

we take advantage of the largess of the state, the billion dollar commitment we've made in tax breaks, and say, in exchange for that, we will give you the incentives, we appreciate you coming into the state, we also would like you to provide a decent wage and benefits for the workers of this state. That will provide a ripple effect throughout the economy and I think have a very positive impact. Now some will argue, I'll anticipate the argument against this, well, you can't...you can't interject yourself into the marketplace, just as I heard the argument on minimum wages. The marketplace should work to determine wages. You shouldn't be setting a higher minimum wage. You shouldn't be setting the sort of minimum wage in the breaks that we provide under tax incentives. Well, you know, it is an interesting argument. The market is always turned to by the business community when it is to their advantage. They love to talk about the market and how it creates the very best of services at the best of prices, but they also don't seem to want to leave the market to decide questions like location and expansion issues. There they want the state to intervene in the market. There they want tax breaks to interject itself into the market decisions of businesses. There they don't think the marketplace is working. They want to have the state be...play a role in the private sector marketplace when it comes to tax incentive legislation. That's fine, but when it comes to some other things where we want something back, or the business community wants something intervening in the marketplace, that's fine, but when the public wants something back, when the public wants a decent minimum wage, when the public wants safe working conditions, when the public wants to have health benefits, now that's an intervention in the marketplace that isn't tolerable. So it's...it's a sword that is used to cut down certain things, and I am suggesting that interjecting the state, as we have in the market for tax incentives, we now ought to take the next step and suggest that those tax incentives go to help those who are working have decent wages from those benefits. Other handouts that I passed out, one of the questions that came up on the minimum wage issue was low wages in our state versus other states, how does that compare to the cost of living, and I did follow up on that and wanted you to know that our wages are about, just under 20 percent below the national average. Our various factors that we have in cost of living show that we are between 6 and about 11 percent below the national average. So it is true that we are slightly below the national average in cost of living, but our wages are significantly below the