



**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**STATES OF DELIBERATION**

**OF THE**

**ISLAND OF GUERNSEY**

**HANSARD**

**Royal Court House, Guernsey, Thursday, 3rd November 2022**

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**Representatives of the Island of Alderney**

Alderney Representatives S. Roberts and E. A. J. Snowdon

**The Clerk to the States of Deliberation**

S. M. D. Ross, Esq. (States' Greffier)

**Absent at the Evocation**

Deputy T. L. Bury (*indisposée*); Deputy L. J. McKenna (*indisposé*);  
Deputy A. H. Brouard (*relevé à 10h 29*); Deputy L. C. Queripel (*relevé à 9h 54*);  
Deputy A. W. Taylor (*absent*); Deputy J. P. Le Tocq (*absent de l'île*)

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# States of Deliberation

*The States met at 9.30 a.m.*

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

## **PRAYERS**

*The States' Greffier*

## **EVOCATION**

# Billet d'État XIX

## **COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL SECURITY**

### **2. Non-contributory Benefit Rates for 2023 – Propositions carried**

*Article 2.*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether, after consideration of the Policy Letter entitled 'Non-contributory Benefit Rates for 2023', dated 3rd October 2022, they are of the opinion:*

- 1. To set the income support requirement rates at the rates set out in Tables 3 and 4 of the Policy Letter, from 6th January 2023.*
- 2. To remove the income support limit of weekly income for a person living in the community, with effect from 6th January 2023.*
- 3. To set the income support limits of weekly income for people residing in residential homes, nursing homes, EMI (dementia care) accommodation, and the Guernsey Cheshire Home at the rates set out in Table 6 of the Policy Letter, from 6th January 2023.*
- 4. To set the income support earnings disregard at £40 per week, from 6th January 2023.*
- 5. To set the income support disregards for carer's allowance and other benefits and income at the amounts set out in Table 7 of the Policy Letter, from 6th January 2023.*
- 6. To set the income support capital limits, which also apply in respect of access to social housing, at the amounts set out in Table 8 of the Policy Letter, from 6th January 2023.*
- 7. To set the personal allowances payable to persons in Guernsey and Alderney residential or nursing homes who are in receipt of income support and to persons in United Kingdom hospitals or care homes who are in receipt of income support at the amounts set out in Table 10 of the Policy Letter, from 6th January 2023.*
- 8. To set the maximum rent allowances at the amounts set out in Table 11 of the Policy Letter, from 6th January 2023.*
- 9. To set the rate of family allowance at £15.80 per week, from 2nd January 2023.*
- 10. To set the rates and annual income limit for severe disability benefit and carer's allowance at the rates and limit set out in Table 12 of the Policy Letter, from 2nd January 2023.*

11. To set the payment tariffs under the Mesothelioma Compensation Scheme at the rates set out in Table 16 in Appendix 4 to the Policy Letter, from 1st January 2023.

12. To direct the preparation of such legislation as may be necessary to give effect to the above decisions.

**The States' Greffier:** Billet d'État XIX. Article 2, the Committee for Employment & Social Security – 'Non-contributory benefit rates for 2023'.

5

**The Bailiff:** I invite the President of the Committee, Deputy Roffey, to open debate, please.

**Deputy Roffey:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff.

10 Members, at the heart of this policy letter, it is all based around an RPIX uplift of 7%, which was the figure for the second quarter of this year and was the latest figure available when the policy letter was published. But I do stress that I mean a 7% uplift in total, year on year. So a combination of the 5% increase already approved by this Assembly and the very minor balancing increases proposed in this policy letter. It is definitely not a 7% increase on top of the previous 5% increase, as suggested by one very confused economist in *The Guernsey Press* recently.

15 However, the detailed proposals are slightly more complicated than that for several reasons. About once a decade it is important to recalibrate the basket of goods and services on which the Income Support requirement rates are calculated. That exercise has been carried out and it has resulted in the relative requirement rates for different categories of claimants changing relative to each other. For example, the requirement rate for the youngest children, under five, has gone up, but elsewhere – for example, adult householders – the requirement rate has actually gone down a fraction in real terms. Overall, the result is a very modest increase indeed in the Income Support budget, before adjusting for inflation.

20 It was partly because of this adjustment between the different categories of claimant that ESS was only able to propose an interim increase of 5% in the benefit rates from the start of last month. We could not simply bring forward that planned 7% RPIX increase from January to October because, after the recalibration, some claimants were only going to qualify for an uplift which was marginally below that RPIX adjustment. So those claimants would either get no extra payment or, in the majority of cases, a very small further increase in January and effectively their annual increase will be below inflation.

25 Others will see an above inflation increase but the total Income Support package after that recalibration is being adjusted by 7% across the board. I hope that is clear, although I know it is quite complicated and I am happy to answer any further questions – or any questions, rather – if any further clarification is required.

30 The other major change we are proposing is the scrapping of the iniquitous weekly income limit. This limit means a small percentage of claimants are not able to afford the very basic basket of goods and services which is used to calculate the requirement rates and those baskets are very basic. Indeed, a previous States deemed households unable to afford the contents of those baskets to be in intolerable poverty. I think that was the term coined originally by Deputy Perrot.

