

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Madam President and members. I'd simply rise to oppose the motion to return. We always seem to put off the minimum wage and issues like this until we're usually addressing them a couple years after we first start talking about them. This is an effort to bring us in compliance with the federal regs and it does hit a few more people in the state than the federal regs would. I don't know if you read the paper this morning. A new study out showed one out of five children living under the poverty line now. I don't know if this will help alleviate that problem, but it will go a long ways in that direction and I've caught...got a lot of grief from some of the folks in my district for supporting this--what are you doing to us? Well, I truly believe that the minimum wage is important because that is money that stays within a community. Again, we've said it over and over, these people aren't going out of town to buy their commodities. They're staying in town because they can't afford to drive out of town. I think it's pretty important that we raise the base on the lower end to affect a lot of the people in my district. And, again, that money stays in the district. We all hear about trickle down all the time, but I truly believe in bubble up because these people are in tough, in dire straits and when they get the money they save it. They don't worry about buying an extra car or an extra house or taking a vacation. They spend it on necessities. Let's not support this motion to return and, again, do what we should do. Help the people on the bottom. Help their kids, the one out of five in this country that are living under the poverty line. Let's think about that and let's leave the bill as it is. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Morrissey. Senator Robinson.

SENATOR ROBINSON: Madam Chair, members of the body, Senator Morrissey is all wrong. We're talking about young people out there that will be deprived of jobs. We're not talking about one out of five people being below the poverty line, and you know it and I know it. I support Senator Hefner's amendment. It's a good way to phase in the minimum wage at the state, even though I object to that, as all of you know. So please vote this amendment on. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Robinson. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Question.