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ISSUE UPDATE

DATE: May 1, 2014
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director,
NAACP Washington Bureau

U.S. Senate Fails to Reach Cloture On The *Minimum Wage Fairness Act*, 54 to 42 S. 2223 WOULD RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE TO \$10.10 AN HOUR AND THEN INDEX IT TO THE COST OF LIVING

THE ISSUE:

On Wednesday, April 30, 2014, the United States Senate failed by a vote of 54 yeas to 42 nays to “get cloture,” or to end debate and move towards an up-or-down vote on final passage of S. 2223, the *Minimum Wage Fairness Act*. Under the rules of the U.S Senate, 60 votes are needed to get cloture, and Sen. Harry Reid (NV), changed his vote at the last minute from a “yea” to a “nay” for procedural reasons, so he can bring up the question again (Senator Reid is very supportive of S. 2223 and an increase in the minimum wage.) This means that until they can convince 5 more Senators to change their votes to a “yea”, the bill is dead.

Led by Senator Tom Harkin (IA), the *Minimum Wage Fairness Act* (S.2223) would increase the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 by 2015, in three steps of 95 cents each. It would then adjust the minimum wage each year to keep pace with the rising cost of living starting in 2016 – a key policy reform known as “indexing,” which ten states are already using to prevent the minimum wage from falling in value each year and to ensure that the minimum wage is not held hostage to petty politics. Finally, the proposed bill would raise the minimum wage for tipped workers – which has been frozen at a meager \$2.13 per hour for more than twenty years – to 70% of the minimum wage.

The *Minimum Wage Fairness Act* would help restore the minimum wage to its historic level, making up for decades of erosion. The federal minimum wage has lost more than 30% of its value and would be more than \$10.55 per hour today if it had kept pace with the cost of living over the past forty years. More than 30 million workers would receive a raise from the *Minimum Wage Fairness Act*; the majority of this money would be directly reinvested into our national economy. The *Minimum Wage Fairness Act* would generate more than \$32 billion in new economic activity, translating to 140,000 new full-time jobs as higher sales lead businesses to hire more employees. Furthermore, of the workers who would benefit from this legislation, 88% are adults over the age of twenty, 56% are women, nearly half are workers of color, and over 43% have some college education.

The current wage of \$7.25 was implemented in July 2009, the final of three increases resulting from 2007 legislation signed by President George W. Bush. The minimum wage today pays only \$15,000 per year, which is \$3,000 below the poverty level for a family of 3. The *Minimum Wage Fairness Act* will boost the minimum wage to \$21,000, lifting families above the poverty line.

SEE HOW EACH SENATOR VOTED ON THE NEXT PAGE

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MINIMUM WAGE INNCREASE / CLOTURE**S. 2223 / Cloture Vote / Roll Call Vote #117**

Motion to invoke cloture, and thus end debate and move towards an up-or-down vote, on S. 2223, the Minimum Wage Fairness Act. The legislation would have increased the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour in three increments.

Cloture was not invoked, and thus the legislation could not move forward, by a vote of 54 yeas to 42 nays on April 30, 2014 (60 yeas are needed to invoke cloture on legislation).

The NAACP supported the legislation and thus asked for a “Yea” on Cloture.

ALABAMA

Shelby ▽
Sessions ▽

ALASKA

Begich ▲
Murkowski, L. ▽

ARIZONA

McCain ▽
Flake ▽

ARKANSAS

Boozman ?
Pryor ?

CALIFORNIA

Feinstein ▲
Boxer ▲

COLORADO

Udall, Mark ▲
Bennet ▲

CONNECTICUT

Blumenthal ▲
Murphy ▲

DELAWARE

Coons ▲
Carper ▲

FLORIDA

Nelson ▲
Rubio ▽

GEORGIA

Chambliss ▽
Isakson ▽

HAWAII

Hinoro ▲
Schatz ▲

IDAHO

Risch ▽
Crapo ▽

ILLINOIS

Durbin ▲
Kirk ▽

INDIANA

Coats ▽
Donnelly ▲

IOWA

Grassley ▽
Harkin ▲

KANSAS

Moran ▽
Roberts ▽

KENTUCKY

McConnell ▽
Paul ▽

LOUISIANA

Landrieu ▲
Vitter ▽

MAINE

King (independent) ▲
Collins ▽

MARYLAND

Mikulski ▲
Cardin ▲

MASSACHUSETTS

Warren ▲
Markey ▲

MICHIGAN

Levin, Carl ▲
Stabenow ▲

MINNESOTA

Klobuchar ▲
Franken ▲

MISSISSIPPI

Cochran ?
Wicker ?

MISSOURI

Blunt ▽
McCaskill ▲

MONTANA

Walsh ▲
Tester ▲

NEBRASKA

Johanns ▽
Fischer ▽

NEVADA

Reid, Harry *
Heller ▽

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Ayotte ▽
Shaheen ▲

NEW JERSEY

Booker ▲
Menendez ▲

NEW MEXICO

Udall, Tom ▲
Heinrich ▲

NEW YORK

Schumer ▲
Gillibrand ▲

NORTH CAROLINA

Burr ▽
Hagan ▲

NORTH DAKOTA

Heitkamp ▲
Hoeven ▽

OHIO

Portman ▽
Brown ▲

OKLAHOMA

Inhofe ▽
Coburn ▽

OREGON

Wyden ▲
Merkley ▲

PENNSYLVANIA

Toomey ▽
Casey ▲

RHODE ISLAND

Reed, Jack ▲
Whitehouse ▲

SOUTH CAROLINA

Graham ▽
Scott ▽

SOUTH DAKOTA

Johnson ▲
Thune ▽

TENNESSEE

Alexander ▽
Corker ▲

TEXAS

Cruz ▽
Cornyn ▽

UTAH

Hatch ▽
Lee ▽

VERMONT

Leahy ▲
Sanders (Independent) ▲

VIRGINIA

Warner ▲
Kaine ▲

WASHINGTON

Murray ▲
Cantwell ▲

WEST VIRGINIA

Manchin ▲
Rockefeller ▲

WISCONSIN

Baldwin ▲
Johnson ▽

WYOMING

Enzi ▽
Barrasso ▽

VOTE KEY

▲ = Voted in support of the NAACP position and in support of cloture on *The Minimum Wage Fairness Act*

▽ = Voted against the NAACP position and against cloture on *The Minimum Wage Fairness Act*

? = did not vote

* = Sen. Reid (NV) supported cloture and supported The Minimum Wage Fairness Act; he changed his vote at the last minute for procedural reasons so he can bring the bill back up at a later time.