

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

April 15, 2003 LB 232, 435

cities surveyed identified low-paying jobs as the primary cause of hunger. According to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition September 2001 report, the national median housing wage based on each county's housing wage for a two-bedroom unit at the fair market rent, weighted by Census 2000 population estimates, is \$13.87 an hour, more than twice the federal minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour. This means that, on average, there must be more than two full-time minimum wage workers in a household, more than two in a household, in order for a household to afford a two-bedroom housing unit at what they establish as their fair market rent figure. America's Second Harvest did a report called "Hunger in America." They reported that among client households who receive emergency food assistance from soup kitchens and food pantries and shelters, four out of ten had at least one employed adult, and of the adults in client households, 17 percent, 2.5 million people, worked full-time. So, you know, I think...I'm wondering whether that fact is still in contention or whether we're just callous to the fact that we don't mind a certain number of hardworking families living way below poverty. I hope it's not the latter.

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: But why should any of them be living below the poverty level? Why should any of them? If they're working 40 hours a week and they're doing good work, there's no reason why they should be living in poverty in America today, in the wealthiest country in the world, at the wealthiest time in the history of the world. It is just, in my mind, unacceptable and unfair and a shame. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, I have one item, if I may. Senator Schimek, would like to print an amendment to LB 232. (Legislative Journal page 1281.)

I do have a priority motion, Mr. President. Senator Hartnett would move to recess until 1:30 p.m.

SPEAKER BROMM: The motion is to recess until 1:30 p.m. All in