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Grover G. Norquist

President

July 13, 2004

Dear Congressman:

This Wednesday, the House Appropriations Committee is scheduled to mark up the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for FY 2005. An amendment may be offered that seeks to block the Department of Labor from implementing its common-sense update of overtime regulations this August. ATR strongly urges you to allow the Department to continue its necessary update of the half-century old overtime rules.

The new overtime regulations are the first modernization and enhancement of the rules since 1949. They expand overtime coverage for millions of workers earning up to \$23,660 per year—three times the current protection. The final rule strengthens overtime for licensed practical nurses, police officers, fire fighters, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians. Employers will more easily be able to comply with the new regulations, which are less than half the length of the old rules.

The description of job duties required for overtime have been frozen in time for nearly 50 years, resulting in confusion and uncertainty for both workers and employers. As a result, trial lawyers and labor union bosses have conspired together to sue employers and take advantage of this ambiguity. Aggressive trial lawyer tactics on overtime are a jobs killer. Independent analysts estimate that over \$1 billion is used by business to defend themselves against predatory overtime lawsuits. This is money that should be used to create jobs and raise the standard of living for employees of small businesses.

The new overtime rules are fair, common-sense, and long overdue. The Department of Labor should not be blocked from updating overtime rules by 11<sup>th</sup>-hour parliamentary tactics.

Sincerely,

Grover Norquist

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