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FLOOR DEBATE

March 25, 2003 LB 608

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Engel. Senator Thompson on AM0883.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I did pass something out to you. And I'm just...I'm not going to read it to you, but I do want to point out how low the floor is. And we're at a point where we're saying...we're looking at our tax incentive bills and our tax incentive programs, and we're going to set standards. This standard is way too low. Under this scenario, if a worker receives \$7.21 an hour, this would equate to \$1,249.73 a month. If the worker is a single parent and has two children, they would be slightly below the 2002 federal poverty level. If you go to the scenario of \$8.24 an hour and the worker is the single parent with two children, they would be at approximately 114 percent of the 2002 federal poverty level. Is this what we want to say as a state? You know, I moved to Nebraska in 1965. I came here as a student, and I've been here ever since. Had an interesting conversation with a friend of mine who I met in college at that time, this weekend, about the bill. We were just having dinner and visiting. And he said, you know, when I grew up in Omaha, the big businesses were the ones that cared about the quality of life in the community. And they cared about people having good jobs and good schools. And they wanted the very, very best for the Nebraska and for their employees. And I think it is absolutely shameful...and this isn't true of all the businesses, because some of our lobby friends are not lobbying this piece of the bill, that are representing big businesses. But some of that group and...that are supporting this proposal have a whole different attitude of what being a good corporate citizen is, in my view. To say that we should have as our standard...and they can pay more, and I understand Senator Pederson's argument. But in law, that the standard is so low, the floor is so low that we're not only subsidizing the job with the tax incentives, we're using all our other programs too. The two examples I gave you, food stamps, childcare, medical care, all of these kinds of things, that is a double subsidy for us. Why would we want to say, when we're setting standards as 37 other states have done in the last...in recent years...and we just haven't gotten around to it, and we're there. Why would we want to set such a low, low floor in our legislation dealing with tax incentives.