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Money is nothing more than a medium of exchange. I believe that, as wages go up, purchasing power has not gone up with it, because if you increase wages and don't increase productivity a corresponding amount, then that makes minimum wage laws a contributor to inflation, which we've heard a lot about today. So prices on most goods and services that all of us buy go up when minimum wage goes up. I also believe that the minimum wage law has been a contributing factor to companies leaving this country for other countries, causing unemployment, causing an increase in our trade deficit, which causes an increase in our taxes. And if minimum wage is necessary in our society, I wish it wasn't, but if it is I think it should be left to the federal government to impose so that it's the same in all states. And so, again, I stand to oppose the amendment and the bill, and thank you very much.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Burling. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, some time a person who is outside of an area can understand it better than those who live there. I want to tell Senator Cunningham and some of these other rural senators some of what's happening in their areas. People are leaving. When you don't have people who live in your community, you don't have customers. Houses are empty, barns are empty, farms are going deserted, and it has nothing to do with minimum wage. To stretch that problem that the rural sector is having to cover every issue with which these rural senators disagree is a stretch. It is totally unreasonable, and it is irrational. If Wal-Mart comes to Senator Cunningham's area...let me ask him a question, because he's an expert in retailing.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Yes.

SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Cunningham, would you yield?

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Cunningham, I've had it...heard it said that when Wal-Mart comes into an area, little retailers are driven out of business. Now is that true or is it not?