

April 4, 1996

LB 829, 1368

ASSISTANT CLERK: 25 ayes, 3 nays to cease debate, Madam President.

SENATOR CROSBY: Debate does cease. Senator Wesely, to close on your amendment. I am going to leave the house under call until we vote on the amendment.

SENATOR WESELY: You know, thank you, Madam President, it is tough enough to adopt any change to LB 775 and these tax break bills, but when you have only got 35 people here at the time. I, also, I do thank everybody's indulgence in looking at this issue. We did come back and try to offer a suggestion on how to address the wage issue in this state in a different fashion than minimum wage. That's what this proposal says. If you want the tax breaks under 775, LB 1368, and LB 829, the jobs created will have to pay at least \$20,000 and provide health care. The idea is that we have only so much money that we can provide in tax breaks. It is now hurting our revenue picture severely. The obligation is huge. The impact we just felt yesterday with the recent announcement, we've got to do something about prioritizing and targeting what we are using our tax incentive legislation to accomplish. One thing I think we need to target are good paying jobs. The breaks that we provide ought to be focused in on those. Now I do want to follow up a bit, I want to emphasize Union Pacific is a great company. I know they pay good wages. We are very glad that they are here. Nobody is intending to use this as a vehicle to beat them over the head, but the constant references to 775, and how wonderful it is over the past discussions that we've had, again, amendments are hard to come by. Senator Brashear said in '88 we passed 40 amendments to LB 775. I didn't remember that. I did pull out the bill and realized that they were mostly technical changes that clarified some things and codified some things, and so there really has been no significant amendment to LB 775 that has done anything to close any loophole in that legislation since it passed in 1987, and that's wrong. I understand why people protect and feel good about it, for whatever reason, but at the same time, there are problems in that legislation. It does not have a minimum wage to try and attract the good jobs to the state. It doesn't...well, it still allows for illegal aliens to receive jobs and get credits applied to them, and other changes that we've talked about that would help us focus better the limited resources we have. One of the arguments Senator Brashear had in the past was, well, that's worked so