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FLOOR DEBATE

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the last time that we changed the law. That part of the bill is bare bones, just keeping up with changes, with the erosion in purchasing power from 1997. The second part of the bill, which increases the amount to \$6.30, attempts to make up a little bit for all that...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...purchasing power that has been previously lost, and that I'll try to describe to you momentarily.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. You've heard the opening on advancement of LB 435. Mr. Clerk, item on the desk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, I do have an amendment from Senator Foley, FA1309. (Legislative Journal page 1280.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Foley, you're recognized to open on FA1309 to LB 435.

SENATOR FOLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. President, members. Thank you, Senator Beutler, for bringing this bill. I think it is a very important bill. And it forces us to look at a question that we haven't looked at and Congress hasn't looked in a very long time, apparently. Been quite a number of years since Congress has adjusted the minimum wage. And because they haven't done it, some other states...some of the states are now jumping out in front of the federal government, doing it on their own. I was once a minimum wage worker. Probably most of you were as well. I worked for minimum wage when I was in high school, and somewhat in college. And the only time I ever got a raise was when Congress jumped in and raised it. And I think Senator Beutler has made some very valid points about, if we're going to have a minimum wage, if you believe in the basic concept of a minimum wage, and I think most of us do, then we all ought to try to work toward a consensus as to what's fair, what's a fair floor. And when you establish a floor and then don't touch it for years, obviously, with inflation, the value of that wage has been diluted. But I look out across the country, and I see what other states have done. Eleven states now, 11 states, have now taken, as their own initiative, an