

September 9, 2004

Dear Friend,

I wanted you to know that the U.S. House of Representatives just passed an important amendment that would stop President Bush's new policy that could take away the right to overtime pay for over 6 million workers.

I voted for the amendment, which passed by 223-193. One hundred percent of House Democrats voted for the amendment, sponsored by Reps. David Obey (D-WI) and George Miller (D-CA), and nearly 90 percent of Republican members voted against it. It was a rare victory for Middle Class families; the White House has even threatened to veto the final bill if the amendment stays in it.

As I wrote you last week, a new Bush Administration policy governing overtime pay took effect on August 23rd that will hand millions of American workers a pay cut. Along with my colleagues in the House, I have been working hard to stop this new rule. This amendment is one of our last chances to stop the Administration from succeeding in cutting the pay of workers who work more than forty hours per week and are entitled to overtime pay. The matter will now go to the Senate.

For years it has been pretty clear who was eligible for overtime pay and who wasn't. And if you were eligible, you got paid time and a half for the extra hours. Now, however, the rules have changed, and as many as six million people could have their eligibility changed -- and their overtime pay cut. These workers have the same jobs as before, work the same hours, or more, but would not receive any overtime compensation. It is one of the worst anti-worker policies this Administration has ushered through -- and there have been many!

Workers who stand to lose their overtime pay because of the new rules include foremen, assistant managers, registered nurses, workers who perform relatively small amounts of supervisory or administrative work, salespeople who perform some amount of work outside the office, chefs, nursery school teachers, workers in the financial services industry, insurance claim adjusters, journalists, funeral directors and embalmers, law enforcement officers, athletic trainers, and others from all different parts of the workforce. For more information about the new policy, click [here](#).

Some low-income workers will actually become eligible for overtime pay under the new rule, and that is a good thing. The Obey amendment I supported does not affect those workers. I believe no one should lose overtime pay just because of a phony change in one's job description.

Now that our amendment has passed, you can be sure that the Speaker of the House, Rep. Dennis Hastert (R-IL), and the Majority Leader, Rep. Tom Delay (R-TX), will do everything they can to stop the amendment from becoming law. They have done it before, but I will do everything in my power, working with my colleagues in the Senate and the House, to make sure our amendment makes it to the President's desk.

Feel free to let me know your views about this issue. You are welcome to share this message with your friends, colleagues and family in other communities and in other states about this important vote and the importance of making sure the Bush administration doesn't get away with cutting overtime pay for six million American workers.

Thank you for your time.

Very truly yours,

Rep. Tom Udall