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LR 12

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Kruse, to open on your amendment to the Smith amendment.

SENATOR KRUSE: Mr. President and members, thank you. My amendment takes out the benefits section of this, and that's all I'm really going to say about it. It's offered without prejudice. I would prefer that benefits not be put in there for reasons that have already been stated. I think the public distrusts the type of benefit. I'm not speaking to this particular...to the Smith proposal, which does look good to me, but no better than some. At any rate, I think to keep it even we should consider this. So vote it up or down. Please don't talk about it; just vote it up or down. Thank you. (Laughter)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Kruse. You've heard the opening on FA297 to AM1649. Those wishing to speak to that are Senator Jensen. Your light was on. Do you wish to address the...

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, and I don't know if this is the proper way that we should be conducting this, if we're...maybe we should have passed out a sheet that people could have selected their top choice and then come together on that. But by adopting amendments, and then amendments, and then amendments, I don't know. And certainly, I put one into the mix that, yes, does float. You know, I think the 49 senators here do a good job of representing the public in that we have grocers and carpenters and we have attorneys and farmers and nurses, and so I think we have a good representation of the entire state. Now, along with that, I think we represent a lot of average citizens and I think that that's the reason I put mine in there that said that we would be paid the average wage of working people in Nebraska. Yes, the Legislature would have to determine, should we follow the Nebraska Department of Labor, should we follow the federal labor, whatever that figure would be. And then it would go up and down, and if we were under a depression and wages fell, also the salary would fall, too; no benefits, but just the average wage of the citizens of Nebraska, and that, by the way, is somewhere around \$31,000. I think we need to think a little bit