

been held back by the department. And what they're finding is there's legitimately a need for 100 or 200 thousand more dollars there, just as there is a legitimate need in Region III for 100 to 200 thousand more dollars there than the other rural regions. And so, it's my intent to support this amendment, recognizing the unique situation, and to finally put in place, now that we finally got a hospital, one of the big problems in Region IV was the hospital's lack of cooperation. They got cooperation in Region III, particularly, and some of the other areas got more help than others with the hospitals. Some hospitals just simply didn't want to deal with the mentally ill. That area in Region IV, being primarily Norfolk, weren't able to get hospitals to cooperate. So that has complicated their situation. But now they finally got a new administrator, new attitude and some potential for success in Norfolk with Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. So it's important that we deal with this, that we not lose the momentum that's there, and to get in place a program, as every other area of the state has, and the \$100,000 is far less than was originally requested. The region had originally talked in terms of 4 or 5 hundred thousand more dollars. They wanted about 7 or 800 total thousand dollars. They had 200-some thousand allocated, so they wanted 4 or 5 hundred thousand more dollars. Now they're down to 100,000, and that seems reasonable, in light of their previous request. As for the 147,000 for Region V, I'm not as clear about the circumstances here...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...with that region versus the other regions. But this is the one region that's come forward and said we're really in a budget crisis, we'll have to lay off people if we don't get help, and it's a serious problem. Maybe the same problem exists in other regions, maybe not. But at least we don't know, at this time, of any requests from the other regions. So, in deference to the obvious needs of Region and the proposals they've put forward, I'm willing to support their concerns. Again, I'm trying to emphasize that we have a chance, with the 100,000, up in the Norfolk area to deal with this problem. I wish we could get it done. We're a year past the deadline, and it would be important to move forward on that. So I very much support this amendment.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Lamb, you're next.