Why the ACLJ's Agenda for Reform Is Advancing

Shortly after President Trump's election, the ACLJ issued its ambitious agenda for reform. Our agenda proposed the repeal and replacement of Obamacare with a focus on the advancement of a patient-centered, consumer-driven program emphasizing choice and competition, including taking affirmative steps to waive or eliminate fines associated with the individual mandate.

We also called for the reversal of the Obama administration's decision to sign onto the Paris Climate Accord; the streamlining of the federal regulatory process, including a move requiring that for every new federal regulation, two existing regulations must be eliminated; the lifting of Obama administration's roadblocks to full employment; and the allowance of vital energy infrastructure projects like the Keystone Pipeline to move forward.

When President Trump took office, he made a number of promises regarding the limp economy. Recognizing the prior administration's failure to deliver economic growth for the middle-class, President Trump in his inaugural address argued that in order to get the economy on track, the nation must create 25 million jobs and reach an economic growth rate of 4 percent.

Moving in this direction, would, of course, require regulatory streamlining, health care reform, and tax reform. Achieving those promises advances the ACLJ's agenda for reform and advances human liberty. Important steps in this process include, 1) the greenlighting of the Keystone Pipeline, 2) the passage of a massive tax cut for the American people that simultaneously repealed the ObamaCare individual mandate and 3) regulatory reform.

While critics of this administration have said that those promises on jobs, the economy and achieving fair trade would be nearly impossible to achieve, it is clear that those promises are now coming true.

Real gross domestic product in the last quarter increased at an annual rate of 4.1 percent, as consumer spending championed the economy, according to the advance estimate released by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. It is manifest, that this jump represents the fastest increase in GDP growth since the third quarter of 2014. This means that the U.S. economy is on track to hit the highest annual average growth rate in over 13 years. This progress makes the promise of 4 percent economic growth a reality.

In addition, Americans have made significant gains in wages as the employment cost index increased 0.6 percent for civilian workers in the three-month period ending in June, according to a Bureau of Labor Statistics analysis. This brings wage gains up for the past 12-month period to a 2.8 percent, which is the highest level since the third quarter of 2008 and the sad days before the Great Recession took hold. As all Americans have known for quite some time, significant wage gains have been a missing part of the economic recovery, with average hourly earnings increases barely keeping pace with inflation. That is until now.

Moreover, the administration promised to pursue fair trade in order to put American workers first. Despite the critics, increasing evidence shows that this approach is working. As Stephen Moore notes:

> *President Trump scored a big victory for the American economy on trade last week. Trump and the European Union reached a handshake deal that is designed to lower tariffs on both sides of the Atlantic. They agreed to shoot for zero tariffs on both sides of the Atlantic. Sounds like freer and fairer trade to me.*

> *All Americans should recognize that an ambitious economic agenda that includes job growth, wage gains, tax cuts, health care reform and fair trade is good for America. The American economy is clearly on track to help the forgotten men and women of the United States flourish. Promises made. Promises kept.*

Although more work needs to done, this process advances the ACLJ's commonsense conservative agenda for growth that is good for America. {eoa}

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