

servicing the elderly is still a priority in my book and will be supporting this motion to add this money to the bill.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Hall, please, followed by Senator Schmit.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, I rise to support Senator Smith's amendment to the committee amendments. I noticed in Senator Johnson's discussion of the Game and Parks budget item that there was a provision placed in there for the seasonal employees. There was an increase of approximately \$75,000 for seasonal employees with regard to the increase taking place at the federal level of the minimum wage standard. That seems to me to be a reasonable request, just as the request that Senator Smith puts forth. I completely understand Senator Scofield's discussion of the rationale on the part of the committee, that it did not have these numbers at the that the discussion took place and also her, I think, at best neutral support of the committee's standing on this issue, because I think she clearly explained that it is something that we all had to make up our own minds on. And the point is just this, that their costs are going to go up for their help because of the federal minimum wage, as they should. Those costs should not be borne out of operating dollars that they currently have and that are currently stressed beyond their limits. All Senator Smith's amendment does is allow for them to continue to operate at the level that they anticipated operating at with last year's budget as it was introduced because, if you've listened so far, you know that what the Appropriation Committee did was just add back in that amount of money that had been vetoed out. So, with the Smith amendment, basically all we do is put them back on line with regard to the increase in the minimum wage, as well as the committee amendment that brings them back up to the level of the budget that was passed last year. I would urge the adoption of Senator Smith's amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Schmit, please, followed by Senator Ashford. Senator Ashford, you're up.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, much of what needs to be said has already been said. I think Senator Hall just briefly outlined the course of events that occurred with this department after the Governor's veto last year and rightly said that what we did in the committee is at least try to reinstate those dollars back in and that what this amendment