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2003, later this year; and then to increase it one step further, to \$6.30 an hour, on April 1, 2004. The state minimum wage at the present time is the same as the federal minimum wage. The federal government has failed to increase the minimum wage, now going on six years. In every one of those six years, there has been substantial inflation, so that those people who most need the wages are having the purchasing power of those wages eroded year after year, with no thought, apparently, given by the government to the effect of what's happening, including the effect on our welfare programs. It is ironic to me that we all sit in this Legislature and we make certain decisions about the need for childcare and the need for food stamps and the need for these various programs, and we make these decisions based upon our best judgment of what real needs are, but then we turn around and allow the economic system to give wages to the lower 5 percent or so of our people that do not afford them the wherewithal to get childcare, or to get necessary food, or to get health insurance. I wish that somehow we could start to see things in a kind of unity, that the purpose of government and welfare should only be to supplement in those rare cases where the economic system doesn't provide on an ordinary basis enough for workers to live on. But instead, we seem to want to continue to subsidize certain businesses, and then by turning around when their workers can't make enough, and creating these huge government programs. We need to reduce the government programs, and one of the ways we can do this is by insisting that the economic system provide for everybody at a decent level. I know that there are aspects of the minimum wage law that I know I forgot over time, and I'm assuming some of you have forgotten, and others of you have never had a chance to be acquainted with them. So I do want to go over some of the material in the Nebraska statutes which I think will answer some questions for you with regard to the scope and dimensions of Nebraska's minimum wage law. But even the declaration of intent is important, because it points out that the purpose of the law is to provide a wage for workers at levels consistent with their health, efficiency, and general well-being. Well, we know most of them don't even have health insurance, and can't afford it. Efficiency is interesting, because it does relate to the idea of incentives and the idea of being a benefit to business, because they have some incentive to work harder, and the general