

Four-and-a-half million Americans signed up to fight, including a friend that I later got to know by the name of Frank Buckles, who was 16 when he joined the war in World War I. He lived to the age of 110 and died in 2011. American doughboys like him proved the decisive difference.

Just a year after the U.S. was in the war, the war was over on the 11th day of the 11th month at the 11th hour. In all, there were 30 million casualties worldwide, civilian and military.

Mr. Speaker, after the war, the United States became an international power. So 114,000 doughboys died over there in the great World War I. When they got home, an equal number died from the Spanish flu that they had contracted when they were in Europe.

Mr. Speaker, we remember them all 100 years ago this year, for the worst casualty of war is to be forgotten.

And that is just the way it is.

#### LEAD POISONING IN DRINKING WATER IN SCHOOLS

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, we have a situation that is getting very serious in this Nation, and it is the issue of drinking water in schools.

I hail from the 10th Congressional District of the State of New Jersey, and after traveling to Flint, Michigan, on March 4 to listen to the people of that community talk about what had happened in their community around their drinking water and how their children have been poisoned—a potential of 9,000 children having issues with lead—I came back to Newark, New Jersey, my home, knowing that Newark is the third oldest city in the Nation.

I took action. I spoke to several mayors in my community, and I said: “You need to pay attention to what is going on with drinking water. There is a problem.”

Lo and behold, 3 days later, in 30 schools in Newark, New Jersey, elevated levels of lead were found. So I took action, and I have introduced the TEST for Lead Act in schools. This will help States that get Federal dollars from the Federal Government test the water in schools for lead.

This is not only a cities issue. In several communities around Newark, this issue has also been found in the suburbs. It is coming to a community near you. So I ask my colleagues to support the TEST for Lead Act.

□ 1545

#### CHANGES TO THE WHITE COLLAR EXEMPTION

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, the current administration has changed the way business is done in America.

By making unilateral changes to the white collar exemption within the Fair Labor Standards Act, businesses across our Nation will be forced to change their investment and growth strategy. This Big Government pie-in-the-sky philosophy does not grasp the realities of Main Street America. The change would require employers to pay overtime for all employees who make \$50,440 or less per year.

The administration's own Chief Counsel for Advocacy at the Small Business Administration pointed out that research for this comprehensive rule change was based on assumptions and lacked industry data and involvement.

Here is another example of an agency reinterpreting an old law from 1938 and changing it to fit the current administration's agenda. This is lawmaking by executive fiat and it is unconstitutional.

It is time for Congress to revive the legislative veto and hold an unaccountable executive branch accountable.

#### MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALKER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the Raise the Wage Act that was introduced almost exactly 1 year ago today.

Raising the minimum wage is critical to addressing income inequality in the United States, one of the most pressing issues facing our Nation. But the majority has not even called a hearing on this issue.

Yesterday, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Democrats held our own forum on this issue, during which we considered the evidence in support of raising the minimum wage. We heard from business leaders and economists that raising the wage will reduce workforce turnover, stimulate consumer spending, and grow jobs.

The evidence is absolutely clear that raising the minimum wage will give 35 million workers a raise and lift 4.5 million Americans out of poverty. It is also abundantly clear that raising the minimum wage will benefit businesses in the U.S. economy. That may be why in a recent poll from Republican pollster Frank Luntz, 80 percent of business executives supported raising the minimum wage.

The record could not be more clear: raising the minimum wage is good for workers, businesses, and the American economy. That is why today I include in the RECORD testimony from yesterday's Member forum on the Business Case for Raising the Federal Minimum Wage, presented by David Cooper of the Economic Policy Institute; Sherry Deutschmann of LetterLogic, Inc.; Scott Nash of MOM's Organic; and Carmen Ortiz Larsen of AQUAS, Inc.

WRITTEN REMARKS FROM CARMEN ORTIZ LARSEN, PRESIDENT OF AQUAS INC. AND CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF THE HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

Submitted to the House Education & the Workforce Committee—Minority Panel on the Business and Economic Case for Raising the Minimum Wage, April 27, 2016

My name is Carmen Ortiz Larsen, and I support an increase in the Federal minimum wage to at least \$12 by 2020; I support the Raise the Wage Act. I am the owner and President of an Engineering and Information Technology firm called AQUAS Incorporated. I am also the Chair of the Board of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County, Maryland.

AQUAS Inc. staff includes professionals, administrative personnel, and field technicians. Our lowest wage is \$14 an hour. Our plan is to have the minimum wage in our workplace at \$16/hour within the next 18 months.

Being a small business owner is hard work. Small business owners have to be frugal, prudent, smart and alert to opportunities, navigating cash flow ups and downs, and managing cost increases and price competitiveness. Controlling costs is essential to ensure sufficient margins for funding growth, long-term success and customer satisfaction. If I don't control costs wisely, though, the dollars I save in one area of the business could cost me more in other areas.

Some years ago we sought to keep costs down by using the lowest legal minimum wage as compensation for clerical and field staff. We found that these workers had a greater incidence of health issues, absenteeism and turnover. The cost of replacing and retraining staff outweighed any savings in keeping their pay rate low.

We found that it was a smarter business policy to raise the hourly rate for the lower paid jobs. The results were better staff morale, increased loyalty and better service to the customer. We gained a more stable workforce and improved performance.

Markets are competitive, and every year costs go up. We have to face yearly increases in cost of insurance, supplies, advertising, facilities, services. We take this for granted as the cost of doing business. It should be no different to expect wage increases, especially for the lowest paid workers. All employees deserve a wage that is sufficient to live without the anxiety of being left without food or shelter.

AQUAS does not believe that the answer to cost management or competitive challenges lies in paying our staff poverty wages; this simply diminishes the quality and ongoing success of our enterprise. Instead, we remain competitive through efficiencies and quality improvements, through innovative ways to maintain reasonable profitability and improve the customer's experience. Our staff is part of who we are as a company, and they deserve to make ends meet.

We look to you as elected officials to set boundaries that cut across special interest areas, to make those tough decisions that create a delicate balance between an unrestrained commercial interest and a level