

millions that is being proposed or the brick and mortar, in some of the cases, over and above supporting some of the elderly and the truly needy people. With that, I hope you will support Senator Smith's amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. There are no other lights on. Senator Smith, would you care to close on your amendment?

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to those of you that support me on this issue, and I understand the concerns of those other people in the Appropriations Committee have. I would just simply state that the dollars appropriated were placed in LB 743. Where is LB 743? It is now dropped to the end of the line of General File. It will never come up this year. There is not an opportunity for me to address the issue except for to come with this proposal like this right now on 813. This is a choice, and Sandy Scofield brought this up, we have to make a choice. You are right, this is a choice. I think it should be a priority of this body because this money is being put into services for those that are going to be in need, those people that are in the home that need in-home care. Now you can talk about whether or not the people have money or whether they don't have money, but they are not going to get it unless they need it. That is a need-based program. Those that can afford will pay, those that can't will be supported by the additional funding through that sliding scale that they use in the Area Agencies, and speaking of policies, it is not good policy to pass bills like they did in 1982 before I came here, and still not ever have funded those bills. That isn't a good policy for this body. I guess I would say that if we are not going to fund some of these things that we have passed, then why do we pass them? Since 1982, these people have waited for the funding of this bill. We thought it was a good idea then, and now with what we know about aging populations in our state and in the nation, it is a better idea than it was then. Within this increase, only a third of my original request, we could begin to put in place a service system to show gradual gains in serving those that are truly in need of the services, to help them to stay in their homes, to be a viable part of the community, and that is important folks, because that means dollars for the economy of those communities they do reside in. If they can stay in their homes instead of going into an institution at a much higher cost, by the way, they reach a point of spend down, then they become Medicaid cases. That is why our Medicaid budget continues to zoom upward. We have got