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nobody is helped is the argument. So another way of approaching the problem is through a minimum wage. But then the same people who want the incentives to the corporate managers who run the system don't want a minimum wage which might have the effect of narrowing the discrepancy because they say that hurts business too. How else can we help? Well, we can do what we've historically been reduced to doing. We can enlist government at least to help the poorest and to help certain segments of society who are hurt by the honoring of these other principles I've just described. How are we going to view child-care deficit this session? Part of the reason that people have problems paying childcare is because wages are so low, because the disparities are so great, and we allow it to happen for other reasons. And what has business said about government using explicit tools to deal with problems in the low-income sectors? Well, a year ago we just had this massive initiative from the business community trying to shut down government's ability to even make those kinds of selected assistance. If we create new incentives that give advantage, as a by-product, to people in the upper income levels, do we call that a redistribution of wealth? No, we would never say that, would we? But is it? Yes. It's the effective use of a change in government to change the income to a particular sector, whether or not that was the principal reason for it. And yet when government tries to help with the income disparities, somehow each and every time it's called a redistribution of wealth. The fact of the matter is that we redistribute wealth on a continuing basis decade after decade by one government action or another, one way or another. But in light of recent...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...reports, I think we really have to ask ourselves, are we...is it fair what we're allowing to happen? Let me read you just a couple of paragraphs of the executive summary on this latest report: Despite the strong economic growth and tight labor markets of recent years, income disparities in most states are significantly greater in the late 1990s than they were during the 1980s. The average income of the lowest income families grew by less than 1 percent from the late 1980s to the late 1990s. The average real income of middle-income families grew by less than 2 percent, while the