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SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Schimek, followed by Senators Wesely, Maurstad, Chambers, and Robinson.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. Senator Beutler, you're exactly right. I agree with everything you said. Not only that, but you could go on and on about some of the other kinds of programs we've had to establish. You could talk about...you could talk about the whole social fabric, not only of our state, but of the country, as well. You could talk about how in some cases it's absolutely mandatory that both parents work because they can't afford to keep home and family together without it. We know that there are a lot of social costs that sometimes go along with that kind of a situation. So I'm...I certainly don't disagree with you. I think you made an excellent point and I think that we need to keep hammering on that, if you will, until we can convince this state that something needs to be done. But, to the Maurstad amendment, even though I think that this bill could be implemented possibly without any kind of state funds, I think it would be exceedingly foolish to close the door on any state funds. That's a policy decision that you should make when you find out what the recommendations are, when you find out what the possibilities are for funds from other programs. It's not a decision that you should make now. If you do that, you preclude a lot of the possibilities, and I don't think you want to do that at this stage. Thank you.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President, members, I rise and share the concern expressed by Senator Beutler. Senator Chambers and I others, Senator Schimek, we do have a bill to raise the minimum wage. We'll be bringing that issue to you, hopefully, some time later this session. He's not wrong. Obviously if everybody had a decent wage, we would not have to worry about things like being able to get them housing. But, in fact, we know that that is not the case. We do have low income individuals, they have to have housing. When you think about the elements that make up a society, a civilized society, you have to have food, you have to have housing, you have to have health care, in my view. But those are issues that we've tried to address in different fashions. And the housing part of it we've done very little with as a state. We have not, in fact,