

Castle Votes to Raise the Minimum Wage -- January 10, 2007

Washington D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today voted to increase the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour over a span of two years, saying that it has been almost 10 years since the last time the wage was increased. The legislation passed by a vote of 315 to 116.

"Today's legislation to increase the minimum wage is long overdue for America's workers. The purchasing power of the current rate is lower than it has been in fifty years and I believe that is an unacceptable standard for those who live off of an annual minimum wage salary. It is evident that states around the country feel that the current pay of \$5.15 per hour is not adequate as 27 states, including Delaware, have adopted a minimum wage in excess of the federal rate. It is time we followed suit at the federal level." Castle said.

The national minimum wage was created during the Great Depression, and began at 25 cents an hour. That floor has been increased in 19 steps, with the last occurring in 1997. More states are setting their own minimum wages higher than the federal rate, such as Delaware. On January 1, Delaware's minimum wage increased to \$6.65 and on January 1, 2008 it will increase to \$7.15.

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