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SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Maxwell, thank you. There is no body of research taken as a whole that indicates in any way that it will hurt. There is some research that indicates that it's slightly helpful. There's some research, maybe the larger body of research, that can't come to a conclusion one way or another. Let me say this in a rhetorical way, Senator Maxwell. If every group of people that I know if in this country that has any knowledge of low-income people, whether you're talking about community agencies or labor groups or whatever it is, if every one of those groups is in favor of a minimum wage, why would they be in favor of it if they thought it lost jobs? I mean I think that the people who know best and understand best what happens among low-income people understand that a minimum wage is, on balance, a good thing for low-income people. Otherwise, they wouldn't be out there promoting a minimum wage. I think it's...and it's those who don't understand the low-income community that seem to think that no minimum wage is necessary.

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: The Economic Policy Institute is one group that recently studied the increases in the minimum wage at the federal level. They found that raising the minimum wage did not reduce the employment of minorities or women. Raising the minimum wage was associated with statistically significant employment increases among teenage Latinos, less-educated adult women, and less-educated adult African-American women. For whites and for African-Americans overall, the minimum wage increase resulted in neither significant positive or negative employment effects. According to a 1999 study by Jerome Levy Economics Institute, the last increase in the minimum wage did not affect the overwhelming majority of small businesses. Nine out of ten of small businesses surveyed said the last increase did not have an effect on their employment or hiring decisions.

SPEAKER BROMM: Time.

SENATOR BEUTLER: And I have more information, Senator.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Cunningham.