35 So at the moment we use Income Support to ensure that almost no one is in intolerable poverty, but we uniquely make an exception for a small number of larger households and currently say that it is perfectly okay for them to live in intolerable poverty. ESS does not think that it is okay, particularly when those who suffer most are families with several children and we surely owe better than that to Guernsey children.

40 I know I have heard some Members opine that people should not have children if they cannot afford them. That is very harsh. It is certainly not the children to blame and it is also completely at odds with the concerns that were being expressed just a couple of weeks ago about Guernsey's low fertility rates during the population debate.

45 But, more importantly, it also ignores the way in which most of these larger families are created these days. In very many cases, they are the result of two separate family units merging, where both

50 partners already have children from previous relationships. Ironically, if those in such relationships chose to stop short of creating a new family unit and maintained two separate households instead, it would actually cost Income Support far more, not least because of the need to pay out two separate rent allowances, but also because in those circumstances both households would be paid their full requirement rate.

55 But as soon as they get together, saving the taxpayer money, we say that we will not then fully fund their basic requirement rates, because of the number of children involved in the household, and plunge them into what this Assembly has deemed to be intolerable poverty. And, of course, their children along with them – a strange approach to corporate parenting.

60 Several things are very important to emphasise here. The first is that removing the weekly income limit will *not* – I repeat, *not* – mean no limit on the amount of Income Support payable. Every claimant will still be strictly limited in the benefit they receive. The rent allowance is strictly capped so that private landlords cannot just put up rents and expect the taxpayer to pick up the tab.

65 All any claimant is entitled above that rent allowance is this specific requirement rate which, as I have said, is calculated on a very basic basket of goods and services which any Member, if they want to see, can take a look at. In fact, I have got some examples with me and we are talking about very modest goods and services indeed. So basic, in fact, that many families are now coming forward, during the cost-of-living crisis, and seeking the help of ESS, only to be told they do not qualify.

70 Often the income of those families has not actually changed that much. Their work circumstances are the same but their outgoings have risen significantly. We are having to say no to very genuine cases because the requirement rates under Income Support are so modest.

75 I know that some question how it could be remotely possible to be in poverty with a household income of circa £50,000. Well, for most people, it certainly cannot be. But I am afraid that in this expensive Island, if that is the joint income of both parents – i.e. they are both in modestly paid jobs, paying about £25,000 a year – and an enormous chunk of it, sometimes nearly half of it, goes in rent and when they have, say, five children to feed and clothe, then sometimes that level of income actually is not enough to provide even the basics. We know because we have done those calculations and, as I have said, the benefit is only payable when the family income falls short of a very basic requirement rate indeed.

80 Thirdly, I have to put to rest the idea that people are sitting at home and claiming this sort of income in benefits. They are not. Income Support is an *in-work* benefit and typically such households have at least one and very often two people in work. We illustrate that in the policy letter with extracts from a letter that we received at ESS from one householder whose family is impacted by the weekly income limit and he wanted the States to understand their position. I think  
85 it might be helpful if I quote from that letter a bit more expansively:

Dear all Deputies, I am writing this personal letter in the hope that you will get a sense of understanding of how the benefit limitation is affecting my family and other families like mine. The Guernsey's benefit limit, as you know, is currently capped at £930 per week. This means that if me and my husband earn £700 a week between us we are topped up to an amount of £230 to make the amount of £930 in total. Once £400 rent is paid, plus other bills on top – electricity, gas, phone bills – it leaves us with very little. Our weekly requirement rate, stated by Social Security for cost-of-living, having me, my husband and four children, works out at over £1,000 and the way the benefit is worked out means we are receiving £133 less a week than we should actually get. Me and my husband are locally born citizens of Guernsey, currently living in States' housing with our four children; two of our own and one each from past relationships.

As I said, very typically the way large families are assembled these days. Back to the letter:

Unfortunately, we were not born into rich families to give us the opportunity academically. However, we were very fortunate to be taught by our parents to work hard and appreciate the small things in life. We have both worked pretty much from the get-go of leaving secondary school. My husband works as a –

– perfectly respectable trade, but there are not many of them, so I am not going to mention it because it will identify them –

– [blank] and I work as a hair stylist. I work in a salon and I am now in my eighth year of working for them. Some of my clients are people that have very high-end careers: doctors, lawyers, surgeons, accountants. Believe it or not, I have also cut one of your wonderful Deputies' hair a couple of times.

I do not know what wonderful Deputies we have got, but anyway! (*Laughter*)

However, little do these people know, that are sat in my chair in front of me every day of the week, that me and my family are classed as one of the poorest in Guernsey. I love my career as a hair stylist. Nothing beats seeing the smile on someone's face after a transformation. Me and my family very much appreciate the help that we have had from you, the States of Guernsey. We are very lucky to have a lovely four-bedroom property with a garden that we try our very best to maintain and keep tidy. However, this last year, we have really been feeling the effects of the benefit limitation and it's our children who are suffering. Me and my husband are quite happy to go without and we've always thought in the way that there's always someone worse off than us, which is probably true somewhere in the world that we live in. It just seems lately, it just feels, with rising costs of living, that every day is a real struggle. The bank balance goes to zero within a week or two of getting paid, because the bills are so high, not to mention the food shopping is ludicrous. I dread going food shopping now because there's just less and less that we can afford to buy and I cannot emphasise how much this is having a detrimental impact on everyday life for us. For anyone to truly understand how it feels to just break down and cry on the odd occasion because all I do is worry about finances, they would have to be in that situation themselves. And until one day they are, they will never understand. I really do hope you can take on board everything I have written in my letter. God bless you all. A mum that's trying her best.

