



ENQUIRY

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Free thought and discourse

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\$15 Minimum Wage: Disaster for New York

By **ALEX KLOSNER**
STAFF WRITER

As one of the most unathletic and uncoordinated teenagers that God ever created, I avoided all extracurricular sports and spent most of my high school years working multiple minimum wage jobs. Low wage employment allows millions of young and less-educated workers to acquire the skills needed to advance in the job market. Another hike in the minimum wage could eviscerate employment opportunities for thousands of workers across New York.

The minimum wage in New York rose to \$9 an hour at the beginning of this year. Governor Cuomo then proposed another drastic hike in the wage, which the state legislature recently approved. It will increase the current wage in New York City by 67 percent to \$15 an hour by 2018. The upstate minimum wage will increase to \$12.50 in 2022, with the timeframe for the \$15 target dependent on economic conditions.

Unfortunately, the results of minimum wages will contradict their advocates' good intentions.

According to data released by the Empire Center for Public Policy, the \$15 minimum wage is the highest in New York state's history (adjusting for inflation). Previously, the highest minimum wage in New York's history was in 1970, at a rate of \$11.35 in 2015 dollars.

New York is the first state in the U.S. to adopt a \$15 minimum wage. Although well intentioned, such a drastic increase will result in substantial loss in employment. According to economists Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a former Congressional Budget Office director, and Ben Gitis of the American Action Forum, a \$15 minimum wage could result in job losses ranging from 200,000 to 588,800 by 2021.

Imposing this drastic hike in the minimum wage in an economically diverse state such as New York is irresponsible public policy. Affluent regions downstate can better endure a \$15 minimum wage. Other areas, by contrast, may struggle to weather this wage hike.

According to the report by

Holtz-Eakin and Gitis, Long Island could lose 22,000 jobs or 1.6 percent of employment while the Mohawk Valley could lose nearly 5,000, or 2.5% percent of employment.

The minimum wage hike will exacerbate the deteriorating economic conditions upstate. The Empire Center argues that between 2010 and 2015, 41 of the 50 upstate counties experienced population decreases. Republican State Senator John DeFrancisco from Syracuse said, "The reality is that upstate New York simply can't afford a \$15 minimum wage. The small businesses and farms that power our economy will be devastated, jobs will be lost, consumer costs will skyrocket and taxes will rise."

Last fall, Governor Cuomo bypassed the state legislature and created an unelected Wage Board to enact a \$15 hourly wage only for fast-food workers at chain restaurants. The "Fight for \$15" campaign argues that fast-food corporations earn

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Give Garland a Hearing

By **RYAN GLENN**
STAFF WRITER

In the wake of Justice Antonin Scalia's untimely death, the ideological future of the court hangs in the balance. The court's eight members are now split on many interpretive issues, which would make a new justice a key swing vote in certain cases. President Obama nominated Merrick Garland, from the Federal Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, to fill Scalia's spot.

Garland has served as a judge of the Federal Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit since his appointment by Bill Clinton in 1997, becoming Chief Judge in 2013. He studied at Harvard Law School and previously worked as a federal prosecutor.

Garland's colleagues hold him in high regard, and his background and experience mirror those of many Supreme Court justices. Obama previously considered Garland for nomination in 2009 and 2010, but opted for the more liberal nominees Sotomayor and Kagan.

Garland has called the Constitution and law "the cornerstone of [his] professional life," asserting the importance of rule of law over personal ideology. Republican politicians, however, are concerned with Garland's record on the Second

This Week's News in 140 Characters

EDITORIAL REPORT



Seth Mandel @SethAMandel · Mar 29
"By the way, motorcycle people love me." Real Trump quote just now.



Bernie Thoughts @berniethoughts · Mar 30
IMAGINE A POTATO AND INSIDE IT IS ANOTHER POTATO AND SO ON AND SO FORTH



Blake Hounshell @blakehounshell · Apr 2
Jokes gonna be on all you nerds when Trump mints a \$19 trillion platinum coin.



southpaw @nycsouthpaw · Apr 1
There's a certain novelty in constantly offending both sides of the abortion debate. I'll give him that.



Oliver Emberton @oliveremberton · Apr 1
April Fools Day is the one day of the year that people critically evaluate news articles before accepting them as true



Todd 'Papi' Carlos @TheToddWilliams · Mar 30
"It seems like many polls are turning against you. How do you respond?"

