

July 11 =, 2005 - Rules Committee Republicans Vote Against Increase of Minimum Wage/Safe Workplaces

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Members of House Rules Committee Vote Against Safe Working

Standards and Minimum Wage Increase as Part of OSHA Bill

Washington, DC - Monday evening Republican members of the House Rules Committee, Chairman David Dreier (CA) and Reps. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (FL), Doc Hastings (WA), Pete Sessions (TX), Adam Putnam (FL), Shelley Moore Capito (WV), Tom Cole (OK), Rob Bishop (UT) & Phil Gingrey (GA), voted against an amendment to H.R. 742, OSHA legislation that would have raised the minimum wage by \$2.10 over the course of more than two years.

"This is just another indication that the Republican leadership is out of touch with the hard working men and women of America. They pass tax cut after tax cut for millionaires but won't increase the minimum wage by \$2.10? It's just immoral," said Rep. Louise M. Slaughter, the Ranking Democrat on the House Rules Committee. "People are working more and more for less and less. It's time that Congress took action to help these families where they need it most: in their pocket books," Rep. Slaughter continued.

The amendment in the House was designed to gradually raise the Federal minimum wage of \$5.15, first to \$5.85 after sixty days, then to \$6.55 after a year, then to \$7.25 after two years, promoting a more reasonable wage over a set period of time.

Rep. Slaughter noted, "It was almost a decade ago that Congress last decided to raise the minimum wage. Since that time, Republicans have denied working families the bare minimum that they need to survive." She added, "My Republican colleagues on the Rules Committee are clearly out of touch with the hard working American people and their most basic economic needs."

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Rep. Slaughter said, "It is very clear that the intention of this one-sided bill is to diminish and greatly dilute safety and health protections for millions of American workers. Republicans aren't strengthening the mission of OSHA. The bill they are pushing will overturn court cases that ruled in favor of OSHA and weaken the safety and health protections workers rely on."