

## Republicans Hold Minimum Wage Hostage to More Giveaways to the Super-Rich

For Immediate Release: July 29, 2006

Contact: Kimberly Allen, (202) 226-8364; (202) 420-1524 [cell]

Rep. Rothman: "Republicans Hold Minimum Wage Hostage to More Giveaways to the Super-Rich."

[Jump to: Rep. Rothman's Remarks on the Floor of the House of Representatives](#)

[Rep. Rothman's Statement about the Vote](#)

[Background: Facts about the Minimum Wage](#)

[Remarks on the floor of the House of Representatives](#)

Mr. ROTHMAN. "Mr. Speaker, tomorrow's headlines are going to read "hostage taken". And you know what they are going to mean? The increase in the minimum wage was taken hostage by the Republican majority. They have taken the increase in the minimum wage hostage unless we give the super-rich \$100 billion.

"To give the working poor a \$2.10 increase an hour, they have held us hostage unless we give them \$800 billion. Now, they have had 9 years in the majority in the House to have a clean increase in the minimum wage. They never did it. They would not let us do it, because they were in the majority.

"They still will not do it. Only if we give the super-rich \$800 billion. And American people are not stupid. They do not want a bad deal. They do not want a bad law. They do not want to give into hostage demands. They do not want to give in to extortion. They want an increase in the minimum wage, not another \$800 billion gift to the super-rich because the Republican majority does not want to give it in any other way."

[back to top](#)

[Official Statement about the Vote](#)

Congressman Rothman's (D-NJ) statement on tonight's minimum wage vote follows:

"I want every single working American to know that this morning at 1:41 AM, the Republican Majority killed any increase in the minimum wage. Instead, they passed a Trojan-Horse bill loaded with "poison pills" adding \$800 billion to the national debt to pay for more tax cuts for the richest Americans.

"Nearly 90% of Americans support an increase in the federal minimum wage. A majority of U.S. Senators and a majority of U.S. Representatives support an increase. To tie an increase in the minimum wage to more tax cuts for multi-millionaires and billionaires is morally outrageous &ndash; it is obscene.

"For years, Republicans have attached poison pills to minimum wage bills to ensure that the legislation failed and this year was no exception. This dead-of-night bill included \$800 billion more in tax benefits to multi-millionaires and billionaires who would escape all estate taxes entirely.

"Improving the minimum wage is an issue of basic fairness and justice. Hard-working Americans have the right to a decent day's pay. It is a national embarrassment that many Americans who work full-time and put in a full 40-hour week still don't earn enough to raise themselves above the poverty line. President Bush and the Republican Majority in Congress are solely responsible. It is clear that we need a Democratic majority in Congress to steer a new direction for America."

[back to top](#)

### Facts about the Minimum Wage

- The minimum wage is now at its lowest level in 50 years when adjusted for inflation.

- If the minimum wage had been indexed for inflation since 1968, it would be \$9.05 today.

- About three-quarters of minimum wage workers are adults over the age of 20, many of whom are responsible for over half of their family's income.

- Congress has not raised the minimum wage since 1997. Yet, in the last four years, CEO compensation has nearly doubled to \$10,982,000 a year. (Economic Policy Institute, June 2006)

- 86% of Americans support a raise in the minimum wage (Pew Research Center, December 2005)

- There is no evidence of job loss following minimum wage increases. A study released by the Center for American Progress and Policy Matters Ohio in May 2006 found that between 1997 and 2003:

- Employment in small businesses grew more (9.4%) in states with higher minimum wages than federal minimum wage

states (6.6%)

[back to top](#)

###