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SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Janssen. Senator Erdman, followed by Senator Tyson, on the Foley amendment.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, I think that there's probably somewhere in the middle is where reality is, but I think the discussion has been interesting, to say the least. I think lost in this discussion, though, is some key points, and I think Senator Schimek did bring up some points that I think were realistic and that was, you know, you can't make it on minimum wage. All right, well, it depends on what decisions you make in addition to the amount of money you bring in. But she's right, natural gas costs are increasing. Private citizens, if you're not in some type of group plan, your insurance costs are going up. Being an elected body to this fine institution, obviously, we're not eligible for insurance so most of us are, unless we're fortunate to have our husbands or wives on some other plan, we're probably paying for it, as I am. Park permits are probably going up again, that's if you're going to go to a park. If you walk in, you don't have to pay. But, again, those are going up. Some of the things that weren't mentioned, property taxes are going up, not because of mill levies but because valuations are going up, so property taxes are going up. The point that was made by Senator Schimek and by Senator Beutler was tuition was going up. Now, realize that tuition was going up even when money was good. My first year down here the university Regents, not the Legislature, voted to increase tuition, and that was when they were getting an increase in funding. So some of these things are independent of the financial situation that we're in, but some of them do go hand in hand. I was trying to get a handle of what an actual, you know, minimum wage amount is, what is poverty. And I don't generally use myself and I don't think we should use ourselves, probably, as a fair indicator of the rest of the state, because we're probably going to have difference of what we would buy versus what others would, what we need versus what others would need. Senator Chambers and I were talking off the microphone about, you know, do you think we're both in what we would consider poverty, and I think we could both answer yes. Now we probably are going to have differences of what we purchase. I can go down the list and, you know, I filed my taxes yesterday and it was hard to write that check out to the federal