off. I have seen jean factories in Elkins and Phillippi, a shoe plant in Marlington, a glassworks in Huntington, and a shirt factory in Morgantown, close down because of foreign competition, throwing hundreds of people—many of whom had never held another job—out of work.

Many of the unemployed are in their 20's and 30's with young children to support. Others are in their 40's and 50's and have held the same job for more than 20 years. A few may never find work again. For those who do, it will be at a vastly reduced salary with fewer benefits. And as plants continue to close down, who knows if the health care and pension benefits that were guaranteed by their employers and which those workers thought they could depend on will still be there for them when they retire?

It makes me angry that we as a Nation have not done nearly enough to help those who have been dislocated from foreign trade, through no fault of their own, particularly when our trade policies led to their unemployment. Instead, we have provided a TAA program for which many of our workers do not qualify and which provides too little assistance for workers to retrain so that they can adequately provide for their families. That is just not right.

At the same time, our foreign trade partners continue to engage in unfair and illegal trade practices that throw more and more Americans out of work. For years, the relative market shares of the top Japanese steel firms has never varied by more than 1 percent, regardless of changes in the marketplace, because they have a cartel. Russian steelworkers often do not receive wages. New uneconomic steel capacity continues to come on line around the world, often partially funded by loans from international financial institutions that receive U.S. Government funding.

Yet our steelworkers, glassworkers, and others in the manufacturing sector of our economy are forced to compete on the same playing field with these countries, whose producers are heavily subsidized or who have benefitted from a long legacy of indirect government assistance or toleration of anti-competitive activities. Such practices have allowed foreign steel companies to stay in business long after they would have shut down if they were located in the United States. How are our workers supposed to compete with that, no matter how efficient they are?

It is no wonder that people in this country are beginning to wake up to our trade policies and wonder just what we are doing and what principles, if any, we are using to guide them. You should not need to have an MBA from Harvard in order to get a good job, with good wages and benefits, in this country.

If this Administration wants to negotiate more trade agreements, without dealing with the impact that trade has on our steelworkers and workers in other sectors of our economy who built this country into the economic super power that it is today, then it will fail miserably.

This bill is a good step forward. I urge my colleagues in Congress to help us pass it and the President to sign it into law. But it is only the beginning. We simply cannot ignore the fact that with trade, a rising tide does not always lift all boats. Our laws are not the laws of nature, but rather, the laws of mankind. We cannot say that dislocation through trade is inevitable and just throw up our hands, leaving millions of American workers behind. We have an obligation to them and to their families, to craft trade policies that are to their benefit and which help them prepare for the future. It is an obligation that we simply cannot ignore.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Madam President, at the close of business Friday, July 20, 2001, the Federal debt stood at $5,723,280,631,657.09, five trillion, seven hundred twenty-three billion, two hundred eighty million, six hundred thirty-one thousand, six hundred fifty-seven dollars and nine cents.

One year ago, July 20, 2000, the Federal debt stood at $5,665,503,000,000, five trillion, six hundred sixty-five billion, five hundred three million.

Twenty-five years ago, July 20, 1976, the Federal debt stood at $619,038,000,000, six hundred nineteen billion, thirty-eight million, which reflects a debt increase of more than $5 trillion, $5,104,242,631,657.09, five trillion, one hundred four billion, two hundred forty-two million, six hundred thirty-one thousand, six hundred fifty-seven dollars and nine cents during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MINIMUM WAGE

• Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I ask that the following article from the Wall Street Journal, dated July 19, 2001, be printed in the RECORD.

[From the Wall Street Journal, July 19, 2001]

[By Rick Wartzman]

FALLING BEHIND—AS OFFICIALS LOST FAITH IN THE MINIMUM WAGE, PAT WILLIAMS LIVED IT

SHREVEPORT, LA.—Night had fallen by the time Pat Williams, hungry and bone tired, arrived home to find the little red ticket mocking the more than 10 hours of toil she had just put in.

''Oh, Lord,'' she said, reaching into her mailbox, ''what is this?'' She swatted a mosquito, held the ticket to the light above her front stoop and took in the bad news: Reliant Energy Inc. had cut off her gas because her account was $477 overdue.

''I ain't going to sweat it,'' she muttered over and over. Clearly, though, she was wound tight, and soon began puffing on a succession of discount cigarettes.

It was early April, and Ms. Williams was dressed in the dark blue uniform that she wears at her first job, caring for the aged and infirm at a nursing home. Atop that was the gray apron she dons for her second job, cleaning offices at night. The place where she works as a nursing assistant, Harmony House, was paying her $5.55 an hour—barely above the minimum wage—even though she has been there more than 10 years, is a union member and completed college courses to become certified. The cleaning job, which she took up because she couldn't make ends meet, pays right at the federally mandated minimum: $5.15 an hour.

For the 46-year-old single mother with a bright smile and big dimples, life has never been easy. But, as she will tell you, it certainly has been easier.

When she began minimum-wage work more than two decades ago, Ms. Williams says, she had little difficulty paying her bills. Small indulgences for her and her three children—a burger and fries on a Saturday afternoon, a new blouse, the occasional name-brand sneakers—weren't such a stretch. Most of all, Ms. Williams wasn't nearly so stressed over money.

Sometimes, she and her best friend, Ruby Moore, sit in Ms. Williams's back yard and, as trains thunder by, they talk about how they just can't get ahead. Ms. Moore, 51, has earned around the minimum wage for years, first by working in the kitchen of a drug-treatment center, and now by cooking for recovering addicts of a different sort—the gamblers who've surfaced along with the glittering casino boats on the Red River. ''It's much harder than it used to be,'' she says. ''You've got to skip this bill in order to pay that bill.''

''You think you're moving forward,'' adds Ms. Williams, ''but you're just moving backwards.''

There's little wonder why. As a long-time low-wage worker, Ms. Williams has felt the sting of one of the most profound shifts in American economic policy during the past 20 years: a mounting disdain for the minimum wage. Established during the New Deal, the minimum wage was once viewed by Democrats and Republicans alike as an instrument of economic justice—an effort to ''end starvation wages,'' as President Franklin D. Roosevelt himself put it. Now, though, it is seen by much of official Washington as an economic impediment, an undue burden on a marketplace better left unfettered. Where the onus was once on the business owner to pay ''a decent wage,'' it's now more on the worker to demonstrate that he or she deserves one.

This sea change began when Ronald Reagan swept into office. From 1950 through 1982, the minimum wage was allowed to fall below 45% of the average hourly wage in the U.S. in only four separate years. Since 1982, the minimum wage has never reached 45%, and it currently stands at 36%, of that benchmark. Even using a conservative measure of inflation, the minimum wage throughout the '60s and '70s was consistently worth more than $5.50 an hour—and frequently more than $6—in today's terms. After 1980, its value plummeted, sinking to less than $4.50 as President Reagan left office. Two subsequent increases have nudged it back up to its present $5.15.

While the robust job market of the '90s thinned the ranks of minimum-wage workers—only about 1% of hourly employees earn exactly $5.15 an hour now, down from more