TRUMP: They should be sent back to Poland. Very dangerous people.



Marcus Hawkins @HawkinsUSA · Mar 30
John Kasich has won 600,000 fewer votes and 30 fewer delegates and 2 fewer contests than Marco Rubio and is still in the race.

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GIVE GARLAND A HEARING *cont.*

Amendment. Garland's previous support for strict, controversial gun restrictions in D.C. opposed the Supreme Court's *Heller* decision, which the Court could overturn with Garland ruling with the previous minority.

The senators should ask themselves whether they honestly expect a better nomination from the next president.

Contrary to expectations, President Obama has made the most conservative nomination by a liberal president in recent history, banking on Republicans rejecting Garland before consideration, thus making Republicans look uncooperative and obstructionist by not "doing their job," even for a nominee who should receive bipartisan support.

The Senate must now exercise its constitutional duty to advise and

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North Korea Threatens Nuclear Attack

By **ELIZABETH BARRY**
STAFF WRITER

Kim Jong Un looked on last Friday as North Korea fired a short-range missile off its east coast. This event is the latest in a series of North Korean missile launches in response to what the media has called an extended period of elevated military tension on the Korean peninsula, triggered by Pyongyang's fourth nuclear test on January 6.

Friday's launch came in the middle of the two-day Nuclear Security Summit in Washington D.C., where President Obama had hoped to meet with South Korean President Park Geun-hye and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to "discuss common responses to the threat posed by North Korea and to advance areas of trilateral security cooperation in the region and globally."

The U.S. has been particularly eager to encourage better

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substantial profits but do not pay works sufficient wages for food, healthcare, and rent.

Advocating economic justice for fast-food workers sounds like a good idea. Unfortunately, these policies' results will contradict their advocates' good intentions. Higher labor costs force corporations to raise prices or lay off workers to combat declining profit margins.

In 2013, Oxford Professors Carl Benedikt Frey and Michael Osborn released a report titled *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are Jobs to Computerisation?* The report analyzed the probability that specific professions could be replaced by technology on a scale of 0 (profession irreplaceable) to 1 (completely replaceable by computers). It revealed that the probability fast-food workers could be replaced with automation and technology was .92. Fight for \$15? More like fight for \$0.

Democrats argue that increasing the minimum wage stimulates the economy and creates jobs. Assuming low-income people are more inclined to save, a higher minimum wage, in theory, would create more spending and increase aggregate demand. More people become employed at higher wages and we all live happily ever after.

That's not the case in Seattle. In June 2014, the Seattle city government approved a \$15 minimum wage to gradually take effect by 2019. A report by the American Enterprise Institute shows that Seattle experienced the largest nine-month employment drop since the recession between April and December of 2015. Additionally, Seattle lost 10,000 jobs in September, October, and November of last year. This was the largest three-month job loss in Seattle since 1990.

No one wants to see working people struggle to pay for basic necessities in the United States. Pragmatic, bipartisan measures exist to address issues of poverty. For example, the earned income tax credit (EITC) acts as a sort of negative income tax. Expanding the EITC helps low-income families without putting jobs in danger. The EITC encourages employment and helps combat our disastrous entitlement system.

Economist Thomas Sowell famously said, "Unfortunately, the real minimum wage is always zero, regardless of the laws, and that is the wage many workers receive in the wake of the creation or escalation of a government-mandated minimum wage.... Making it illegal to pay less than a given amount does not make a worker's productivity worth that amount."

GIVE GARLAND A HEARING cont.

consent to (or ignore) the president's nomination. The Constitution dictates few particulars for the court. The court still functions with

fewer than nine members and is not required to seat any specific number of judges.

Another liberal justice would swing the court majority firmly towards judicial activism, allowing judges to legislate from the bench and overrule state or local prerogatives. For this reason, the Republican Senators, expecting President Obama to nominate another extremely liberal justice, have refused to even consider confirming a nominee before Obama's presidency ends.

By waiting for the next president, the American people could have a democratic voice in the future of the Supreme Court. Under the guise of increasing the democratic influence in government, both Republicans and Democrats in the Senate have attempted to wait out presidencies in hopes of securing a better candidate from a new president.

The senators should ask themselves, however, whether they honestly expect a better nomination from the next president. Since the frontrunners are an unpredictable nationalist populist and a power-hungry, flip-flopping, pandering career politician with a deplorable record and possible federal indictment, the Senate will likely not get a better nominee than Garland.

