

SENATOR BRASHEAR: ..acknowledge, is emotionally unacceptable. This is not a state in which all, because we've had some improvement of late in our economy, because we are at what people would statistically, and that's cold, I know...call full employment, people are being better and better compensated by our free market economy. In preparation for discussing these issues with you, I began to look at the minimum wage and some of what I've found runs absolutely counter to the generalized "we're for the smallest person, we want to lift everybody up" kind of discussion, and I'd like to share that. Did you know...

SENATOR LINDSAY: Time, Senator Brashear. You may continue. You're on your own time now.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was interesting to me to learn that two-thirds of those who work at minimum wage are between the ages of 16 and 24; that 92 percent, 92 percent mind you, are part-year or part-time workers and that, in our relatively full economy with researched evidence like you saw in one of our publication...newspaper publications over the weekend about how easy it is, relatively speaking, to get jobs, to quit a job, to seek other employment, to get an ever-larger increase in salary, we need to keep that in mind in terms of our full employment economy, 80 percent of our...of minimum wage workers come from families which are not, statistically or otherwise based on income, poor; 93 percent of our minimum wage workers are not supporting or maintaining a family. In fact, when you examine the statistics closely, we might, for instance, focus upon a single parent and think that we ought to increase the minimum wage for the single parent. While, again, anyone is important emotionally, statistically that's only one percent of our minimum wage workers. Well, you say, then if it only affects the younger people, the teenagers, those living at home, those who want a second job or those who want to work part year or part time, why not do it? Because the clear statistical evidence is that as you increase the minimum wage, you force from the marketplace some of those who have the least skill, the least learning, the least stability; that as you make the entry level job more attractive in terms of its compensation, then the less attractive candidate, in fact, is dropped from the marketplace. That is, in fact, so true that 90 percent of economists surveyed by the American Economics Association indicate that a minimum wage is regressive, that it's