

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

March 22, 2004 LB 1093

pay is not increasing. Some live paycheck to paycheck, many live paycheck to paycheck. So a property tax increase would in fact affect them just as adversely as it would the rural population. Income tax increase would affect them just as adversely so again, I don't know which one I hate more. I'm not going to say anything new. Constituents expect us to, at least those that I talked to, don't expect us to raise taxes. They don't like it, they don't want it, you don't like it, I don't like it. But what I believe we haven't done yet as a body, we've done it...the Appropriations Committee I believe has done a fair and reasonable job, but we as a body haven't talked about what can we do without. What can we cut out? What things, in our list of priorities, what things make the most sense? Certainly education has to top that, but can we afford to increase property and/or income tax to accommodate our wish list? And, folks, we're still at a wish list stage. If we are to prioritize, we need to start very quickly and we need to understand where in the world we're going. I tried to bring some information to the body about the four different brackets, income tax brackets, and the revenues derived from each bracket. And let me just, for the record, go over that the bottom bracket of...for a single individual in Nebraska is 2.51 percent. And that's for those that make below \$1,800 a year. Bracket number 2 is 3.49 percent and those are for individuals that make between \$17,000 and \$2,400. Bracket number 3 is a little over 5 percent and that's for individuals that earn between \$17,000 and \$26,500. And for those of us that are rich, those are the...we are the wealthy Nebraskans, that's anyone that earns over \$26,500 a year, about \$10.50 an hour if you're counting an hourly wage. So to increase...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR MINES: ...and this isn't anything new either, but to increase the amount on the highest wage earners in Nebraska includes anyone, almost anyone that's flipping burgers on up. This isn't...these aren't...\$26,500 a year isn't a very high wage. And I would caution this body against increasing the income tax on those wage earners because you're affecting virtually everyone in the pot. Back to my original thought, I'm not...I could be swayed to vote for AM3027 just simply because