

"Thanks to unions, working people have come a long way – an eight-hour work day, pensions, safer job conditions and health benefits. I will continue to fight for worker rights. As a member of the House Committee on Education and the workforce, I will continue to fight for the right of every worker to join a union, free from fear and intimidation." – Rep. Holt

Rep. Holt has fought throughout his career to ensure that workers receive fair compensation, have the right to organize and bargain collectively, and are assured of strong workplace safety laws. He has worked hard to strengthen and expand the rights of all employees, both union and non-union workers.

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Raising the Minimum Wage

Rep. Holt believes that hard-working families and individuals should not live in poverty. After a decade of stagnant wages for working families, in 2007 Rep. Holt successfully fought to increase the minimum wage to \$7.25. Rep. Holt is an original cosponsor of Fair Minimum Wage Act to increase the minimum wage over three years from \$7.25 to \$9.80 per hour. The minimum wage would then be indexed to inflation each year thereafter. Rep. Holt knows that broad-based wage growth helps to ensure that our economy takes advantage of the talents of the entire population.

Defending the Right to Organize

Rep. Holt has a family history of defending the right to organize and bargain collectively. In fact,

at his own political peril, Rep. Holt's father, a U.S. Senator from West Virginia, single-handedly filibustered legislation that would have denied unionized West Virginia coal miners the protections they deserved.

Rep. Holt is a strong supporter of the Employee Free Choice Act. He believes that collective bargaining is a fundamental right that must not be undermined or discarded. While the New Jersey Legislature debated and subsequently approved the so-called Christie pension reform, Rep. Holt spoke out in opposition to the legislation being imposed upon those who have dedicated their lives to serve the public.

Investing in Job Training

Rep. Holt stands by hard-working Americans who have fallen upon difficult times during the current downturn. He has long called for reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the primary federal program that supports job training.

When the House Committee on Education and the Workforce considered a partisan WIA reauthorization that cuts and slashes at WIA under the guise of improving it, Rep. Holt led the fight to improve the bill. He introduced amendments to reauthorize the Rehabilitation Act, allow for incumbent worker training, increase cooperation with local libraries, and increase the availability of online job training.

Rep. Holt also has sponsored the Online Job Training to bolster the availability of home-based training programs. The legislation, based on a New Jersey pilot program, would make job training over the Internet more accessible and convenient for prospective workers.

To help Americans who are out of work, Rep. Holt introduced legislation to recognize the important role that libraries play in helping the public find employment in this challenging job market and to integrate libraries into job training efforts.

Extending Unemployment Benefits

At a time when so many New Jersey residents who want to work cannot find a job, Rep. Holt believes we must provide extended unemployment benefits for individuals who are looking for work and who have exhausted their 26 weeks of regular unemployment benefits. He is a cosponsor of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act to add an additional fourteen weeks of benefits for individuals who received up to 99 weeks of unemployment benefits and still can't find a job. According to Congressional Budget Office, every dollar spent on unemployment assistance generates \$1.90 for the overall economy.

Ensuring Paycheck Fairness

Rep. Holt supports the bedrock principal of equal pay for equal work. He helped enact the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to restore the fundamental right of women and other workers to contest pay discrimination, giving them their day in court. Rep. Holt is a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act to strengthen enforcement to prevent pay discrimination and to increase penalties for infractions. This legislation, another step in Rep. Holt's efforts to protect workers' rights was filibustered in the U.S. Senate and blocked from even being considered in the House of Representatives.

Rep. Holt also is a cosponsor of the Healthy Families Act to provide employees with paid medical leave. This legislation would be a significant step toward increasing workplace productivity, improving public health, and strengthening families.

Ending Employment Discrimination

Rep. Holt opposes employment discrimination based on genetics or disability. As a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Rep. Holt helped win approval of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act. This law prohibits health insurance and employment discrimination against individuals and their family members on the basis of genetic information. Rep. Holt also was a cosponsor and helped win Congressional approval of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2007, which was signed into law on September 25, 2008. The law restored protections for disabled Americans under the ADA and allow the ADA to reclaim its place among our nation's most important civil rights laws.

Promoting Fair Trade, Not Just Free Trade

One of the best ways to stop outsourcing is to make sure that we export the goods we make, rather than the workers who make them. Rep. Holt voted against the flawed free trade agreements negotiated by the Bush Administration with Colombia, Panama, and Korea because they will not create jobs in the near future but would cause some dislocation for American workers.

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