

Nebraska enough, this is one way we can do something about it. And at 25 cents an hour, I don't think that's too much to ask, in fact, it's too little to ask for, but at least, again, it's a first step. Thank you.

SENATOR LINDSAY: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Hilgert.

SENATOR HILGERT: Mr. President, members, I stand to respond to some of the comments and some of the tone of the debate that has taken place today on the minimum wage. I support LB 1368. I believe it's best for south Omaha, I believe it'll provide jobs, I also believe it'll provide redevelopment in the near south side and the downtown area. I think these things this is important. I'm certainly willing to look at legislation like 1368 to expand opportunity in Nebraska. But I also stand and I now, I support the minimum wage amendment that Senator Wesely has introduced. Nebraska, as Senator Wesely has said, we're 28th as far as wages, but...in the country out of all fifty states, but we also include in that farm subsidies and the transfer of payments. I believe wages are quite a bit lower if those were taken away. The thing that disturbs me is the tone of the debate that somehow, and Senator Wesely referred to it as nonsense, and aptly so, that somehow to re...to increase the wages of poor people is somehow hurting them, that we're somehow denying them opportunity. In fact, one senator said that there was nothing tangible that can be seen from raising the minimum wage 25 cents. Well, I have something tangible right here in my hand that you can get from raising the minimum wage 25 cents, it's called a quarter, I think it's very tangible. There's 16,500 working families with children in this state that live under the poverty level; 8,650 work full time and were single parents; 1,500 had two-parent families. Some of the statistics that we've heard referring to the minimum wage as a 4 percent and this percent and that percent, what about the part-time individuals who are not head of household, what about people who are trying to help out their families that have to work part time for minimum wage because they want to be home when the children come home, because they can't afford day care. This idea that if you're poor there's some...that is somehow your fault or it's because you didn't try hard enough, because you don't have education, does anyone really believe that...that people's status in life is only attributable to their own efforts? That is nothing...that we have total full opportunity in this state, that we have no racism, that we have no bad luck