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FLOOR DEBATE

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members. I, unfortunately, stand up in opposition to the amendment and to the bill. Probably doesn't surprise most of you. I believe the supporters of this bill, their hearts are in the right place. But it actually doesn't accomplish the goals that they strive to accomplish, in my opinion. As you all know, I own a small grocery store. And I want to stress "small." The only people in my store that get minimum wage are high school students. Everybody else gets more than minimum wage. And when you increase the minimum wage by whatever it may be...I'm just going to use \$1 as a figure to...for easy talking. But if you increase it \$1 to the minimum wage person, whether it's right or wrong, invariably, for an \$8 or a \$9 person, you increase it more than a dollar for those people. You have to go up by that percentage. And that's not the right way, but that is the way it actually works in the real world. You have that trickle-up effect. In my store, I'm paying now more for labor than I have ever paid before, because of the marketplace. The market demands it, and that's what we're paying. I offer profit sharing, I offer insurance. And I don't pay full insurance, but I pay for the...part of the individual insurance. And the insurance is going up every day. With the budget that we're dealing with right now, it's a...I hate to say it, but I think it's probably a foregone conclusion, taxes are going up. And small business simply cannot afford this any longer. And even if you do it, Senator Beutler told us that prices are going to go up. You have to pass that on. But the one thing that he's not telling you is, it's not just people that pay low wages; everybody's wages are going up. And the people that get the raises now are not going to buy one penny more than they could before, because of inflation. And I want to read to you, this is a letter that I wrote back in 1999 to Congressman Bereuter. I'm just going to take some statistics out of there. They don't necessarily pertain to this bill. But it was with the minimum wage at the time. And this is figuring if the minimum wage increases by one dollar. So if I have an \$8 an hour person in my store, and I give them the same percentage of raise, that's 19.4 percent. I also told you I have profit sharing. In my store, every full-time...or, pardon me...every adult employee over 21 who has worked for two years or longer, we give them profit sharing, whether they're full-time or part-time. And we give them 10 percent of their wage. So now, on the five...or on