

views

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Minimum Wage **And Real Progress**

MCCOOK GAZETTE (June 1): Nebraska's minimum wage is going to \$9, far below the \$15 some activists are demanding, so it was interesting to see a study published by the National Low-Income Housing Coalition about the cost of living.

According to the study, the average Nebraskan would have to work 54 hours at a minimum wage to afford a one-bedroom apartment.

Of course, that average includes Lincoln and Omaha, where rents are higher, and sets the amount the average minimum-wage worker would spend on housing at 30 percent of income — probably far less than most minimum-wage workers spend when they get out of their parents' homes

On the other hand, minimum-wage jobs that allow workers to put in 54 hours are few and far between because of the benefits and overtime pay required.

Nebraska minimum-wage workers have it great compared to New Yorkers, who would have to put in 98 hours, the District of Columbia, Maryland and New Jersey, around 100 hours or more, or California, 92 hours - or even worse, Hawaii, where one would have to work 125 hours for a one-bedroom apartment.

As we predicted, higher minimum wages push employers to install more automation, such as a fast-food restaurant that lets customers order through kiosks instead of through a counter attendant.

But is the answer to housing affordability higher minimum wages,

or are lower housing costs and lower standards of living required? Minimum wage workers probably will never be able to afford to buy one, but according to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2014, the aver-

age new single-family home sold for \$345,800, costing \$97.09 for each of its 2.506 square feet. More and more people are finding ways to lower their cost of liv-

ing.

Many are finding ways to reduce their cost of living, such as the "tiny house" proponents living in 400 square feet or less, or adopting European "net zero" standards calling for 500 square feet per person, although initial energy-saving costs are far from economical.

Of course, many resort to other methods — finding a roommate, moving back in with parents or other relatives — and does everyone need a \$100 cell phone plan and a big-screen TV?

Yes, it's hard to live on minimum wage, but it was never designed to provide that level of income, and raising it can only result in more kiosks and robots on the job.

A better solution is upgrading personal skills, or even starting one's own business to bring in that living wage.

ABOUT THIS PAGE

The View page provides a forum for open discussion of issues and interests affecting our readers. Initialed editorials represent the opinion of the writer, but not necessarily that of the **PRESS & DAKOTAN.** Bylined columns represent the view of the author. We welcome letters on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press Today is Monday, June 15, the 166th day of 2015. There are 199 days left in the

Today's Highlight in History: On June 15, 1215, England's King John put his seal to Magna Carta ("the Great Char-

Five years ago: In his first Oval Of-fice address, President Barack Obama promised that "we will make BP pay for the damage their company has caused, describing the massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico as a "siege" on the shores of erica. Mexican F ident Felipe (deron appealed to his fellow citizens to support the fight against organized crime just hours after troops killed 15 suspected gang members. One year ago: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused the Ha-mas militant group of kidnapping three Israeli teenagers who had disappeared on June 12 (the teens' bodies were found June 30). Death claimed "American Top 40" host Casey Kasem, 82; "Flowers for Algernon" author Daniel Keyes, 86; and French actor Jacques Bergerac, 87. Golfer Martin Kaymer of Germany won the U.S. Open. The San Antonio Spurs won their fifth NBA championship, beating the Miami Heat 104-87 to win the series in five games. Today's Birthdays: Rhythm-and blues singer Ruby Nash Garnett (Ruby and the Romantics) is 81. Rock singeractor Johnny Hallyday is 72. Funk musi-cian Leo Nocentelli (The Meters) is 69. Actor Simon Callow is 66. Singer Russell Hitchcock (Air Supply) is 66. Rock singer Steve Walsh is 64. Comedian-actor Jim Belushi is 61. Country singer Terri Gibbs is 61. Actress Julie Hagerty is 60. Actress Polly Draper is 60. Rock musician Brad Gillis (Night Ranger) is 58. Baseball Hall-of-Famer Wade Boggs is 57. Actress Ei-leen Davidson is 56. Bluegrass musician Terry Smith is 55. Actress Helen Hunt is 52. Rock musician Scott Rockenfield (Queensryche) is 52. Actress Courteney Cox is 51. Country musician Tony Ardoin is 51. Country musician Michael Britt (Lonestar) is 49. Contemporary Christian musician Rob Mitchell is 49. Rock musi-cian Jimmy McD is 47. Actor-rapper Ice Cube is 46. Actress Leah Remini is 45. Actor Jake Busey is 44. Bluegrass sing-er-musician Jamie Johnson is 43. Rock musician T-Bone Willy (Save Ferris) is 43. Actor Neil Patrick Harris is 42. Actor Greg Vaughan is 42. Actress Elizabeth Reaser is 40. Rock singer Dryden Mitchell (Alien Ant Farm) is 39. Rock musician Billy Martin (Good Charlotte) is 34. Rock musician Wayne Sermon (Imagine Dragons) is 31. Actor Denzel Whitaker is 25. **Thought for Today:** "The times are not so bad as they seem; they couldn't be." — John Franklin Carter, American commentator and author (1897-1967).



