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FLOOR DEBATE

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not choose to be known as the cheapest state in the Union when it comes to being fair to the workers. The mere fact that the economy in the rural areas have been described as depressed does not mean that when an issue comes before the Legislature we should not do what is the right thing. We are the policymakers. We exercise our judgment. We should be the ones who set the tone and standards for this state, not corporations. They are interested in getting the most they can for what they expend, and they want to expend as little as possible and derive a great return. We know that they are in business to make a profit, but the purpose of this Legislature is to represent the state, not just the state as an entity, but the citizens who make up the population within this state. As Senator Loudon pointed out, we should not create two classes of people. We should not say if you drive a certain distance west on the interstate your labor is worth less, which means you are worth less as a human being. Wages are supposed to compensate a person for the work done. You mean to tell me that if a person is going to have a job lifting kegs of nails and each keg weighs 100 pounds, and each person with that job is expected to lift 20 of those kegs an hour, that if the person in the rural area does that work and the person in the urban area does that work the one in the rural area is worth less? Does he or she expend less energy in doing the work? Does the employer derive less in the way of profits from the work done by that individual? We know that a lot of these companies are like octopuses. They have numerous tentacles. They do not just operate in one location. Even if they do, the word should not go out that you ought to run to Nebraska because the people there are paid starvation wages and, not only that, but Nebraskans are proud of it. Their Legislature is proud of it. I'm wondering if that will be one of the promotional notions that will be used when they're trying to exalt Omaha and bring people to what they call tourist sites in the rest of Nebraska. Not Beverly Hillbillies, because there's no Beverly Hills here. There are no hillbillies, as far as I know, in Nebraska, but you have semi-slaves. Come out to the rural areas and look at those hardheaded, ignorant people who are willing to sweat and slave for slave wages and they are so happy they don't know what to do with themselves. Listen to the songs that they sing. They go to work,...