90 Members, this is not at all atypical. In fact, it is very typical. Solving the situation where we wilfully leave an, admittedly small, but significant number of larger Guernsey families in intolerable poverty comes at a cost. I know it does. But it is a fairly modest one.

We all know that the current situation, which hits children so hard, is plain wrong. I know the States recognise this too because otherwise they would not have supported raising the weekly  
95 income limit by more than inflation in recent years; and you have done and I thank you for that. But in reality, wherever you set an arbitrary limit just changes the dividing line between those claimants that we do fund for the level required to afford the basic basket of goods, to avoid intolerable poverty, and those that we *do not* fund sufficiently. And it is really time we stop this.

There will still be strict limits on how much Income Support can be paid, but those will be  
100 calculated using the requirement rates and the difference is that that approach is sensitive to the exact family circumstances. It is a much better and superior approach and I thank P&R – I really do thank P&R – for their unequivocal support in making this long overdue reform.

Moving on, we are also proposing the first increase in the earnings disregard for many years,  
105 from £35 to £40 a week. This is the amount that claimants could earn before their benefit starts to be reduced pound for pound. Actually, it is not intended as a work incentive. I know many people think it is but it is not intended as that and mainly because it is not needed, as such.

Our experience is that in the vast majority of cases, people on Income Support are actually very keen to work as much as possible without any particular prompting. But the earnings disregard is a recognition that going to work involves some modest cost, such as transport, for instance, and we  
110 really want to make sure that nobody is actually worse off by working than they would be by relying on benefits. However, it is only fair to point out that this £5 increase, the first for some time in earnings disregard, is by far the most expensive element of the package of proposals before you today, coming in today at £222,000 a year.

We are also proposing a higher-than-inflation increase – uniquely higher-than-inflation increase;  
115 10% – in the Carer's Allowance. In doing so, we are hoping that we are picking up on the mood music from this States over the last few years, which has been consistently that the level of this benefit is too modest.

This does not come cheap. This will cost the taxpayer an extra £100,000. Not £100,000 from where we are now but £100,000 just for the difference between had it been RPIX and what we are  
120 proposing. So it is not a cheap measure, but it is also a recognition that the full review of the whole system has yet to reach the top of the to-do list of our small policy team.

However, there are a couple of things that I need to make very clear. First of all, in all of ESS's Budget headings, payments for Carer's Allowance has been rising much faster than any other Budget heading. In fact payments for this benefit have risen by 35% from £1.9 million to £2.6 million



125 over the last five years alone. Why? Only 12.4% of that increase is due to the benefit rising by  
inflation. The rest is solely down to an increasing number of claimants. The number of claimants has  
increased 15% in the last three years alone.

It is worth stressing that in Guernsey the Carer's Allowance is available to anybody who does  
more than 35 hours of caring each week for someone in receipt of Severe Disability Allowance. So  
130 it is not in any way restricted to those who have had to give up work or even reduce hours in order  
to care. That means it is very different to the sort of benefit paid in other places, such as Jersey,  
where the benefit is set at a significantly higher level but eligibility is very strictly limited.

Effectively, in Jersey, it is regarded as an earnings *replacement* benefit, whereas in Guernsey we  
use Income Support for that purpose and the Carer's Allowance is instead an income *enhancement*  
135 benefit. For example, in Jersey, no one over the state pension age is entitled to claim Carer's  
Allowance, but in Guernsey we have 190 claimants that are above States' pension age. Likewise in  
Jersey, it is only available for those who work less than 15 hours a week, whereas in Guernsey you  
can work any amount of hours and still claim the benefit, providing you provide those 35 hours of  
caring a week. Of course we realise there is a particular burden on any carer who does need to give  
140 up or reduce work in order to care, but we use Income Support to address that issue.

Speaking personally, my initial reaction is I would hate to go down the route of much higher  
allowances, but only awarded to those who can show that they have given up work to care, because  
so many current claimants of the Guernsey Carer's Allowance – I estimate about 40% – would be  
disqualified and no longer get that benefit. But that is a sort of assessment – whether it is better to  
145 swap to a Jersey-style income replacement scheme, with higher allowances but narrow eligibility,  
or to stick with the Guernsey approach of wide eligibility but slightly more modest benefits – that  
is the sort of issue that will no doubt loom large in the forthcoming review.

But one thing is beyond doubt: trying to marry Jersey's level of allowances with Guernsey's  
eligibility criteria would be utterly unaffordable for any community. So it definitely needs a full  
150 review but what we are proposing in the meantime is a modest but significant real-terms increase  
as a holding position.

