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FLOOR DEBATE

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averages in this state vary tremendously. They vary from 15,000 bucks to \$25,000 by county average. In other words, there are states that have areas in which their average salary would have to be \$25,000 in some of their counties. In others, it would be lower. Colorado, \$8.50 in the metro area, \$7.00 in rural Colorado. We have never had a wage limit or a wage ceiling or floor, rather. We never asked ourselves what kind of a job should we have. For 15 years we've said any job will satisfy. Forty hours? Doesn't make a difference. Minimum wage? It works. We haven't done it in other areas. You know when we got big employers on the line, Micron and UP, we behaved differently. At the beginning, the second and third time we did this incentive program idea, we started adding some demands on the employer. And the demands that we've made on employers after we did LB 775 have been significantly higher than what we're asking for in this committee amendment, significantly higher. For example, in the Micron bill, in the Micron bill it was two things. We asked for \$100 million of investment and 500 jobs, or \$250 million of investment and 250 jobs, a really big request up front. And we said they had to have 110 percent of the county average, which averages in this state today \$28,000. There was a rural tier for the Micron bill, and it was 100 percent of the county average, and the statewide average today...I am sorry, this was 100 percent of the statewide average. A 100 percent of the statewide average today would be \$26,000. That's what we asked in Micron. In the UP case, where we asked for \$200 million in investment and 500 jobs, we said 120 percent of the state average, and that's \$31,000. That's in our law today. And do you know what? Both of those bills have been used. We asked for and got quality jobs. We've never asked for it in LB 775, and we've gotten a range. We have gotten a range of some quality jobs and we've gotten a range down to the rock bottom, as we just saw in the meatpacking issue. What the committee said is you know what? This idea of quality jobs, which this body has already done for the big guys, should be set at an appropriate amount. And what we picked, given the range of options that we had, was \$8.70 if there's health insurance, and \$9.57 if there isn't. The amendment, I think, is very fair. It's very reasonable. It is the least that we should do. Remember, what we're saying to an employer who today could be doing work in Nebraska, that if they grow