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think we want them to drop the healthcare so that they can just pay a 6 percent tax to the state. I think that would be counterproductive. I'm looking at the average wage...or, average annual pay in Nebraska in 2003, which is the most recent data I have--$30,382 a year. That would mean about $1,822, and that doesn't buy much of an insurance policy for an employee. And if you would like to respond, I will give you the remainder of my time.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Redfield. Further discussion on the Beutler amendment, AM1622 to...Senator Beutler, I'm sorry.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Yes. I would just respond briefly. First of all, if you want to get up to the probable actual cost, then you should raise the percentage, Senator Redfield. And maybe you would like to amend it to raise the percentage. I would be open to that. But I wanted to create a percentage that nobody could argue was unfair, and I think that 6 percent does that. Regardless of whatever your wage structure should be, or is, 6 percent is not going to be more than the cost of a reasonable...or, of some healthcare policy. But I don't think you're going to create a race to the bottom, because there's actually nothing right now that keeps them from going to the bottom. So if they have in place a healthcare benefit package that they think they need to be competitive, there's no reason they would drop it simply because they could pay less. Because they can pay less right now. In fact, they can pay nothing at all. So I'm not sure that that's a valid argument in this instance. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Redfield, did you wish to use the remainder of your time?

SENATOR REDFIELD: No, I waive the rest of my time. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Okay. Okay. Thank you, Senator Redfield. Further discussion? Senator Mines.

SENATOR MINES: Thank you, Mr. President. Could I ask a question of Senator Beutler, please?