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recognize the differences in our state. Thank you,
Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Pederson, Senator Landis, for the review. On with discussion of the amendment offered by Senator Don Pederson, AM0883 to FA1207 to LB 608. Senator Thompson, followed by Senators Beutler, Landis, Hartnett, Kruse, Senator Don Pederson. Senator Thompson on the Pederson amendment.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I'm going to have some things passed out. Senator Beutler kind of was thinking of the same. Mine is a little bit different, but we're going down the same path with this, and that is...and I oppose this amendment, and I oppose it for a number of reasons. One is because I think it sets the floor way too low. And when you get this data that's coming around, you'll see why. I also oppose it because it doesn't have any recognition of the importance of health benefits. And as I said a couple of days ago when we were talking about this issue, one of the things we need to look at are, what are the hidden costs of the incentive programs that hit our budget? And this is something I didn't give a lot of thought to until I watched all these programs from the Health and Human Services Committee and from the Appropriations Committee. And this amendment qualifies people for just about...for a person making this low a wage, for just about every public assistance program we have and we provide as a state, whether it be food stamps, Medicaid, Kids Connection, if this is a person with children. And if it's a single person, it's going to put them at a very, very low subsistence wage level. And if we're making public policy, one of the things we have to look at is how this amendment affects our other public policy, what we have to provide because people are automatically eligible for a lot of other public assistance programs. So we need to address the hidden costs of these tax incentives. We should be "incenting" living wage jobs, and we should be "incenting" companies to provide health benefits. If we don't do this, not only are they qualifying for state programs; they're going to qualify for county programs. They are going to qualify for city programs, whether it be for housing, whether it be for general assistance. They're going to