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April 10, 2006 LB 554

CLERK: Yes. I mean...

SENATOR SMITH: Okay, not the Beutler amendment.

CLERK: I'm sorry. Well, it's the Redfield-Beutler amendment.

SENATOR SMITH: Oh, I see. Okay.

CLERK: I'm sorry. Excuse me.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President, members. amendment addresses the fact that, instead of 17 years old as an exemption, it would be 19 years old. I'm not sure we have all of the information in terms of the impact, and I would argue that there are a lot of wages being paid out there that are more than minimum wage right now. And the fact is, tweaking the minimum wage won't probably get to the issue where someone is making \$10 an hour but deserves to be making \$15 an hour, or how many people are really covered under this? What's the practical impact of 16- and 17-year-olds being exempted, as compared to 16- through 19-year-olds as being exempted? So this is something that I'm truly interested in and we need to look at, and so I offer this amendment to change 17 to 19 and hope that the issues here can be discussed. I'm hoping to get some So far I've been unable to get the numbers on the numbers. practical implication or practical impact of the unamended version of the bill, and certainly, Senator Friend raises some questions, as well. I think that in this day and age of trying to hamstring future legislatures, needing to come up with 25 votes to undo something that perhaps was unintended by a legislature prior, that is a huge issue. But certainly, in my eight years here in the Legislature, it's become more and more clear that there are clever little things that can be done in the legislative body through legislation, in terms of addressing the future, whether it's removing sunset clauses, whether it is, for example, tying this to inflation. And I'm interested in the long-term impact, and that's why I offer this amendment in trying to address the long-term impact and certainly hope that we can have a fruitful discussion. Thank you, Mr. President.