



## Happy Holidays...Are Hard to Afford for Minimum Wage Workers

*"The U.S. minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour has not been raised in nearly a decade and we believe it is out of date with the times. We can see first-hand at Wal-Mart how many of our customers are struggling to get by. Our customers simply don't have the money to buy basic necessities between pay checks."*

*– Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott, Oct. 25, 2005*



The average American consumer will spend a total of \$738.11 this holiday season. It would take a minimum wage earner in the United States 143 hours—or almost an entire month of work—to pay for the total average cost of the holidays.



Of that cost, the average consumer in the United States will spend a total of \$421.30 on family members. Thus minimum-wage earners would need to spend more than two weeks of pay (more than 80 hours) to afford the average cost of gifts for their families.



Minimum-wage earners would also have to devote over two full days of work to purchase the \$78.99 in gifts that the average consumer will spend on friends this holiday season.



The least expensive toy on the top 10 list this season, the Dancing Elmo, would take the minimum wage earner four hours of work to afford at \$19.99.



If a child whose parent earns minimum wage asks Santa Claus for the most expensive item on the top-ten list, the \$120 “Roborator,” that parent would have to spend 3 full days of pay on their child’s gift.