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situation Nebraska is in.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Well, I just heard someplace where they're going to get more in sales tax than they thought, so maybe things are looking up. I just don't know. But I wanted to get a clarification on that. Thank you, Senator Cunningham. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members. This morning, the Lancaster County senators had their town hall meeting and it was very interesting. We had Senator Wehrbein there to talk to us about the Appropriations Committee recommendations, and each senator got up and told a little bit about how they viewed what was happening on the floor of the Legislature and in this session. And then we always call on our constituents to tell us what their concerns are, what their questions are, what the comments are. And there were quite a few people this morning who expressed their concern and their hope that the minimum wage bill would be passed on the floor of this Legislature. I truly believe that the American people are of a nature that they do not want people who are at the bottom rung of the ladder to suffer needlessly. I believe that the American people, and Nebraskans in particular, think that it is the responsibility of government not to let those who truly are in need continue in need. And we have a big conflict here and I'm understanding that conflict, and I think we all understand that conflict. Senator Cunningham is afraid for his business, and that's a legitimate concern, particularly in this kind of an economy. I think particularly small business owners are hit harder than the larger business owners sometimes in an economic situation as we have now. But if you go out to any mall in America, you will discover there's lots of money being spent out there on a daily...out in those malls on a daily basis. If you go to any restaurant in Lincoln, and probably anywhere else in the state, you will discover there are lots of people that are eating out, and they're eating out frequently, and they're eating out on a less than frugal kind of budget. I think that if Senator Cunningham were faced with a situation where he was faced with paying more of a minimum wage, he would naturally