

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].