Capitol Notebook

More, More, More: **SD Needs Gambling**

BY BOB MERCER State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — Our state government wants more people to gamble more.

And when people spend more on state-sponsored gambling, our state government

can spend more, without taxing more the people who aren't gamblers. This is free will at its finest and its

worst I've known gambling addicts. For some their curse was to like much too

much gambling on video lottery. They didn't look like addicts. One was a state judge. I watched

him on an occasional Saturday morning. While others nursed coffee, he pushed money into a machine.

Several state legislators I knew couldn't seem to stay away from the machines.

One gave me a ride in his car one day. He reached across to the glove box. Out came a roll of greenbacks, held together by a rubber band.

"My winnings," he said.

Then he added, his voice changing from pride to the voice with which we keep secrets about ourselves from our loved ones, "Don't tell (her)

For their family's sake, I'm leaving her name out.

But I knew that she already knew.

Eventually they always do. Often, too late. Anyone who pays attention to the numbers behind video lottery would tell you the same

thing: His wad wasn't winnings If he had been truly winning, the wad would

have been much, much fatter. Even if he had been only breaking even, the

wad would have been about 40 percent thicker. South Dakota's video lottery businesses are highly effective at capturing money of people

who like that kind of gambling.

For every dollar lost in the privately owned terminals, state government takes half of that dollar.

The businesses get the other half of the dollar — and pay the lottery one more cent from that dollar, for the administration of the video lottery system.

For many years the video lottery establishments and the machine owners

- and increasingly, the South Dakota Lottery itself - have wanted more opportunities to take in more money from the gamblers. They want the bet limit raised from

the \$2 that's been in place since video lottery began in October 1989.

They want the maximum number of terminals increased from the 10 per establishment that's been in place too since 1989.

The Legislature repeatedly rejected those changes. In the coming 2016 session of the Legislature, the South

Dakota Lottery and their business partners will pursue those types of changes again.

The two sides of the partnership also will ask lawmakers for permission to offer a new version of gambling machines known as progressives.

Progressives already are common in true casinos. They offer the additional feature of a large jackpot. The jackpot comes from a slice of each bet. The jackpot amount is prominently displayed to attract players.

Who knows whether this time the Legislature will say yes to the governor.

We'll also see rules changed soon for Powerball, the big daddy of jackpot lotto games in South Dakota

The winning matrix will be adjusted so jackpots grow bigger faster. Fewer jackpots will be won.

But people, being people, will gamble more to win the bigger money.

Such is our state's official policy. Let the suckers pay.



Bob

MERCER

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ter") at Runnymede

On this date: In 1775, the Second Continental Congress voted unanimously to appoint George Washington head of the Continental Army. In 1836, Arkansas became the 25th

state.

In 1849, James Polk, the 11th president of the United States, died in Nashville. Tennessee.

In 1864, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton signed an order establishing a military burial ground which became Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. In 1904, more than 1,000 people died

when fire erupted aboard the steamboat General Slocum in New York's East River. In 1934. President Franklin D.

Roosevelt signed an act making the National Guard part of the U.S. Army in the event of war or national emergency. In 1944. American forces began their

successful invasion of Saipan during World War II. B-29 Superfortresses carried out their first raids on Japan.

In 1955, the United States and Britain signed a cooperation agreement concerning atomic information for "mutual defence purposes.

In 1962, Students for a Democratic Society issued the Port Huron Statement at the conclusion of a five-day convention in Michigan. In 1978, King Hussein of Jordan mar-

ried 26-year-old American Lisa Halaby, who became Queen Noor.

In 1984, composer-librettist Meredith Willson ("The Music Man") died in Santa Monica, California, at age 82.

In 1994. Israel and the Vatican established full diplomatic relations. The Walt Disney animated feature "The Lion King"

was released by Buena Vista Pictures. Ten years ago: The autopsy released on Terri Schiavo backed the contention of her husband. Michael, that she had been in a persistent vegetative state, finding she was severely and irreversibly brain damaged and blind as well. Iraqi and U.S. forces freed Australian hostage Douglas Wood. Former Baylor basketball player Carlton Dotson was sentenced to 35 years in prison, a week after he unexpectedly pleaded guilty to murdering teammate Patrick Dennehy.

