

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

March 25, 2003      LB 608

building a new home is the same. It's so much a square foot whether you're in Douglas County or Dodge County. So those costs are...I think they're very comparable. And in some instances, clothing probably costs you a little more in rural Nebraska than it does in the city. So you start weighing all these factors together, and I don't think we're that far apart. And we talk a lot about slaughterhouses, you know. And thank goodness we have the slaughterhouses. If we didn't, rural Nebraska would have one heck of a time marketing their products that they produce. But how many of you have ever worked in a slaughterhouse? It's not a piece of cake, let me tell you. It's very hard work. And that is why I think that the packers have a problem finding someone who is willing to do that kind of work. Thirty or forty years ago, it wasn't a problem, because those were some of the highest wages that you could find. Their benefits were good. The working conditions aren't...weren't any different than they are now. I mean, when you kill a beef or slaughter a hog, you still go through the same process, you still make the same cuts, because the anatomy of an animal has not changed any. They make a lot of different things. Yesterday I had the good fortune of visiting a processing plant. They did not slaughter there. But did I ever get my eyes opened up at what a great facility this was. And the modernization of the equipment that they use, it is just fantastic some of the machines that run these these different cuts of beef through them, and the electric eyes that they have. And they'll weigh a portion of a tenderloin out, and they're cut precisely to the certain ounces that they want them. And I would imagine there were probably 80 people working in that plant. And it was still production work. I would imagine there is a lot of carpal tunnel syndrome that happens there, because they do a lot of work with their hands. But not one of those employees had one bad thing to say about that company. They were treated very well.

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.

SENATOR JANSSEN: And I'm sure that that is not a minimum wage plant. And I like to get back to the buying power that a dollar had 30 years ago to what it has today. And how much has that minimum wage increased? It...folks, it has not kept up with the