However, before finishing on the Carer's Allowance, I want to clarify one extremely important  
thing because I think that many Members are suffering under a misapprehension. Actually, no, on  
reflection, I think it is important that I correct that misapprehension, but it is probably best in the  
155 debate on the amendment so I will come in as early as I can during that debate, because there is a  
really important point that needs to be made but I will park it until then.

But before finishing I think I had better address the elephant in the room. As I said in opening,  
the proposals were based on the most recent RPIX figure known at the time of going to print, which  
was 7%. But we know that RPIX has already risen from 7% to 8% and it is far from clear whether  
160 that has now peaked or it will be even higher at the start of next year, when the benefits increases  
actually come into effect. I think it is far more likely that we will have at least one more quarter of  
rising RPIX, hopefully falling after that.

If it is the latter, then in most cases these cash increases will represent a real-terms decrease in  
benefits from 1st January. So what will we do in those circumstances? Sir, our position on these  
165 non-contributory benefits is exactly the same as it was during the pensions debate a few weeks ago:  
we reserve the right to return to the States with an interim increase proposal if it seems necessary.

But returning to the package before Members today, taken as a whole, unashamedly, it does  
represent added cost to the taxpayer. The MIS adjustments result in an incredibly modest increase  
in spending, as does scrapping the iniquitous weekly income limit, as does the 10% increase in  
170 Carer's Allowance, as does the increase in the earnings disregard. How can we justify that? Clearly,  
these proposals come against the backdrop of a structural deficit in Guernsey finances, which needs  
fixing. We talked about that at length yesterday and ESS is very aware of that, as I hope all Members  
will be when we are considering amendments later on.

But it comes against another backdrop as well. This package of proposals comes against a  
175 backdrop of the biggest cost-of-living crisis for many decades and most governments around the  
world are doing all that they can to ease the burden for their citizens and particularly for their most

180 financially vulnerable households. In comparison with what most other countries and territories are doing, this package is modest in the way it seeks to help our most vulnerable households, but it is what we can afford and it will help. We are really grateful for the strong support from P&R for this package and we hope that Members will support it too.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Queripel, is it your wish to be relevéd? (**Deputy Queripel:** Please, sir.) That may help what happens next.

185 Deputy St Pier, Amendment 1. Are you proposing to lay that?

**Deputy St Pier:** I am sir, and I am just wondering whether it would actually make sense to lay them both together but only take the vote on Amendment 2 if 1 is defeated? That would avoid the need to lay the second one.

190 **The Bailiff:** I am very happy if that is how you would like to proceed, bearing in mind it is both you and Deputy Queripel who are proposing and seconding both amendments.

[Amendment 1.](#)

*To amend Proposition 10 to insert "save that the 2023 weekly rate of Carer's Allowance in the Table shall read '£114.88'" after "Table 12 of the Policy Letter".*

[Amendment 2.](#)

*To amend Proposition 10 to insert "save that the 2023 weekly rate of Carer's Allowance in the Table shall read '£105.69'" after "Table 12 of the Policy Letter".*

**Deputy St Pier:** Yes, thank you very much, sir, and I am sure the Assembly will welcome dealing with this in that way as well.

195 I can be relatively brief in introducing these amendments. They are very straightforward and, for the benefit of those outside the Assembly, they are to change the proposed rate of Carer's Allowance for 2023 in the policy letter before us to either £105.69 in Amendment 2, or £114.88 in Amendment 1.

200 Sir, Deputy Le Tocq, during the Budget debate yesterday, did make reference to this Amendment, knowing that it was likely to be laid today, and he also drew attention to the language in the Rule 4(1) (a) information, that:

The proposition contributes to the States' objectives and policy plans, particularly Priority 3 Community Investment in the Government Work Plan to enable accessible and affordable 21st century health and care services.

205 It was that latter part of that sentence that he drew attention to. Of course, my riposte to him is that is the language which is contained in the Government Work Plan in relation to Priority 3. So it has been recognised by this States, by this Assembly and by this Government that, through the Government Work Plan, enabling accessible and affordable 21st century health and care services is a priority during this term.

210 As is noted in the explanatory note in relation to both amendments, there was a policy letter in 2016, which had a long gestation, entitled SLAWS. A horrible acronym, but it means the Supported Living and Ageing Well Strategy. It finally popped out of the sausage machine in 2016 and it directed the Committee for Employment & Social Security in conjunction with P&R to investigate extending the Long-term Care Insurance Scheme to include care and support at home. In other words, where care is being provided at home rather than in a residential or nursing home environment, to explore the possibility that that could be funded from the Long-term Care Fund. In other words, from Social Security contributions, rather than from General Revenue, which of course is where the Carer's Allowance is funded from.

215 The Proposition also said it should include a review of Carer's Allowance for that very reason, which made perfect sense. That review has not yet commenced and there is no prospect of it

commencing imminently. It is not a priority in itself and, sir, it is our contention, from Deputy Queripel and I, that it is simply not reasonable that carers should continue to be prejudiced by the States' inability to complete the work that it has, the States of Deliberation has itself, determined is necessary.

220

I am not critical of the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security in relation to this delay. They have had much work on their plate and, as with many other Committees, with limited resources. In particular, the two big policy items of this term for them so far have of course been the Discrimination Ordinance and Secondary Pensions. This States has thrown up some road blocks on the journey for those two pieces of work, but has given them additional work, taken additional resources and therefore drawn those resources away from other projects, including potentially this one as well.

