

expensive cost. We could have started up in the community, had those in place over the course of this year and next year, we could have had this in place this year and next year, and, in turn, then been able to downsize to a degree the Regional Center and not ended up with a situation where, in the transition, unmet needs occurred. Unfortunately, rather than take this route, we are taking the route of just cutting back and taking the extra \$2 million and putting it as a savings together on the General Fund side. It is unfortunate. We have to go through a transition. We have to recognize that we can find other ways to serve the mentally ill perhaps better, perhaps less expensively, but that is going to take some adjustment, help to make that happen. We've seen it before in welfare reform. We needed, initially, some additional monies in order to provide the training under the health care and the child care, and then in long term you save. When you have transitions in systems, you don't save immediately usually. You have to have some additional investment to make a transition, and then phase out one in order to move in the other direction. That could have been done. That won't be possible, and that's unfortunate. I also want to overall extend my concerns for the lack of funding, generally, for mental health services. The funding over the course of the last few years has been fairly steady, and I applaud the Appropriations Committee, which has provided additional funding for mental health community-based programs and children's programs. That has been a step forward this fiscal year, and I know they are trying to maintain that with this amendment for the next fiscal year, but, clearly, we underfund mental health in relation to other types of services that we have in the state. There are so many unmet needs in mental health services. It is a crying need that we need to address at some point, but I know the committee is trying to do what they can. Again, this veto will set us back, but, under the circumstances, I don't know that there is much else we can do. I am, again, hoping that as we head into the next fiscal year, we recognize there is a chance for transition. There is a chance for a change in the system. We need to take that opportunity, but we can't do it when we constantly cut back on the Regional Center side and then not send that savings back into the community where it needs to go. That's what we are talking about here is a savings on the Regional Center side will never been seen on the community-based side to help meet the needs of the mentally ill. I don't see much alternative so I rise in support of the Appropriations Committee amendment. I