

coming and watching the Legislature today. Next we have Senator Hefner on the Robinson amendment.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I rise to support the kill motion on it. I thought that we should have amended it the other day when we were debating the issue because this bill causes a 90 cents an hour increase. Minimum wages for those employees that are covered under the state minimum wage will go up 90 cents an hour starting July 1st, and this is certainly going to cause a hardship for some of the small businesses we have in Nebraska. Some of you are probably going to say, well, Senator Hefner it's going to affect you. Well, all of our businesses that I'm involved in are covered by the federal minimum wage, so it won't affect our businesses at all. But I would like to see this feathered in. At least it will give some of these small mom and pop businesses an opportunity to raise their prices a little bit to cover that, so I think that's only fair. In the committee, it's true, nobody testified against the bill, but in the calls, and letters that I've received after the hearing, was that we didn't know about it, we didn't know about it. And I know the press, and the reporters tried to do a good job in getting this information out to the people, but in the survey that I did several years ago there's only 50 percent of the people in my district, or approximately 50 percent in my district that takes a daily newspaper. And the daily newspapers do carry the hearing schedule for the upcoming week. Like Senator Robinson said, these small businesses don't have a lobbyist. They can't afford a lobbyist. They don't even know when...some of these people don't even know when we're in session. I had a call over last weekend and a small businessman says, I've been trying to get ahold of you, where have you been? And I said, well, I've been in Lincoln all week, when we're in session. He said, well I didn't know that. And I said, well we'll be in session until the first week in June. And what this bill would do, I feel, would cause a hardship. In fact, it may cause some of these small businesses in these small towns to close their doors, and I don't think we want to do that. So I would encourage you to support the kill motion on LB 297.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Senator Hefner. Our next speaker is Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, there's not often that I maybe get quite so perturbed at some of the discussion. It's certainly funny how our priorities may change