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SENATOR BAKER: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Absolutely, Senator. This is a question of fundamental fairness, it really is, whether it's young people or older people. And, by the way, Senator Aguilar has hit upon a point there that's going to become more and more important. As the boomer generation retires and we have fewer workers to do the work that needs to be done, more and more of the elderly, of the retirees, are going to be working these jobs. And so I suppose you can say they don't need the money or something like that, but, Senator, you got to be fair to people. You just can't use them. I mean, how low would you go? Would you let this drop another 100 years? Tell me that. Would you let the whole bottom fall out of the American wage scale? You don't like the fact that it goes up into the higher levels and has a "trickle-up" effect. You'd rather have the "trickle-down" effect.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: I would tell you that if you listen to what Senator Redfield said earlier, she was talking about nobody can hire anyone for minimum wage anymore. I think that the market is dictating that and...

SENATOR BEUTLER: The market is not dictating it. There's 16,000 of them that have been there.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: But most of those, I have to believe, are the young high school type kids.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator, U.S. Department of Labor statistics indicates that in the age of 16 to 19, these are 2004 statistics, it's 7.3 percent of the total number that are below minimum wage.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Below minimum wage?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Minimum wage or below.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: That...those are Nebraska numbers?

SENATOR BEUTLER: No, these are national numbers.