

# Ri\$ch & Crapo

**Marty Trillhaase/Lewiston Tribune**

JEERS ... to Idaho's Republican senators, Jim Risch and Mike Crapo. Wednesday, they helped scuttle raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 an hour.

Yet they represent one of the poorest states in the union. Last year, 7.1 percent of Idaho workers earned the minimum wage. That's the second largest proportion in the country. The only reason Idaho didn't retain its status as the No. 1 minimum-wage state is because Tennessee had an even worse year.

These are not teenagers earning gas money. Of the people on the economy's bottom rung, 88 percent are at least 20 years old and 55 percent are working full time. One of every three is supporting a child.

The Idaho Risch and Crapo represent now ranks next to last - second only to Mississippi - in per capita incomes.

Raising the minimum wage would put more than \$172 million into the hands of struggling Idaho families. And it would make up for lost ground. Had the minimum wage kept pace with inflation, it would already be at \$10.60 an hour.

The last time Congress raised the minimum wage - from \$5.15 to \$7.25 - was 2007. Then, Crapo, joined by Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, voted yes.

Who are Risch and Crapo looking out for?

Not the little guy.

JEERS ... to former Idaho state Sen. Evan Frasure, R-Pocatello. He's playing both sides of the religion card.

Frasure is one of four Republicans seeking to succeed retiring Secretary of State Ben Ysursa.

Writing in the Idaho Statesman's online voter guide, Frasure notes he served a mission for the Mormon Church in New Zealand. Nothing unusual there. Frasure hopes to win big in heavily Mormon eastern Idaho while Chief Deputy Ada County Clerk Phil McGrane, former Sen. Mitch Toryanski, R-Boise, and former House Speaker Lawrence (Boss) Denney, R-Midvale, split the votes everywhere else.

But that wasn't good enough for Frasure. He characterizes McGrane as "a good Catholic (who) goes to work for AmeriCorps for a year, then off to two colleges in Washington, earning a degree in philosophy at the University of Washington, hardly the path of a future Republican."

If Frasure thinks it's OK to vote for him because he's Mormon and McGrane is not, presumably the reverse is true.

JEERS ... to Congressman Raul Labrador, R-Idaho. Wednesday, he stood alone among every member of Congress and blew off America's military veterans.

Let that sink in.

The men and women who served this country, some of whom came home grievously wounded, can count on the support of people like Eric Cantor, R-Va., Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash., and Mike Simpson, R-Idaho. They can even count on every one of Labrador's Tea Party allies such as Justin Amash, R-Mich., Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., Steve King, R-Iowa, and Louie Gohmert, R-Texas.

All of them recognized the need to boost spending on veterans services by \$1.5 billion to reduce what Simpson called "the unacceptable backlog of disability claims."

Labrador alone sees things differently.

When he gets around to explaining why, we'll let you know.

JEERS ... to former University of Idaho football coach Robb Akey.

Before he was bounced in 2012, Akey had amassed a 17-33 record - including winning only three games during his final two years.

Meanwhile, his players weren't exactly hitting the books. The NCAA requires teams to meet an average Academic Progress Rate of 930 during four years. In 2010, the UI's APR slipped to 921, then to 881 the next year and 838 in 2012. That put the average at 903.

Last week, the NCAA imposed sanctions: No postseason play and the loss of four hours of practice each week in 2014.

Some teams lose games. Some get knocked for flunking classes. Under Akey, the UI managed to do both.

CHEERS ... to Sandy Patano of Coeur d'Alene. Once a top aide to Sen. Craig with serious political bona fides of her own, Patano is in the thick of a battle to cleanse the Panhandle of its wingnut legislative brigade.

Along with establishment Republicans such as former state Rep. Dean Haagenson, R-Coeur d'Alene, and former Intermountain Forest Industry Association head Jim Riley, Patano has founded a political action committee to support "reasonable" Republicans.

Two years ago, they helped pragmatic incumbents such as Sen. Shawn Keough, R-Sandpoint, survive Tea Party challenges in the state's first closed GOP primary election.

Now they're trying to ditch five Tea Party incumbents, including Sen. Bob Nonini, R-Coeur d'Alene, and Reps. Shannon McMillan, R-Silverton, and Vito Barbieri, R-Dalton Gardens.

If they succeed, you may have heard the last of Barbieri's flirtation with nullification and Nonini's unconstitutional ploy to siphon off your tax dollars from public schools toward private and religious academies.

Godspeed.

JEERS ... to Clarkston City Councilor Terry Beadles. If he thinks the law will allow Clarkston to avoid implementing Washington's legalized marijuana initiative, let him find the legal authority to do so.

But Beadles' comments Monday suggest he's resorting to subterfuge under the guise of extending the city's six-month moratorium.

A moratorium to give city officials time needed to implement the system of producing, processing and selling marijuana is one thing.

Renewing it simply because, as Beadles said, councilors don't want to "implement a drug into society" is something else.

Right or wrong, Washington voters already made that call.- M.T.