

you deny, deny a fair and just minimum wage to the residents of your district, the employees of your district, you're denying your entire district. You're denying that income to flow into your district, stay there and to let people pay tax on it. Is it a \$40 million tax? No, it's not even anywhere near that. It's not anywhere near that. And that's, I think, a very jaundiced way to look at this bill. This bill is a minimum wage proposal, minimum is the operative word, folks. We're not talking about people who go out and live high on the hog. They get by right now on the state wage of 3.35 an hour, get by. They pay their taxes if they're eligible to pay them. They try to provide for their families in many cases. These aren't just kids that work at minimum wage on part-time seasonal jobs. They are people who support families on a minimum wage. It ought to be a fair and just wage. Four and a quarter an hour is not unfair. It is not excessive. It is only just. It makes good sense to adopt it into the state law. If you choose to vote for Senator Coordsen's amendment, fine. I think we ought to put it in place effective this year. Ninety cents an hour is not going to make or break a business. Go back and check with your districts, with employers, as Senator Robinson suggests. I think what you will find out is that the reason they don't know about this bill is because they're already paying \$4.25...excuse me, 3.80, which is the current federal level, or they're paying over and above that because they can't find people to work for less than that. And they know what an individual is worth in terms of their work. They know what somebody is worth in terms of their output for an hourly wage. It's a fair and just proposal. I would urge you to oppose Senator Coordsen's amendment but, in any case, advance the bill.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Hall. Senator Chambers, followed by Senator Robinson.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam Chair, members of the Legislature, while I was downstairs I listened to some of the debate and Senator Robinson's remarks particularly concern me. He referred to this as a tax on business. Senator Robinson, this is not something that these businesses pay to the government for nothing in return or to raise revenue for government to operate. This is the quid pro quo. This is an amount that an employer pays an employee for work done. So to refer to it as a tax I think is a misrepresentation of the situation. In 1991 in Nebraska, there is no excuse to say that a person should receive less than what the federal government, after much political