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SENATOR CUDABACK: Time, Senator.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...Wal-Mart, Senator Cunningham, from getting an advantage.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time, Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Are you interfering with the economic system in all your work in that area?

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time, Senator Beutler. Thank you, Senator Beutler and Senator Howard. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I do have some concerns about this bill. I think all of us know that Nebraska's economy is actually based on small businesses, and I think that Senator Cunningham shared some of those concerns. Small businesses work on a very narrow margin, and I think it's true that either they're going to have to raise prices or they are going to have to eliminate workers. We talked about...there just simply aren't that many jobs available in rural Nebraska or in Nebraska today. I did some checking on my largest town in my district, which is York, and the motels along the...what we call the strip are paying \$6.75 an hour. Burger King is paying \$6.50 for adults and \$5.75 for minors. So I think that you can see that most of these jobs already are paying beyond the minimum wage. When we compared Nebraska to some of the other states...Senator Redfield compared New York State. I think there was also mention of California, Florida. We look at those states. They're very heavily populated states. They don't have the 1.7 million population that Nebraska has, and that is really one of my concerns. Also, earlier in the session we passed the Earned Income Tax Credit in our tax relief package. I believe this directly was to assist the low-income families. They will be receiving the highest income tax return of any portion of our taxpayers, and I think that that was certainly a beneficial step. Also, I think we need to look at our surrounding states, and I think that was pointed out. Our surrounding states, the states surrounding Nebraska, still adhere to the federal minimum wage. Now it's not that I don't