88R9959 CW-D

By:  Reynolds H.C.R. No. 50

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Federal law sets the federal minimum wage at $7.25 an hour; and

WHEREAS, The last time Congress raised the federal minimum wage was in 2007; that year, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 was passed to gradually raise the federal minimum wage from $5.15 an hour to $7.25 an hour in 2009; the Act included small business tax relief provisions and was signed into law by President George W. Bush; and

WHEREAS, Speaking at a 2006 news conference, President Bush said that he supported increasing the federal minimum wage, adding that to achieve this and other goals, Congress needed to put aside partisan differences and work constructively to address the vital issues confronting our nation; and

WHEREAS, In the nearly 16 years since President Bush signed the last federal minimum wage increase into law, the desire for Congress to put aside partisan differences and work constructively to raise the federal minimum wage has grown stronger in the states; and

WHEREAS, To account for cost of living increases, 30 states have set their minimum wage higher than the federal minimum wage, though not at the level of a living wage; 15 states, including Texas, have set their minimum wage in line with the federal minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, Supporters of a living wage emphasize that increasing the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour would reduce poverty and grow the economy; their review of previous minimum wage increases found little or no evidence that raising the minimum wage reduces employment; and

WHEREAS, Demonstrating that paying workers more reduces turnover, numerous companies, including Amazon, Walmart, Target, Best Buy, Costco, and Starbucks, are now paying many hourly workers at least $15 an hour; a 2017 Quinnipiac University poll found that a majority of Americans would support a minimum wage of $15 an hour; and

WHEREAS, Offering a Texas perspective, noted American economist Dr. James K. Galbraith, a professor at The University of Texas at Austin, wrote that states such as Texas would benefit from raising the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour because such states have too many low-wage workers, too much poverty, and too many people who are getting food stamps and other welfare because they aren't getting paid enough; and

WHEREAS, The well-being of this nation depends on a strong and vibrant economy, and Congress should heed the advice of experts such as Dr. Galbraith and raise the minimum wage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 88th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to raise the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.