

level, obviously, the higher the level of service. With that there is no disagreement, but the increase of 10 percent each year is fairly consistent with what was attempted to do in other areas, and that is the basis for it. That would have added 144,000 the first year and 297,000 the second year, so it would have been slightly less, but it would have provided for some growth in both years of the biennium, and for that reason, we felt that that was adequate.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Hannibal, please.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Mr. Speaker and members, Senator Scofield and Senator Warner have said the same kind of thing that I was planning on saying as well, but it is worth repeating because we do have a bill that we did make to the Area Offices on Aging a 10 percent increase in their budget in aid. Senator Smith is suggesting that is not enough, that she would like to go up to 33 percent, I believe, and it is important that we stop and understand what we are doing here with this bill. We are increasing with these amendments more and more all the time. We have requests sitting on the desks down in committee that would have liked to have increased everybody by a third or more or double. If you take a look at the back of your agenda, the green sheet agenda that is on your clipboard, take a look at the bills that are sitting there for you to look at, to make a decision on spending, on Final Reading, and then look what is on Select Reading. You don't even see what is on General File yet. That is not to count all the requests that we had in committee and all the bills that we had in committee. Those are issues that you are going to have to make a spending decision on before this session is over. Now if there are issues there that you think are very important, try to weigh that with what is available. There is no question that the Department of Aging is a very good department and the services they provide out through the areas, CASA, are very worthwhile services. I might point out that many of those services are not need-based, by the way. Those are available to anybody over 65 years-old regardless of their ability to pay. It doesn't mean that they aren't worthwhile but they aren't need-based. Much of the budget increase that we did do with the committee recommendations were based on needs, abilities to pay. This area is not based on it. Obviously, they work very hard with volunteers. They do have donation guidelines that they like to see people contribute and they do a good job of that, and I am not trying to pick out one single issue and say this is a bad idea, we have got to stop