For months the Democrats have taken to the floor of the House asking the Republican leadership to schedule this vote on behalf of hardworking Americans and their families.

And for the same number of months—the Republican leadership has refused. In some instances, even denying that working families trying to get by on $4.25 an hour exist. Easy for them to say when you consider that since Speaker NEWT GINGRICH's April 17 promise to at least hold hearings on the minimum wage issue—34 days ago—he has received $15,975.24 of the taxpayers' money.

Compare that to a minimum-wage worker who earns $4.25 an hour, works 40 hours a week for 52 weeks and makes a grand total of $8,840.00 for that entire year of hard work. In a month of dawdling, the Speaker has made almost twice as much as a minimum-wage worker makes in a whole year.

Let's pass a minimum wage increase now, it's exactly what over 80 percent of American want us to do. They understand that this is simply the right approach to take if we are going to honor work, protect families and fight for children.

THE ECONOMY IS GOOD?

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Look out, Mr. and Mrs. America. The President is selling his own personal brand of snake oil again. But guess what? Sometimes the President does not really mean what he says.

As recently as this weekend the President said he now supports welfare reform. Yes, welfare reform. He is back to that position. So far this year he has vetoed, as my colleagues know, changing welfare as we know it, not once, but twice. The President has simply surrounded this issue.

In fact, he switched his position so many times I am starting to get a bit dizzy.

Then he said this is, and again I quote, the healthiest economy in 30 years. If this is the healthiest economy in 30 years, then why does it lag behind all 4 years of the Carter administration? That is right. Remember the Carter years? The Carter economy grew 2½ times faster than the Clinton economy. No wonder everybody is worried. That does not sound like the healthiest economy in 30 years.

So I say, enough of the Clinton snake oil, enough of the flip-flops. Americans are no longer buying that line.

CONFUSION ABOUT WELFARE REFORM

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, confused about where the President stands on welfare reform? Well, the White House does not even know for sure. The Clinton administration is tripping all over its own rhetoric on welfare. I call it the politics of confusion.

Last Friday in a embargo briefing on the President's radio address, White House press secretary Mike McCurry said, quote, the President in his address, or in this address, has signaled that he will look with favor on the Wisconsin welfare reform model. And the President did. Specifically he said, I quote, ''Wisconsin submitted to me for approval the outlines of a sweeping welfare reform plan, one of the boldest yet attempted in America. All in all, Wisconsin has the makings of a solid, bold welfare reform plan. We should get it done.'' End quote.

Well, however, if my colleagues read the Washington Post this morning, the White House is waffling. We hear remarks such as we will have to negotiate the situation, details will have to be changed before the Federal Government approves the necessary waivers.

Mr. Speaker, it is my belief that President Clinton should not be playing politics with the welfare proposal. We need welfare reform, we need it now. Let us get it done.

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND WELFARE REFORM

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, talk is cheap; like many Americans are not confused about where our President stands because it seems that he changes his opinions dramatically during election years. In his radio address this past Saturday the President said, 4 years ago I challenged America to end welfare as we know it.

Of course 4 years ago President Clinton was campaigning to be President. Once President, Clinton waited 18 months to propose welfare reform that was rejected by his own Democratic Congress. In his address the President bragged that he has approved 38 waivers for State welfare reforms. However, in the last year the President has twice vetoed comprehensive bipartisan welfare reform that would have ended Washington's ability to veto State reforms.

There is no good reason why 50 State Governors should have to go on their hands and knees to get President Clinton's permission to implement welfare reforms for their own citizens.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR COLLEAGUE, SONNY BONO

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday afternoon I had the opportunity to address the California Contract Cities Association convention in Palm Springs, and I would like to congratulate the outgoing president, Bea Lapisto-Kirtley, and the new president, Tom Breazeal.

But as I walked out of that meeting, I turned down the street, and I saw a crowd. And like any of us, we are rather curious when we see a crowd, and who did I see in the midst of that crowd but our colleague the gentleman from California, SONNY BONO, who was joined by his beautiful wife, Mary, their two little children and his 82-year-old mother, Jean Bono.

What was happening was the gentleman from California, SONNY BONO, was having his star status set in stone as he was having a star placed on Palm Canyon Drive in Palm Springs, California, and I would simply like to rise and inform my colleagues that we all knew that the gentleman from California, Mr. BONO, was a star, but now it is set in stone, and I want to congratulate him, and I know that every one of my colleagues will join in doing so.

PRESIDENT'S WELFARE STRATEGY LEADS A DOUBLE LIFE

(Mr. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, Bill Clinton and the Washington liberal groups are leading a double life. They claim that they want to end welfare as we know it, yet fight it and veto every plan we put forward.

They say they want to increase the earnings of working Americans, but yet they are pushing to hike the minimum wage, which kills low-wage jobs. To add injury to insult, they denounce tax relief for working families and job creation which would help accomplish both those goals.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Bill Clinton's strategy undercuts both getting people off the welfare rolls and letting them keep more of what they earn. Studies show that hiking the minimum wage swells the welfare rolls. That is because increasing the minimum wage will cut out over 400,000 entry-level jobs, the very jobs needed to get people off of welfare in the first place.

If Bill Clinton truly cares about the working poor, he will end his double life. He will stop vetoing plans to spring people from the welfare trap, he will stop pushing the minimum wage, rusting the welfare trap shut, and he will certainly stop vetoing the tax relief that he himself has promised.

It is time for Bill Clinton to stop living a double life.

IT IS NOT COMPASSIONATE TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. CAMPBELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks).

