

SENATOR WESELY: Well, the national legislation was 90 cents. We thought we'd try that and if we can't get 90 cents, it's kind of hard to argue how we'd go up 9 dollars or any amount.

SENATOR WITEK: Oh, I guess I am curious, a little more detail, as to why an individual would think that, first of all, that the government should set a wage for any job and, second of all, why you would pick any number at all, and why not raise this to \$20 an hour? Why can't we? Why do we have to go with the federal government on this?

SENATOR WESELY: Well, I did...

SENATOR WITEK: If it's good to raise it this much, why isn't it good to raise it to \$20?

SENATOR WESELY: Well, I did have legislation to raise it to \$11 under the tax incentive legislation we had. If the state is providing tax breaks, it ought to be for good paying jobs. Actually, this bill I think calls for \$20,000 in order to qualify under this particular provision. So I think using the power of the state when we extend assistance to then in turn require something of that makes sense. The minimum wage, I don't want to use your time but that's...

SENATOR WITEK: Oh, go ahead. I'm very interested to have you talk about this.

SENATOR WESELY: Well, the whole concept of the minimum wage started when we had employers out there taking advantage of employees, giving them very poor wages. Sweatshops existed and the federal government interceded and tried to do something about it. I think there's a proper role to set a floor below which we cannot fall and then allow the marketplace to move above that as much as possible. I see the state's role, as in the tax break side, I think we can demand a higher minimum raise. I think we can raise that issue in that point, but for now, I defer to the marketplace above the minimum and the minimum is a question that the state's role has been a part of the policy all these years since the thirties.

SENATOR WITEK: Do you know or have you ever yourself worked for minimum wage?