

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

April 15, 2003 LB 435

that. It's an embarrassment to our society, I think, that they have to do that. So I don't want them getting food stamps. I don't want them getting childcare. I don't want them getting any handouts. I want them to make enough money so they don't have to come begging. I want to go back to the "Business in Nebraska" study because, even though it's not, in my opinion, the very best study, it's one of two studies that has been done in Nebraska that gives us any sort of realistic view of what it takes to have some kind of self-sufficient wage in Nebraska. And I started out describing to you the genesis of this study, that is, the fact that it came out of welfare reform, and sought to articulate what those basic needs would be that would keep people from needing welfare of any sort. And the whole concept comes down to developing a basic family budget, because the basic family budgets attempt to measure the amount of incomes that families require in order to meet their basic needs without public assistance. And it indicates that it's generally accepted that the basic needs of a family include food, shelter, healthcare, transportation, childcare in single-parent families or, if both are working, of course they would need childcare also, assuming the children were of a tender age, and household and personal expenses, including clothing, as well as a minimal amount for leisure activity. So this is the Bureau of Business Research describing what are generally accepted as basic needs. And then the study goes on to attempt to estimate the level of income, or liveable wage, as they call it, required to cover the basic needs, and taxes of individuals and families in Nebraska. And in this respect, I want to note that it is one of only two studies that I know that has attempted to take into account the specific facts of Nebraska costs and Nebraska...and the cost of Nebraska basic needs. And it did so, in this case, independent of public income and housing assistance, so that what was being decided was...or what was being ascertained was what it would take to live without public assistance of any sort. And then it went on to examine whether full-time jobs in Nebraska in fact...

SENATOR VRTISKA: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...pay liveable wages. The liveable wage estimates that they came up with encompassed the minimal that were necessary expenditures for nine basic groups, and then they