



Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District

For Immediate Release

July 23, 2007

Contact: Andrew Whalen, Communications Director
office: (202) 225-6401 / cell: (202) 731-5116

Rep. Shuler Applauds First Raise of the Minimum Wage in 10 Years *New Federal Minimum Wage Takes Effect Tomorrow*

Washington, D.C. – Representative Heath Shuler today celebrated the first increase in the federal minimum wage in a decade. The minimum wage increase is a result of legislative efforts undertaken since the beginning of the 110th Congress.

“Tomorrow will be a great day for millions of hard-working American families. The increase in the federal minimum wage is the first step toward a stronger economy for all Americans, not just for the privileged few,” said Rep. Shuler.

The federal minimum wage will be raised by \$0.70 tomorrow and will be raised two more times by \$0.70 in July 2008 and July 2009. This increase of \$2.10 over two years, from \$5.15 to \$7.25, will increase the annual income of a full-time minimum wage worker by \$4,400 a year.

“For ten years American working families have been getting squeezed. They are paying more at the gas pump. They are paying more for child care, and they are paying more for health care. Today, they will finally begin being paid more.”

“Working full-time at \$5.15 a person makes only \$10,712 a year. That is nearly \$6,000 below the poverty line for a family of three. It is immoral for a single parent to work full-time and still, not be able to provide for their children.”

The ten year stretch without an increase in the federal minimum wage is the longest time between increases in the history of the law.

North Carolina raised the minimum wage in the state to \$6.15 effective January 1, 2007. According to a recent study by the Economic Policy Institute the current minimum wage has the lowest real dollar value in 51 years. Studies have also shown that states with minimum wages above the federal level show faster levels of small business and retail job growth.

###