The power imbalance between workers and employers. First, Congress should pass the Raise the Wage bill and immediately lift wages for 41 million workers. The bill would raise the minimum wage to $15 an hour and index it to growth in the median wage. Because of government inaction, the real value of the minimum wage has steadily eroded for decades and is now 25% lower than it was at its inflation-adjusted peak in 1968. Poverty rates for African-Americans and Hispanics in particular would be almost 20% lower if the minimum wage had kept up with inflation.

Second, Congress can restore the broken link between corporate profits and wages by putting a stop to the growing practice of corporate executives handing their profits to shareholders rather than to workers. Before the Securities and Exchange Commission made it easier for companies to buy back their stock in 1982, S&P 500 companies spent only about 2% of their profits on buybacks. Last year, those same companies spent 59% of their profits on buybacks. Congress should pass the Reward Work bill, which could result in billions of dollars in increased wages by putting a stop to open-market stock buybacks and ensure that workers have a seat at the table to fight for their fair share of the value they create.

The American people are demanding this as well. This past election brought a historic wave of the most diverse candidates from red and blue districts across the country, sent to fight for the people. They don’t want a handout. They just want us to even the playing field and give them a fair shot. Democrats control only one legislative body, but this is the moment for us to put forward a bold vision and stand up to the biggest corporate interests that stand in the way of ensuring that we all move forward—together.

Too many pundits and economists want to join the White House in saying that our economy is strong because unemployment is down and GDP is growing. But the 8.9 million Americans who work full-time and still live in poverty certainly don’t think the economy is booming. Neither do the 40% of Americans who struggle to meet a basic need, such as buying food or covering rent, or the 62% who don’t even have $1,000 in their savings account for an emergency.

The fact is, GDP growth means nothing when 90% of it goes to the top 1%, as is true today. And while unemployment is low, wage growth has been stubbornly slow and not keeping pace with inflation. It’s past time that we acknowledge a simple truth: an economy in which workers don’t benefit from the profits they help produce isn’t strong—it’s broken.

Congress needs to take action to restore the power imbalance between workers and employers. First, Congress should pass the Raise the Wage bill and immediately lift wages for 41 million workers. The bill would raise the minimum wage to $15 an hour and index it to growth in the median wage. Because of government inaction, the real value of the minimum wage has steadily eroded for decades and is now 25% lower than it was at its inflation-adjusted peak in 1968. Poverty rates for African-Americans and Hispanics in particular would be almost 20% lower if the minimum wage had kept up with inflation.

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