 1.3 million New Jerseyans are uninsured—an increase of 303,000 since the beginning of the Bush Administration. The average gallon of gas is 109% more expensive than when Bush took office. And, since 2000, the costs of attending college in New Jersey have jumped 36% at 4-year public colleges. The typical student graduates with \$16,393 in debt.

"How can we expect the current and future workforce to grow the American economy if they're not receiving adequate wages and health care or can't afford higher education? This Labor Day, I think it is vital that we remember why the labor movement began in the first place," added Rothman. "When corporate CEOs hoard profits at the expense of workers, those workers' families suffer, along with the businesses and communities they support."

You can read more about Rep. Rothman's economic and tax policies at http://rothman.house.gov/topic_tax_budget.htm .

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