

April 10, 1979

LB 44

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Simon, speaking to the Wesely amendment.

SENATOR SIMON: Mr. President, members of the body, I rise to oppose Senator Wesely's amendment. I do so because I think it is a matter of convenience to support increasing by a few dollars but doesn't get at the basic question, and, yes, Senator Wesely, I was surprised at your vote this morning. I think several people were. But I for one would not be one to allow you the opportunity of this amendment to crawl back from what I think is a responsibility by all the members of this body and that is whether or not the people of Nebraska should be taxed on food. The \$26 figure, granted, might be a little bit of a more reasonable and realistic figure although I would suggest, as Senator Chambers has said to Senator Maresh, in Omaha that figure would still be low where we are having to pay an additional tax. But irregardless of that, it seems to me that this body has taken it upon themselves to forget about that 9% of the people who do not receive the tax credit. We can say, well, they should not get it if they are not smart enough to fill out the form. If they are too stupid and they don't know any better, if they can't get back the money that we are going to give them, then they shouldn't receive it. Now that is one approach and that seems to be the philosophy of this body as it has voted in the past to increase the tax credit. I would maintain another posture and that is that for various and sundry reasons, and I think if you would take a look at the people who do not receive the credit, the majority of them reside in low socioeconomic backgrounds. They are not the people that make up this body, not the type of socioeconomic background of the people that represent this particular area but the people that really need it, and instead of talking about 9%, as Senator Newell mentioned, let's talk about the numbers. We are talking about 150,000 people, the size of Lincoln, Nebraska, Senator Wesely, the size of the whole area that you represent one fraction of, 150,000 people, and yet we are going to say to them, you don't get a tax credit. It seems to me that whether we increase it by \$1 or \$2, and I know that there are further amendments on the board and we can play the auction game like we have done before, I will oppose any amendment that increases the food tax credit because I don't believe that that is getting at the real issue. It is a very simple cop out for those that don't want to accept the responsibility and try to say to the people, yes, we really want to give you back what you paid in, for the clear facts of the matter are that we make a profit off of this and I think that we should be honest and straightforward and aboveboard, and if it is the posture

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