



Peter Burgess <peterbnyc@gmail.com>

When I helped start EPI in 1986

1 message

Robert Reich, EPI <newsletter@epi.org>
Reply-To: "Robert Reich, EPI" <newsletter@epi.org>
To: peterbnyc@gmail.com

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Peter,

We are at an amazing moment in American economic and political history. Since the Wall Street banks took us to the brink of an economic collapse in September 2008, more and more Americans—particularly low- and middle-income Americans—have become engaged in the movement to Raise America's Pay. We've seen this in the Occupy Wall Street movement. We've seen this in the efforts of fast-food workers to raise the minimum wage. And we've seen this as millions of Americans are becoming engaged in the upcoming 2016 presidential election. But, this movement started long before 2008.



[Join me in supporting EPI's critical work.](#)

Back in 1986, I helped start EPI with a vision of addressing the needs of low- and middle-income workers and ensuring we are all part of the economic policy decisions being made in Washington. And nearly 30 years later, EPI's research is at the forefront of the movement to Raise America's Pay.

[Please, make a tax-deductible donation to EPI today to ensure our progressive economic agenda replaces the trickle-down policies that](#)

[have devastated the American middle-class.](#)

Before EPI, the perspectives of those who work for a living were often left out of the public narrative of the American economy. To fix this, EPI developed a new way for leaders to discuss the concerns of working Americans and their families. By publishing and updating the State of Working America, EPI produced the first and only comprehensive source of data on the nation's wealth, poverty, income, wages, inequality, and employment trends.

Over the years, EPI has built upon this research with new reports, analyses, and online applications, becoming the go-to resource for respected journalists, researchers, and leaders who want information about the economic challenges facing ordinary Americans. **I am proud to feature EPI research and charts in my own classroom as I help to prepare the leaders of tomorrow for the challenges ahead.**

EPI is a longtime defender of Social Security against efforts to dismantle this highly successful safety-net program. When Congress and the Bush administration tried to privatize the system in 2005, EPI worked with allies to oppose privatization and preserve the program we have today.

EPI has a bold vision to expand Social Security and provide Americans with the real retirement security today's workers lack.

[Please donate to EPI today and make an investment in our shared progressive economic vision.](#)

EPI has never shied away from critiquing trade agreements that were a bad deal for American workers. EPI warned that NAFTA would lead to substantial manufacturing job losses in the United States and the erosion of wages and workers' rights on both sides of the border. They also published several papers at the turn of the century warning that China's accession to the World Trade Organization would lead to spiraling trade deficits, the loss of manufacturing jobs, and wage declines. Sadly, these predictions have come true, and many opinion leaders now echo EPI's critiques of trade policy. **EPI continues to scrutinize proposed trade agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership and warn of the dangers they pose for Americans' wages and jobs.**

Following the economic collapse, EPI led the way in outlining the need for massive government stimulus to revive the economy. EPI was the rare voice of reason arguing that most proposed stimulus programs were not big enough! Many of the proposals in EPI's American Jobs Plan were later adopted by the Obama administration in the American Jobs Act of 2011.

EPI has a proud history of seeing the bold ideas it cultivates turned into action.

- EPI's research has repeatedly supported successful campaigns to raise the minimum wage nationally and in states around the country in the 1990s, 2000s, and today. Policymakers, advocates, and voters relied upon EPI's analyses of proposed minimum wage increases in 16 out of the 17 states that have enacted minimum wage increases since 2013. EPI's research was also utilized by lawmakers and advocates in seven successful city or county-level minimum wage campaigns, including the District of Columbia.
- EPI's overtime research has led the Obama administration and the Department of Labor to work on critical updates to overtime policy expected to become law next year.
- EPI's research has been cited by presidential candidates and activists alike who are addressing income inequality and fighting to Raise America's Pay.

Today in America we have a very real choice. We can continue the same failed trickle-down policies which have resulted in over 30 years of stagnant wages, or we can begin implementing policies which will result in higher wages, lower unemployment, and broadly shared economic prosperity.

[Please, support the Economic Policy Institute today to fuel the movement to Raise America's Pay.](#)

I am so proud of the work EPI continues to do and I hope you'll join me in supporting this critical work.

Thank you,

Robert Reich

Former U.S. Secretary of Labor
and author of **“Saving Capitalism: For the Many, Not the Few”**

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