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qualifying projects with less than 30 new full-time employees. As an example, Arthur County, with a population of 421 people, would have the lowest threshold for qualifying projects with only 1 new employee and a \$100,000 investment. The next lowest thresholds would be 2 new employees and \$200,000 in added investment in 11 counties. Projects qualifying under the act would receive two incentives: first, an annual income tax credit equal to 5 percent of the total compensation paid for new employment available each year in a seven-year entitlement period following hiring and maintaining of added employment; and, secondly, an income tax credit equal to 10 percent of the new investment made until the end of the entitlement period. The income tax credits offered by this act would be technically available to all businesses and all counties which meet the required levels of employment and investment, but in counties where the requirements would be at least 30 new jobs and \$3 million in investment, businesses would logically opt for the benefits and incentives under this act. Now, specifically, the numbers are this. There are 23 counties where one-half of one percent of the labor force numbers over 30. In those 23 counties it would be to their advantage, businesses' advantage, to go under LB 775. In those counties, populations have generally grown. Out of those 23 counties, 13 had increasing populations from 1980 to 1998, and 19 had gains from 1990 to 1998. But in the other 70 counties, and those are the counties that this bill is aimed at, in those counties where their economies would most benefit, 66 out of the 70 had declining populations from 1998...from 1980 to 1998. This act addresses another challenge also and that is the wage gap between the most populous counties and the smaller ones. The Nebraska quarterly business condition survey, which is a joint undertaking of the Department of Labor and Economic Development and the University of Nebraska Bureau of Business Research, has consistently shown a major difference in the wage rates in the metropolitan areas on one hand and in the remainder of the state on the other. The survey results for the second quarter of 1999 show a difference of over \$2 an hour between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas for both new positions and replacement hires. The difference exists over a wide range of occupations. Now, I have a handout which lists all of the counties in the state and has two columns on it, and I would direct your attention to it. It