Republicans should wait and gauge the outcome of the primaries and general election matchup. With such bleak presidential possibilities, Senate Republicans' ideal hope is for Senator Ted Cruz (after winning a contested convention and general election) to nominate a constitutional originalist. In the meantime, the Senate should at least hold hearings for Garland, and seriously consider moving to a confirmation vote.

The Republican senators are obstructing Garland to make a point of checking Obama's presidential power. Both liberals and conservatives question Garland's interpretive stance, which is a good sign of a compromise nominee.

In a less politically hostile and radical time, a candidate like Garland should receive overwhelming bipartisan support. As a Trump or Clinton presidency comes closer to reality, the senators should seriously consider confirming Garland.

NORTH KOREA THREATENS NUCLEAR ATTACK cont.

relationships between its two biggest allies, as well as China, because it fears that in the absence of unilateral action, North Korea will continue to grow, and eventually use, its weapons stockpile.

North Korea has already devoted considerable resources to building nuclear weapons, about 10 to 16 warheads, and is working on an intercontinental ballistic missile for delivering them. If it succeeds, North Korea will be the first country this century to develop nuclear weapons with the capability to reach the United States. Major cities including New

York and Washington are particularly at risk.

Last Saturday, the North Korean state media released a propaganda film titled "Last Chance," showing a submarine-launched nuclear missile destroying the Capitol building. This film comes on the heels of strict economic sanctions, similar to those recently lifted in Iran, that the United States placed on North Korea following their nuclear test in January.

The UN also imposed the strongest sanctions on North Korea in over two decades. The UN resolution instructs countries to inspect all cargo to and from North Korea, cut off shipments of aircraft and rocket fuel, ban all weapons sales and restrict all revenues to the government unless for humanitarian purposes.

Countries are also required to expel North Korean diplomats affiliated with illicit programs and to honor the long list of sanctioned individuals and entities. According to Adam Szubin, the Treasury's top sanctions official, the U.S. "will work closely with our international partners to continue in a strong and unambiguous way to pressure North Korea to abandon its illicit nuclear and ballistic missile programs."

In recent weeks, Pyongyang has also upped the rhetorical ante with daily threats of nuclear and conventional strikes against South Korea and the U.S. mainland in response to large-scale South Korea-U.S. war games. In a statement issued on Monday, the North Korean National Defense Commission affirmed that it would take a "pre-emptive and offensive nuclear strike" in response to the exercises.

The statement additionally said that North Korea has "a military operation plan ... to liberate South Korea and strike the U.S. mainland ratified by our dignified supreme headquarters."

This year's annual spring exercises in South Korea are some of the biggest ever, involving 17,000 U.S. troops and around 300,000

South Korean troops. The goal of these exercises is to ensure readiness for any North Korean attack through a combination of battlefield and computer-simulated exercises.

Preparation for nuclear proliferation has taken precedence as officials are even more conscious of the threat that North Korea poses to major American cities following the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels. They fear that North Korea will aid ISIS and other terror groups in obtaining nuclear material or other radiological material needed to make a dirty bomb. If detonated, the blast from these weapons can kill thousands and spread cancer-causing substances over a vast area, triggering panic and evacuations.

"Even if it is small, such an incident would create such havoc in the world that you have to take it quite seriously," said former Ambassador Wendy Sherman, who spearheaded U.S. nuclear negotiations with Iran and North Korea.

A dirty bomb detonated in a major city could cause tens of billions of dollars in economic damage. People and businesses would have to be relocated while the contamination is cleaned up, and few would be inclined ever to go back.

The growing threat of nuclear proliferation has caused many Americans to question whether or not we should build up our own weapons stores. While increasing the stock of such weapons may increase our security in the short run, it could lead to an arms race with North Korea similar the one that occurred during the Cold War.

Instead of starting an arms race, President Obama hopes to approach the North Korea question through non-violent means, namely by working with regional powers to cripple North Korea's economy. In the meantime, officials should continue to monitor the situation closely and prepare for the possibility of mobilization and violence.

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ENQUIRY

Mike Adamo
Editor in Chief

Michael Levy
Creative / Digital Director

STAFF WRITERS

Alex Klosner	Amy Elinski
Will Swett	Will Utzschneider
Ryan Glenn	Sam Benevelli
Elizabeth Barry	

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