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May 21, 2003

LB 608

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Well, I know an awful lot of people that come from rural Nebraska and come into the cities and work for some of these businesses did very, very well. That would be my opinion.

SENATOR BEUTLER: That's not what the statistics will tell you nationally, though, at all, or even in Nebraska.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: The statistics would...I know that you're going to tell me the gap got wider. Is that what you're trying to say?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Yes, in...the problem has several dimensions, but, yes, the gap got wider also.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: So you don't...you don't think that in the nineties that wages went up at all in corporate America?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Oh, I think wages went up in many places, but there were many workers displaced who went to different lower-level paying jobs. Inflation also took away much of what was gained by the lower income people in term of wage increases. They didn't keep up with inflation during the eighties or the nineties or the two periods taken together, and so the actual purchasing power of what the lower fifth of the income levels had was less...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...than what they had had before

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Well, purchasing power, some of that is because of the...all of the regulations that we put out through society. Everything costs more because of that and you get less purchasing power. I mean, I'm a firm believer that we need less regulation and less government, and I know it's a total philosophical difference, but...

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, it's not a total philosophical difference. I believe in that too. And over the course of this session, Senator, I bet we haven't differed on that in one or