225

So I think it is only right that I should acknowledge the very real pressures that there are on the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security in discharging this resolution of the States. It is an extensive piece of work and it will take some time, but a lot of time has passed. I have raised this issue in each of the last two years' debates on this policy letter and I am grateful that Deputy Roffey and his Committee have acknowledged it in what they describe as reading the mood music of this Assembly, which I think were probably a reflection of the comments which I and perhaps one or two other Members made on this point during this previous debate.

230

I absolutely welcome again Deputy Roffey this morning acknowledging this review is very much needed. But I would contend, sir, that what he described as the above-inflation holding position, a 10% increase in Carer's Allowance, is as much a finger in the air as that which is proposed by Deputy Queripel and I in relation to these two amendments. In other words, it is as subjective and lacking the same objectivity in picking a number to increase the rate by.

235

I do also acknowledge – and I think this may be the point which Deputy Roffey will come in on at some point – that for every pound that we raise Carer's Allowance by, there is a commensurate reduction in Income Support. Many of those that are in receipt of Carer's Allowance will be claiming Income Support, but clearly not all, otherwise there would not be a bill for the increase in the rate of the Allowance that is proposed by the Committee. So there are carers who will benefit by a further increase as proposed by these amendments.

240

Sir, we have a carers' strategy, we tell carers in this Assembly and outside this Assembly how important they are, how valued they are, how valuable they are. We metaphorically clap carers and we tell them we know that Carer's Allowance is outdated. We tell them that we know Carer's Allowance needs review. And we tell them, as we did during the Budget debate yesterday in relation to other matters, that we need to do something about it. We need to do things differently. But then we wring our hands and we say, 'Well, there's nothing we can do just yet.'

245

That, in essence is the rationale for bringing this amendment from Deputy Queripel and I: that we feel that we have reached the end of that particular proverbial road and we do need to show more than a metaphorical clap or pat on the back to carers. And that actually, frankly, the States' position is embarrassing, it is a disgrace and it is insulting. That actually, for a carer to complete a minimum of 35 hours caring for the equivalent of £2.62 for each of those 35 hours, it is an insult.

250

This amendment ... again, it is a holding position. These amendments are a holding position in the same way as the original Proposition before the Assembly. But it is a way in which this Assembly can indicate to carers that we really do recognise the challenges they face, that we really do acknowledge and are embarrassed by and apologise for the delay in undertaking the review that we know needs to be undertaken.

255

Obviously it is incumbent on us to talk about the cost of this and that is spelt out in the Rule 4(1) information part (d) paragraph, that Amendment 1 would add £500,000 potentially to the General Revenue cost in 2023 and Amendment 2 would add £166,000. I referred in my intervention to Deputy Le Tocq yesterday, that of course the funding for this would need to come from the Budget Reserve now the Budget has been approved; £166,000 is 0.7% of the Budget Reserve and £500,000 is 2.3% of the Budget Reserve. So it is eminently fundable from the Budget Reserve.

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265

I am sure I am going to return to this subject in summing up, sir, because I have no doubt whatsoever that there is going to be a lot of, perhaps confected outrage that we are proposing an unfunded increase and how hypocritical that is, particularly for me, as a former Treasury lead, who has been so hard on similar amendments in the past and given the bruising comments I made yesterday on the Budget in relation to spending overall. But I will very happily – assuming, sir, that the matters that are raised in debate, which I feel certain they will, and it will give an opportunity therefore to respond to them in debate in summing up – I will deal with those matters should they arise at that point.

Sir, for the reasons I have set out, we do commend Amendment 1 in particular to the Assembly and, failing that, Amendment 2.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Queripel, do you formally second both amendments?

Deputy Queripel: I do, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Thank you very much.

I am going to call Deputy Roffey as he indicated he wishes to speak moderately early on these matters.

**Deputy Roffey:** Yes, I would like to.

Of course these amendments put ESS in a slightly strange position, because part of our role, as we see it, is advocating for the more vulnerable in our community and of course we would like to see the Carer's Allowance being as high as the States could possibly afford. But the reason that the non-contributory benefits, which are paid for out of General Revenue, as opposed to out of contributions, come at the same time as the Budget, is that there does have to be some realism about how much money is coming in and how much money is going out. This is just the same, in a way, as the £500-and-whatever million we voted in Committee budgets yesterday. This is money coming straight out of what we need to raise from General Revenue.

Before I go on to what I was going to say, I think I need to correct to some extent the suggestion from Deputy St Pier that back in 2016 ESS and P&R were charged with the SLAWS investigation and we have not seen anything back. We have, of course. We reported back fully on SLAWS in 2020, in the dying days of the last Assembly. That Assembly did approve – good news – the extension of the Long-term Care Insurance Scheme in principle to fund care in the home. That was very much dealing with the professional care rather than the informal care that the Carer's Allowance deals with, but they did approve it.

Unfortunately, they refused to approve any of the funding mechanisms to allow that to happen. So we are now in an absolutely cleft stick and as part of the Government Work Plan, one of the top priorities will be to go back and revisit that work and bring another set of proposals to the States. So it is not true that we have not done anything on that. We spent an enormous amount of time working on that but the Assembly left us in a difficult position.