FROM THE BIBLE

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Matthew 23:25. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Viola Lenhoff

As we are doing the Ethan Lenhoff benefit, we would like to express our sincere thanks for all the love, prayers, support and donations of our family, friends, co-workers and all who helped to make the benefit a HUGE success!

talents of the benefit team; especially Dawn Noecker, Kari Termansen and Nicki Anderson. Also, the wonderful team at Guard Auctions! These people worked tirelessly to make sure

A Huge Success

There were the time and

everything went smoothly, as they exhausted many avenues to benefit Ryan, Amanda and Ethan. And that they did!

It warms my heart to think of all the support of people near and far! What a wonderful support system they have! Special thanks also to those who donated food, prepared the meet, salads and desserts for the meal. It was all delicious

These funds will assist in expenses for this family for a long time. And the love and gratitude we feel will be with all of us for a long time.

Why America Hates The **GOP-Obamatrade Deal**

BY MICHELLE MALKIN

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Constitutional conservatives don't like it. Trade unions abhor it. Obama critics hate it. Environmentalists despise it.

Outside the Beltway bubble, a broad coalition of voters from the left, right and center opposes the mega-trade deal getting rammed through Congress this week by the Republican establishment on behalf of the White House. Here's why.

The Obama administration, House GOP leader John Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell have sold out American sovereignty. Their so-called Trans-Pacific Partnership Commission will have sweeping authority over trade, immigration, environmental, labor and commerce regulations.

As alert watchdogs U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., chairman of the Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest and U.S. Rep Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., warn: "By adopting fast-track, Congress would be formally authorizing the President to finalize the creation of this Pacific Union and will have surrendered its legislative prerogatives. Before a word, line, paragraph, or page of this plan is made public, Congress will have agreed to give up its treaty powers. ... In effect, one of the most sweeping international agreements seen in years will be given less legislative scrutiny and process than a Post Office reform bill."

The Obama administration, House GOP leader John Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell have sold out legislative transparency. Boehner smugly asserts that so-called Trade Promotion Authority puts Congress in charge and promotes "more openness" on trade talks. Nonsense. Under the Boehner/Obama plan, Congress gives up its ability to amend any trade deals under fast track, severely limits the ability to debate and lowers the vote threshold in the Senate from 61 to 51. The 11 international parties negotiating with Obama on TPP refuse to sign their dotted lines until Congress agrees to pre-agree to behemoth global trade pacts sight unseen.

As Obamatrade cheerleader and Big Business crony Sen. Orrin Hack, I mean Hatch, admitted, "I don't know fully what's in TPP myself.'

The secretive wheeling and dealing on the massive 29-chapter draft (kept under classified lock-and-key and only a tiny portion of which have been publicly disclosed through WikiLeaks) make the backroom Obamacare negotiations look like a gigantic solar flare of openness and public deliberation. Fast-track Republicans,

who rightfully made a stink when Nancy Pelosi declared that "we have to pass the [Obamac-are] bill so that you can find out what is in it," now have no transparency legs to stand on.

The Obama administration, House GOP leader John Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell have sold out our immigra-

tion priorities. Both parties have put cheap labor from illegal immigrants before American workers. Both parties support massive increases in foreign temporary worker programs that favor cheap tech workers from India and China over highly educated, highly skilled American workers who are forced to train their replacements. Both parties back fraud-plagued green card giveaway programs for wealthy immigrant investors that amount to a crony "economic development" racket. More Obamatrade documents disclosed by WikiLeaks indicate that negotiators have discussed unilateral

changes to U.S. worker protections in visa law, processing times and temporary visa expiration dates.

Supporting free enterprise in America does not mean supporting a global free-for-all for every last \$2.00/hour entry-level foreign tech journeyman. Past free-trade pacts have failed to live up to their overhyped promises. University of Maryland economist Peter Morici notes that under Obama's free trade pact with South Korea, imports with that country "are up 3.6 billion" while "U.S. exports are down marginally and the U.S. trade deficit with the Asian nation has swelled to 5 billion."

Meanwhile, he reports, our wage-suppressing \$350 billion bilateral trade deficit with China "costs American workers at least 3 million jobs" and several Asian countries now negotiating TPP "have violated WTO and International Monetary Fund rules by purposefully undervaluing their currencies to subsidize exports and raise prices for otherwise competitive U.S. products in their markets."

Here is what those of us against the GOP-Obamatrade bills can all agree on: Both political parties in Washington are screwing over our country. American citizens are sick and tired of the permanent ruling class subverting the will of the people in the name of "bipartisanship." We've had enough of Big Business betrayals and Big Government collusion.

What part of "Stop selling out America!" does D.C. not understand?

Michelle Malkin is author of the new book "Who Built That: Awe-Inspiring Stories of American Tinkerpreneurs." Her email address is malkinblog@gmail.com.

