

interesting letter because he was afraid that there would be not employment opportunities. Currently in Nebraska, we have a very, very low rate of unemployment. There is a great deal of competition from employers for whatever available labor pool might be. What, and certainly, I suspect that there are very few jobs, except for beginning ones for the very young, that would be in the minimum wage category but, nonetheless, I believe it's important that we try to maintain a potential of a number of employment opportunities for people to begin at. We can say \$4.25 an hour, we can say \$6, we can say \$10, and all of Senator Hall's arguments would certainly fit in that case. It doesn't bother me because in my business I can no longer afford to hire anybody. I used to, but the margins aren't there. So there are several part-time summer jobs for young people that don't exist. My old friend "Heff", in Exeter, running the grocery store, used to employ two people full-time, plus three high school students after hours, and during the summer. He no longer employes anyone. The jobs don't exist. I think this 297 would have been much better had we elected on General File to phase in the increases to adjust in a rational basis rather than to take one jump. I don't know how I'm going to vote on the postpone motion because I concur in some fashion with the arguments that Senator Hall has made, but when we do this we are, quite frankly in some instances, reducing employment opportunities for people if the job will no longer exist at whatever our minimum wage will be that currently exists at \$3.35. Thank you.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Senator Coordsen. Our next speaker is Senator Hall.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President. Again, I rise to oppose the indefinite postponement motion. Minimum wage is a wage that's paid to starting employees, or a certain type of position. It's a wage that those at the very bottom of the skill ladder, those who are the youngest, and in most recent times, those who are some of the most elderly in terms of employees are paid. Minimum wage is a wage that we pay to those people at the very bottom. They're not, in my mind, at the very bottom of the workforce, they just happen to be in positions because they don't have experience, they're not yet old enough, or, in some cases, they're too old for other types of work, they can't be retrained so they fit in the case of the, many of the...what I would term, you know, geriatric burger flippers that you see nowadays with regard to some of the fast food