

Fact Sheet – Employment, Living Wages, and Financial Security

Jobs – The Iowa Picture:

- Iowa lost 36,000 jobs in the last two years
- In Iowa, 90% of the jobs with the most growth pay less than a livable wage.
- In Iowa, 42% of the jobs with the most growth pay less than half of a livable wage. (*Single mothers and new immigrant workers are over represented in jobs with less than a livable wage.*)

Income, Tax & Living Standard Disparity – The National & International Pictures:

- Living standards for Americans in the lowest income brackets are 13 percent below those of low-income Germans and 24 percent below the bottom 20 percent of Swedes.
- Disparity between rich and poor has grown dramatically since 2000.
- Federal tax cuts since 2000 favor the richest.
- The biggest share of the projected deficit increase has come from huge tax cuts favoring the top 1% of income earners, not from spending on homeland security.
- State and local tax systems have become more regressive in the last 10 years.

Working More and Earning Less:

- Attack on the Fair Labor Standards Act passed in 1938: At least 8 million workers nearly lost their legal right to overtime pay with rule changes proposed by the Bush Administration [*passed by the House, Summer 2003, but defeated in the Senate in October 2003*].
- Real wages are lower than 30 years ago and Americans enjoy the fewest vacation days of any industrialized nations.

U.S. Exports Jobs:

Nearly 400,000 white collar jobs have already been lost due to the increasingly common business practice of offshore outsourcing, according to the Communications Workers of America. The CWA estimates that an additional three million white collar jobs now located in the United States will be lost to overseas competition by the year 2012. – *Communication Workers of America*

Tripling of the Long-Term Unemployed:

A dark dynamic in the rising poverty is the near tripling of the long-term unemployed in the past three years, to 1.9 million formerly productive workers who have simply given up looking for jobs in the depressed market. Some of the severest poverty and unemployment rates have struck Midwest industrial states, which have suffered many of the 2.7 million payroll jobs lost during President Bush's watch. – *New York Times Quote of the Day, September 30, 2003*

The Rich Get Richer:

According to the Congressional Budget Office and National Bureau of Economic Research, in 2000:

- The American taxpayers with the top 1% of income had \$862,700 each after taxes, on average, more than triple the \$286,300 they had, adjusted for inflation, in 1979 – up over 300%.
- The bottom 40% of Americans in 2000 had on \$21,118 each after taxes – up only 13% from their \$18,695, adjusted for inflation, average in 1979.
- From 1979 to 2000 U.S. government spending rose 370%.

Resources:

National Priorities Project: www.natprior.org

Global Trade Watch (Public Citizen): www.tradewatch.org

Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN): <http://www.acorn.org>

ACORN's Living Wage Campaign: <http://livingwagecampaign.org/>

AFL-CIO: www.aflcio.org

Reclaim Democracy www.reclaimdemocracy.org

U.S. Department of Labor: www.dol.gov/elaws/flsa.htm RE: Fair Labor Standards Act

Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy:

(Good Jobs First and Citizen's for Tax Justice web sites): <http://www.ctj.org/itep/>