But Deputy St Pier is right about the main thing I want to stress and that is that if the main desire of this Assembly is to give more help to those who have had to actually give up work to care for someone, then just putting up the Carer's Allowance, in many cases, will not give them any extra cash at all. How so? Because although I have to say I have not done, interrogated the data to know exactly what the stats are, but I suspect that the vast majority of people in those circumstances have had to give up work entirely. I accept there will be a few with independent means that will not be on Income Support, but the majority of those will fall back on Income Support to provide for their living costs when they are not able to work.

But the way Income Support works is that it assesses your total income requirement rate and tops up your other income with a level of Income Support to ensure you have reached that

320 requirement rate, although it does disregard the first £35 of earnings. And likewise it does the same for Carer's Allowance and hopefully that will move to £40 next year if the States agree this morning.

325 So for those claimants, increasing the Carer's Allowance by whatever amount would not put an extra penny on their total income because they will still qualify for exactly the same thing: the requirement rate under Income Support, plus hopefully £40 a week. But if any other source of income, including Carer's Allowance, has gone up, then their Income Support payments will go down by an identical amount.

330 Deputy St Pier is quite right that, actually, not all people in receipt of Carer's Allowance are on Income Support. In fact it is a minority. I think have got the figures somewhere that it is ... Of the 567 recipients, it is only 150 that are in receipt of Income Support. But my point is that people who have had to give up work entirely, and therefore, we keep being told, are only getting so much per hour for caring, are highly likely to be in that 150 that are on Income Support and therefore will not benefit in any way whatsoever from either of these amendments.

335 So what are our proposals in the Billet? Those carers who are on Income Support will get the RPIX increase in their requirement rate, plus an extra £5 a week, while those carers not on Income Support – the majority, I admit – will get the full 10%. But the only people to gain any extra benefit under these amendments would be those not on Income Support, which very often means those that are still in work.

340 So I just wanted to put to rest any idea that a higher allowance will help full-time carers who are unable to work. I think that is profoundly misplaced because it will not in the vast majority of cases. But what would help that category would be a revision of the earnings disregard scheme to allow Income Support claimants to retain more of their Carer's Allowance over and above their requirement rates.

345 With that in mind, I am happy, if it helps, and maybe it does not, to assure Members now – this is why I wanted to come in early – that if the major review of the Carer's Allowance has not been completed in the meantime, and I doubt it will have been, then in next year's uprating report, we will include a section on the pros and cons of doing just that. Of changing the earnings disregard so that people can keep more of their Carer's Allowance as well as their Income Support levels and we will include any appropriate Propositions.

350 Because I know what Deputy St Pier and Deputy Queripel are trying to do, but I think if they are targeting – and I may be wrong – those people who have had to give up work entirely to look after a loved one, they have slightly misdirected. But I get the message. I think there is a more targeted and actually more cost-effective way that we can do that and I undertake to include that in next year's uprating report.

355 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Queripel.

**Deputy Queripel:** Sir, I listened very closely to what Deputy Roffey said when he spoke, but like yesterday, seeing as I have already written a speech, I am going to make it anyway in the hope that I can reach out to some of my colleagues because there are some crucial issues to be considered here.

360 In relation to the disregard review that Deputy Roffey just referred to, where are those resources going to come from? Bearing in mind that carers have been waiting six years for their review due to a lack of resources. I very much appreciate ESS always do their utmost to pursue any review they are asked to undertake, but resources, particularly now and going forward, are always going to be scarce, so any review risks being derailed. With the best of intentions, it risks being derailed.

365 We all know what should have been done but what has not been done, so once again we are where we should not be. The review has not taken place, but ESS had to focus on other priorities and I really get that. It is not their fault. There is always too much to do and not enough resources to carry these things out with. So I get that, but the reality is carers have been waiting and waiting and waiting and a carer needs to care for someone for a minimum of 35 hours a week to qualify for the allowance and for that they receive an allowance of £91.90 a week.

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What they really should be getting is £400 a week. Even if they did get that, they would still save the States around about £500 a week anyway by keeping someone in their home and not for them to have to then go into a care home, which also of course would free up a bed. Deputy McKenna has said that on more than one occasion in this Chamber and in the media.

375 But that is a debate for another day. Although I am wondering when that day is going to come because paragraph 5.6 tells us the review will take place 'when resources allow'. So here we go again. It is all down to resources: when resources allow. There are no spare resources, so where are the resources going to come from for the Carer's Allowance review and the disregard review?

380 No one knows when that is going to be and where they are going to come from, so let's send carers a signal that we are aware of their plight by supporting this amendment. Let's not just live in Cloud-cuckoo-land and say, 'Oh, everything's going to be okay, the review will happen one day.' Carers deserve a lot more consideration and courtesy and respect than that, surely?

385 Sir, I have said on more than one occasion, my colleagues know, I am an optimistic realist and I honestly cannot see any further review happening in this term. So what this amendment seeks to do, these amendments seek to do, is give carers a bit of hope, give them an assurance that we not only acknowledge their plight, but we want to do what we can to lift their spirits a little. This is not always about money, this is about people's feelings, their spirits.

