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don't deny that effect. In fact, I applaud that effect. But how much that effect is in any particular business, I think would vary a lot.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: I think so, too. A lot of the union contracts, they base their wages off of the minimum wages where they start, and if this minimum wage goes up, I'm sure that their percent of increase over the minimum wage will be, you know, considered into everything. And if we feel that everybody is entitled to an 8 percent increase in wage, by giving the minimum increase of 8 percent of those 16,000 people, that's going to have a real effect on the economy or the expense of a lot of the people that employ a lot of people. Do you feel that that could happen?

SENATOR BEUTLER: I don't. I have never seen a study that said increasing the minimum wage hurt any economy in any locality or place in this country. I really haven't.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: And you don't feel that the conversation in the communities, saying that, you know, well, if you increase the minimum wage, well, we're going to increase it, too, or the people that are working say, you know, I want another 50 cents an hour, too, or I'm not going to work, you feel that isn't going to happen? I wish that wouldn't happen.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, Senator, again, I'm not saying it wouldn't happen. I think it will happen to a certain effect...to a certain extent, and I welcome it. That's part of what the minimum wage is all about. That's what keeps wages from collapsing. Wages have been collapsing for the last ten years. But there's another side to it. When people have money, when they're well paid, that money is circulating in the community, and other businesses that already pay above the minimum wage have new customers to help them. So it's not like the money is lost. In fact, you can make the argument here in Nebraska that it's better to keep the money circulating in the community than it is to let a Wal-Mart pay substandard wages and the profits go off to Georgia to build an aquarium or something.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: I'll truly agree with you on that, because