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ought to stop those hypocritical prayers because it has to be a stench in the nostrils of any supreme being if there be one who has to put up with it every day.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Newell.

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President, members of the body, Senator Chambers offers the rather emotional and very compassionate sort of address that only he can offer. I would like to go back to statistics for a moment. To respond to Senator Kahle and to Senator Kelly on some of the points that they have made. You know it is kind of interesting to me when I hear people say, we give a credit back and that is all that is necessary. We give back to the average person what it takes to buy food and if you spend more for food you don't get, you know, you lose the credit and if you spend less you reap a windfall and Senator Kahle says, we have food stamps for people that are poor so therefore, why eliminate the sales tax on food. I would like to speak to both of those points for a moment. The first point is that, Senator Kahle, to answer your question, 52,000 Nebraskans receive food stamps. The Department of Welfare estimates that approximately 450,000..., Senator Kahle, 52,000 receive food stamps, 450,000 are eligible for food stamps because of their income and family qualifications. That is correct. You, yourself, may be qualified to receive food stamps. The situation is that 13.2% of the population of the State of Nebraska who are eligible receive food stamps. Now the situation is this, that for various reasons we have welfare programs that people are maybe too proud or certain county governments try not to allow them to, in fact, avail themselves to these programs and for that reason a lot of the poor in this state receive no benefit from food stamps and they certainly get no tax break as other groups do in regards to food. What is happening here is that a large percentage of people do not, in fact, apply for the credit but even more, we are not talking about just the very poor and the very indigent, we are talking about the middle class, the lower middle class and the middle class who pay more for their food, a higher percentage and also have to pay taxes. You know I have never understood the rural interest in this Legislature opposing the elimination of sales tax on food because as Senator Schmit has said there is, in fact, a benefit, a benefit to those agrarian interests who might purchase more food if the tax was exempted. Almost half the states in the union do not tax food and yet Nebraska, an agrarian state, still does. The other problem that we