



Service Employees International Union/District 1199, CTW,
CLC

MINIMUM WAGE TALKING POINTS

MAIN POINT: Our choices reflect our values and once again, Republicans' actions have shown that they simply do not value America's hard working families. Unlike the Republicans, Democrats will continue to fight to increase the minimum wage and we will never turn our backs on America's working families.

The shameful reality is that far too many American workers live paycheck to paycheck, struggling to make ends meet while health care costs, gas prices and college tuition continue to increase. Since President Bush took office, the number of Americans living in poverty has increased by 5.4 million.

America's workers deserve a decent wage they can live on and the fact is that today's minimum wage is indecent. Every day millions of Americans work hard and play by the rules to try to ensure a better life for their families.

- It would take a full day's pay at minimum wage to pay for one tank of gas. Most minimum wage workers are the major breadwinners within their families.
- The buying power of the federal minimum wage - which amounts to \$10,700 a year - is currently at its lowest level in 50 years.

Small businesses benefit from a higher wage. Evidence shows that increases in the minimum wage, by increasing the earnings of low-income workers without diminishing their employment opportunities, have historically helped to lower poverty rates.

A non-partisan survey, which shows that 77 percent of Americans believe raising the minimum wage should be a priority, provides further proof that Republicans are out of touch with the values of a majority of Americans. When faced with an opportunity to help America's hard working families, Republicans in Congress have made it clear that they would rather play partisan political games, putting their party ahead of what's good for America.