

***Gonzalez Issues Statement on Increased Wages and Resulting Economic Growth, Opportunity***

**Washington, DC** - Today the federal minimum wage will increase for the first time in over a decade, providing a pay raise that will benefit close to 13 million Americans, including a direct impact on 863,000 workers in the state of Texas. The increase is the result of congressional legislation, passed and signed into law in May of 2007, which increases the minimum wage in three steps over the next two years. Each step will provide an hourly increase of \$0.70, eventually boosting the rate from \$5.15 to \$7.25 per hour.

Congressman Charles Gonzalez (TX-20) issued the following statement on the wage increase:

"After ten long years, American workers are finally getting the pay raise that they've rightfully earned and deserve. This increase will help hard working Americans provide for their families while also strengthening our nation's economy by placing more disposable income in the pockets of consumers. But most importantly, this increase strongly reflects the belief of this new Congress that all Americans who work hard should be able to earn a decent living and have a real shot at the American dream. This historic victory for the American worker is one that will broadly expand economic prosperity and strengthen our nation's workforce, and I am honored to have been a part of this accomplishment."

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