

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 15, 2003 LB 435

picked beans for 35 cents an hour. I worked in a dairy bar for a dollar and a quarter an hour. I worked in President Johnson's program, Neighborhood Youth Corps. Some of you might have back in the late sixties. I did that for a dollar and a quarter an hour cleaning blackboards at school and scrubbing floors and all that. Those were entry level jobs. Those were jobs to get us used to doing work. I think if we do have the main wage earners for families that are in those jobs, it is incumbent upon us to help them do better and perhaps...

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.

SENATOR COMBS: ...get a better job because, even at \$6.30 an hour, they're only earning a little over 12,000 bucks a year when you count 2010 hours, which is the average number of hours that a worker works. So, you know, it's a nice gesture, but I think the picture of poverty is much larger than this. And, again, the impact financially on my district is not just with the store owners or the business owners. It's with all 33,000 of us that are doing business with them that we have to keep our community vital. I just am not convinced that this is the total answer to poverty in Nebraska at this point in time. And I would yield what's left to Senator Chambers, if he would like it.

SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Chambers, 13 seconds and counting.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: (Laugh)

SENATOR COMBS: (Laugh)

SPEAKER BROMM: He declines, Senator Combs. Thank you, Senator Combs. There are no more lights. Senator Beutler, you're recognized to close on your amendment.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Combs, let me just respond to you. You asked how many of those who are...of those minimum wage workers are the primary earners in their families. I don't have the figure for how many are primary earners, but 40 percent of them have families and 40 percent of them are the...more than 40 percent of them have families, but 40 percent are the sole