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Speaker, what is the compassionate and caring approach to people who need jobs? It is to

give them jobs. The problem with the minimum wage debate is that the arguments have ignored the fundamental fact that it is better to give somebody a job and get them started on their path in life by earning their own income, getting ready to go to work, and keeping a schedule, rather than not to have a job at all. I would like to be able to wave a wand and make sure that everybody's income rises, but I cannot, and nobody in government can. What we can do though is say ''yes'' to somebody who has got a shot at starting in life with a minimum-wage job. So be it, because one moves on from that to the next.

It is not compassionate, therefore, to increase the minimum wage. Every time we have done it since 1974, unless the economy was just shooting through the roof, we lost jobs from what otherwise would have happened. I am afraid that will happen again.

Do not put a tax on those people who offer jobs to people who need them; unemployed people who need a start in life. Do not support an increase in the minimum wage.

A BAD DEAL FOR OUR CONSTITUENTS

(Mr. WISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, as I drove several hundred miles across the State of West Virginia yesterday visiting flood-hit areas, I stopped off at a lot of gasoline stations. I saw gasoline selling for everything and bulk gasoline selling for everything from $1.28 to $1.37 a gallon for 87 octane regular, and as I would stop, I would ask them how they felt about getting 4.3 cents back or having the Congress actually cut the gasoline tax by 4.3 cents. ''Where does it go, BOB? Are we going to get it?''

Well, of course, I told them that the Congress would not be permitted to offer an amendment guaranteeing it went to the consumer.

''You are telling us we don't automatically get it?''

''No, you don't automatically get it. In fact the chances are good that the savings will actually go either to oil companies or to foreign oil producers.''

Well, what good does that do?

They would be even less happy to know that the roughly $3 billion that this will cost while, yes, it will be made up by selling the spectrum in telecommunications, that that is $3 billion that could have been used for deficit reduction. And then again when we need more deficit reduction, what are they going to cut? That will be education.

It is not a good deal.

CLINTON DEMOCRATS' ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

(Mr. FUNDERBURK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, remember President Clinton's campaign promises of 1992? He said, among other things, that he would enact strong welfare reform if elected President. I certainly haven't seen any sign of this. But now, in a true act of desperation, he is trying to blend-over his dismal record by taking credit for some of the reforms our State governments have implemented on their own.

Why the desperation? Because no matter what the campaign game is, the facts remain the same—last Congress when the Democrats were in the majority they didn't deliver a welfare reform package to President Clinton. This Congress with Republicans in charge, President Clinton got a welfare reform package but he vetoed it.

Mr. Speaker, the facts don't lie. The Clinton Democrats' actions speak louder than their words. Until Bill Clinton stops talking about ending welfare as we know it and actually signs a genuine reform bill, we will remain absent without leadership.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WICKER). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5, rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4, rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 5 p.m. today.

REVISION OF VETERANS BENEFITS DECISIONS

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1483) to amend title 38, United States Code, to allow revision of veterans benefits decisions based on clear and unmistakable error.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1483

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REVISION OF DECISIONS BASED ON CLEAR AND UNMISTAKABLE ERROR.

(a) ORIGINAL DECISIONS.—(1) Chapter 51 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 5109 the following new section:

''§ 5109A. Revision of decisions on grounds of clear and unmistakable error

''(a) A decision by the secretary under this chapter is subject to revision on the grounds of clear and unmistakable error. If evidence establishes the error, the prior decision shall be reversed or revised.

''(b) For the purposes of authorizing benefits, a rating or other adjudicative decision that constitutes a reversal or revision of a prior decision on the grounds of clear and unmistakable error has the same effect as if the decision had been made on the date of the prior decision.

''(c) Review to determine whether clear and unmistakable error exists in a case may be instituted by the Secretary on the Secretary's own motion or upon request of the claimant.

''(d) A request for revision of a decision of the Secretary based on clear and unmistakable error may be made at any time after that decision is made.

''(e) Such a request shall be submitted to the Secretary and shall be decided in the same manner as any other claim.''.

(2) The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 5109 the following new item:

''5109A. Revision of decisions on grounds of clear and unmistakable error.''.

(b) BVA DECISIONS.—(1) Chapter 71 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 7111. Revision of decisions on grounds of clear and unmistakable error

''(a) A decision by the Board is subject to revision on the grounds of clear and unmistakable error. If evidence establishes the error, the prior decisions shall be reversed or revised.

''(b) For the purposes of authorizing benefits, a rating or other adjudicative decision of the Board that constitutes a reversal or revision of a prior decision of the Board on the grounds of clear and unmistakable error has the same effect as if the decision had been made on the date of the prior decision.

''(c) Review to determine whether clear and unmistakable error exists in a case may be instituted by the Board on the Board's own motion or upon request of the claimant.

''(d) A request for revision of a decision of the Board based on clear and unmistakable error may be made at any time after that decision is made.

''(e) Such a request shall be submitted directly to the Board and shall be decided by the Board on the merits, without referral to any adjudicative or hearing official acting on behalf of the Secretary.

''(f) A claim filed with the Secretary that requests reversal or revision of a previous Board decision due to clear and unmistakable error shall be considered to be a request to the Board under this section, and the Secretary shall promptly transmit any such request to the Board for its consideration under this section.''.

(2) The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''7111. Revision of decisions on grounds of clear and unmistakable error.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—(1) Sections 5109A and 7111 of title 38, United States Code, as added by this section, apply to any determination made before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) Notwithstanding section 402 of the Veterans Judicial Review Act (38 U.S.C. 7251 note), chapter 72 of title 38, United States Code, shall apply with respect to any decision of the Board of Veterans' Appeals on a claim alleging that a previous determination of the Board was the product of clear and unmistakable error if that claim is filed after, or was pending before the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Court of Veterans Appeals, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, or the Supreme Court on, the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP] and the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONTGOMERY] will each be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP].