



Hon. Doris O. Matsui

Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui

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CONTACT: Adriana Surfas
(202) 225-7163

Congresswoman Matsui Votes to Increase Federal Minimum Wage

Washington, DC – Congresswoman Matsui (CA-05) enthusiastically voted with a bipartisan majority of the U.S. House of Representatives to raise the federal minimum wage as part of the First 100 Hours agenda. The minimum wage had been frozen at \$5.15 per hour for nearly a decade, despite the rapidly rising costs of health care, education and energy.

“Congress was long overdue in giving a raise to the 13 million Americans who will benefit from this minimum wage increase,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “During the last six years, Congress ignored the basic challenges facing working families. Today’s vote is the first in a series of steps that this House will take to help hard-working Americans provide for their families and have a chance to achieve the American dream.”

The House bill, the Fair Minimum Wage Act (H.R. 2), will increase the minimum wage by \$2.10 over two years -- from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour. While California and dozens of other states raised the federal minimum wage long ago, Congress allowed the buying power of the minimum wage to reach its lowest level in 51 years. To put this in perspective, a full-time minimum-wage worker in 2006 earned \$10,712, which is \$5,888 less than the \$16,600 needed to lift a family of three out of poverty.

Matsui continued, “Raising the minimum wage is simply the right and decent thing to do and it should have been done long ago. The American people should take this as recognition that this Congress understands the basic tradeoffs that our working families face. We’re going to be giving working families a boost, because their needs have been overlooked for too long.

“During the past six years this Congress has not rewarded work, but wealth. That sends the wrong message to American families. Today’s vote is the beginning of this Congress’ effort to remedy that imbalance.”

The House passed the legislation to increase the federal minimum wage by an overwhelming margin of 315 to 160.

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