390 It is important that we realise not every carer is caring for a partner or family member in the same house. Not so long ago I was working with a disabled lady trying to help her secure some financial assistance to repair her house. She had a carer, who came in all day, every day, Monday to Friday. The carer was also caring for another lady in another parish who was a friend of hers for about 20 hours a week. So she spent 60 hours a week caring for two different women in two different parishes and she received less than £90 a week. She was totally demoralised. This is what I am talking about here: lifting people's spirits. We cannot just leave people demoralised. We have to try and help them.

395 She was only entitled to one Carer's Allowance under the rules, so it was out of the goodness of her heart that she was caring for the other lady and we really do rely on people's good nature far too much. We cannot carry on doing that. It is totally unsustainable in the sort of situation I have just described, of course. But that is not just a one-off. I am aware of several more similar cases.

400 Things are difficult enough when a carer is living with and caring for a partner or another member of their family in the same house, but when they are driving across the Island five days a week it is a totally different, demoralising ball game. They have the cost of petrol and the wear and tear of their vehicle to take into consideration, as well as their time.

405 I understand completely that there is a lot of fulfilment to be attained from caring for someone. I was a carer myself a few years ago when I lived in the UK. I cared for a friend of mine. I did not receive an allowance. I did it for nothing because I had the time and I wanted to do it. Even then I found myself getting demoralised on occasion. Extremely difficult at times to fulfil my commitment to my friend because I had never been a carer before; I was pitchforked into it. I thought I could do it but after a while, I found myself floundering. It is not until one is in the role that one realises the magnitude of the enormous responsibilities a carer undertakes to ensure the safety and the well-being of the person in their care.

415 I have said in my speeches several times over the years I would love to be part of a States' Assembly that became known as the States of compassion. That would be a wonderful feeling: to be part of an Assembly that became known as a States of compassion. Here is an opportunity for us to head in that direction by supporting this amendment. It is only a small step, but surely it is a step in the right direction. Because, as Deputy St Pier said when he spoke, carers currently receive the sum of £2.60 an hour if they care for someone for 35 hours a week. But of course a partner or family member living in the same house will be doing a lot more than that. They can do 100 hours or even more caring for a loved one. Of course the ones who do that receive less than £1 an hour.

420 Carers out in our community are unsung heroes. They make a tremendous contribution to our society. Surely they deserve a lot more recognition and consideration than we currently give for making such a tremendous contribution. It is obvious carers do not do it for the money, because

the money is not there. The reality is we have got a huge problem to deal with in the future because the reality is we are going to need a lot more carers in the future, if we are serious about trying to support people in their own home, to allow them to stay in their own home, as opposed to going into a care home.

As I said earlier, I only realised how stressful the role was when I became a carer for a friend in the UK. It was like being on a conveyor belt sometimes or in a runaway train. There was no respite. I could not afford to get ill or even catch a cold. That is all part and parcel of the responsibility a carer has to undertake and deal with and when one is in that sort of position, that sort of situation, gestures of goodwill mean an awful lot. They are like a light in the darkness.

That is what these amendments are. They are gestures of goodwill toward our good-natured fellow Islanders, who have hearts of gold, and who really could do with a bit of a lift right now, psychologically, as well as financially. I have spoken to quite a few carers over the years who are completely demoralised. They just carry on doing it. Carry on doing the role, undertaking the role for a loved one, for a friend, someone they never even knew before who was once a complete stranger.

I appreciate this is one of those difficult decisions for some of my colleagues, sir, but in an attempt to encourage the majority of them to vote in favour of at least one of these amendments, I simply point out we can give our carers the psychological lift they so desperately need and deserve by making sure at least one of these amendments succeeds. The headline will read 'Carers receive an extra £22.98 a week'. I get that some will then have a little bit of their Income Support taken away, but not every carer receives Income Support, Deputy St Pier has already pointed out. But surely to see that headline sends out a much better psychological message than, 'Carers receive an extra £9.19 a week' as the Propositions ask us to agree to.

Surely the rationale behind ESS proposing their increase also applies to these amendments? ESS are wanting to give more support to carers due to the current financial climate, which is exactly the same sort of reason behind these amendments. And I know, having been a carer, which headline I would like to read if I was a carer now to give me a psychological lift and lift my spirits, especially if I was one of those who did not receive Income Support.

As regards Amendment 2, again it is a gesture of good will towards the good-natured people out in our community who have hearts of gold and really could do with a bit of a lift right now. This, obviously, it is not about the money. An extra £4.60 is not going to make a great deal of difference, although every little bit helps, of course. It is more psychological, lifting people's spirits, I am talking about here. We tend to forget that a lot in the States. We always talk about finance. I know money talks, but when someone is demoralised what they need is their spirits to be lifted. They need hope.

So I ask colleagues to vote in favour of at least one of these gestures of good will to carers here in the Island. They make an enormous contribution to our society. We could not do without them and we are going to need a lot more in the future.

