

working poor because there'll be a denial of jobs. Studies have been made, in one of the handouts it talks about it, from Princeton, Department of Labor, Harvard; all come to the conclusion there is no significant job loss because of an increase in minimum wage. The last time we had one was in 1991, they studied its impacts. Also in New Jersey, they raised their state minimum wage and it was studied, and they found, at least in the fast food industry, that there was no reduction in employment. So this whole argument that to try and help the working poor will hurt the working poor is nonsense, absolute nonsense. The second, and in addition there were studies done by economists, Nobel laureates, and what have you. Those economists can come to different conclusions, we all know that, but in the end I think the argument is strong that if you want to help people that are working, if you want to reward work, then this is one way that you can do it. Now all those that argue against raising the minimum wage, they all say, well, we should do more than that, we should have a higher wage than this. That's fine. Vote for this and then come back with an amendment to raise it even further. I'll be happy to work with you. But let's see how this plays out. Let's see if we can even get 25 cent an hour increase. What a pathetic thing to even be debating in my view. You all are concerned about why we're taking time bringing this up. Well I'm concerned when the vote is taken on this how it will go, because as you go back to your districts, you go back to your constituents, and you look them in the eye and you say you thought a 25 cent an hour increase was too much to ask for those who are trying to work their way out of poverty, let's see what reaction you get from your constituents. And maybe, maybe they'll think that's fine. Maybe your districts are so well off, their view of the poor is similar to John Breslow's, who's a multimillionaire and thinks the way to equalize the situation is to push down those on welfare instead of lifting up those who are working. And that's the view I think we need to take a look at here. The idea is to reward work. It's not to punish individuals because they're poor, we're trying to recognize that individuals out there in this state are hard working, they want to raise a family, they want decent lives for themselves and their families, and they need better wages to do it. Senator Brown, you say we haven't made any argument. All I have to tell you is 47th in average wages in this state. And if that isn't argument enough that we try and address this issue, I don't know what will get the job done. We're at the bottom in the wages we pay. We ought to be