In closing, in response to a set of Rule 14 questions I submitted to ESS in June 2021, I was told 528 carers currently receive the Allowance. Deputy Roffey updated that of course when he spoke, 560-odd. Mr Peter Harwood, the head of Carers Guernsey, has often told us there are between 4,000 and 6,000 carers here in the Island and only 560-odd receive the Carer's Allowance. So I urge every single one of them who does not receive Income Support to apply for the Allowance. They are not only entitled to it, they thoroughly deserve it.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Brouard, is it your wish to be relevéd?

**Deputy Brouard:** Yes please, sir.  
Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

475 **Deputy Inder:** Just briefly, sir. Deputy Roffey has got a bit of a problem here because he cannot really make more – well he cannot until we hear him so hopefully Deputy de Sausmarez might help – but when you actually read this policy letter and we have seen it time and time again from policy letters coming out of ESS, lots of hyperbole, very little data.

480 I have just read it quickly. Focus group; they had a letter from a parishioner; they consulted with the Guernsey Welfare Service; hardship; damage and deprivation; negative self-image; 'evidence to suggest'; therefore the Committee proposes. There is nothing in this policy letter, full stop, that they can effectively defeat Deputy St Pier's amendment. They cannot do it. We do not know the extent of the issue. We have heard from Deputy Queripel, through a set of Rule 14 questions, that, I think he said there is about 560. The Guernsey Carers' Association reckons there is 6,000.

485 Again, we get this time and time again from ESS. Very little data, lots of policy and absolutely clueless what the extent of the problem is and the cost to the States of Guernsey. I am actually tempted to support this. I really am tempted to support this. The only thing that has thrown me, somewhat, and I would like to hear from the VP, and I think, if I heard it correctly, if I am correct, what Deputy Roffey said, he said it does not matter if this goes through because effectively it will be cost-neutral because some money will be removed from somewhere else.

490 That is the only thing. If there is no point ... I am happy to give way. That suits me fine.

**Deputy Roffey:** No, sir, it certainly will not be cost-neutral: it will cost an extra £1½ million a year. What I am saying is that for the people I think Deputy St Pier is particularly trying to help, i.e. people  
495 who have given up all forms of employment to care, those are likely to be on Income Support and for those they will lose pound-for-pound Income Support for what ... There are others who *will* gain and that is why there is a cost of £1½ million.

**Deputy Inder:** Thank you for that clarification, Deputy Roffey, but I am going to sit and listen to the rest of the debate because, again, I think like we said yesterday, when we spoke about the backbone of carers, carers are the backbone of Guernsey. They are. I think the difficulty some of us have is, to be perfectly frank with you, their joint positions. It seems here we are arguing over £15 a week for some people. Okay, the impact of it might be £1½ million as Deputy Roffey said, but next week or next month we are going to be talking about massive capital projects of £24 million, which  
500 we are expecting just to nod through the Assembly because it is the right thing to do.

505 There is a lot of wastage in the States and I think it was mentioned by Deputy Murray yesterday, and I wonder. I do not think always ESS, with the greatest respect to them ... is that they focus so much on the big policy stuff that really will not have much of an effect – I do not believe it will – spending hundreds of thousands pounds with consultants and yet they are going to quibble over 15 quid. Not very good at all.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Aldwell.

**Deputy Aldwell:** Sir, I am required to make a declaration of interest, being a carer, and I shall  
515 be abstaining from both of these amendments.  
Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Ferbrache.

520 **Deputy Ferbrache:** Sir, everybody, whether they are in this Assembly or otherwise, sympathises with the role of carers, whether they are a formal carer, an informal carer, a paid carer or an unpaid carer. They are the backbone of Guernsey, says Deputy Inder, and he is absolutely right.

525 Deputy Roffey, in his opening, explained that there are 560, 570. He gave the exact figure of carers and about a quarter of those would not be affected in the sense it is a pound-for-pound adjustment – 150 people thereabouts, he said. Deputy St Pier said, 'People might think I', that is he, is being hypocritical when he said something at about 10 past/quarter past five yesterday afternoon



and he is saying something pretty different at a quarter to 10 this morning. I do not think it is hypocritical at all because I believe he is bringing this forward sincerely. But it is inconsistent.

530 We have to face the fact that if either of these amendments are passed, the bigger one is £500,000, the other one is £166,000, that will be an annual requirement, an annual burden on the taxpayer of Guernsey. An annual figure that will have to be paid.

Deputy Inder's, I have to say somewhat flippant remark, we are going to consider whether we are going to spend £24 million on something else, that is a completely different issue. *(Interjection)* Sorry, I did not realise that Deputy Inder was speaking as well. It is a completely different issue in  
535 relation to the one we will address. We will address that on its merits at the appropriate time. We are addressing this one on its merits at the appropriate time.

Deputy Queripel said, and I think the phrase he used was that it is a gesture. He used that phrase I think at least three times in the course of his speech: it is a gesture towards carers. It would not be a gesture, it is a payment made by the taxpayer towards carers. I do not think we are in the process,  
540 as a mature Government, of making gestures towards people in this Assembly.

We would all like to double, treble, quadruple the Allowance for carers if we so could, if the Budget was there to afford it. But what the message came through loud and clear over yesterday and the day before and indeed previously in relation to messages coming not only from P&R but from other senior Members of this Assembly is that we are, whether we are at the end of the railway,  
545 we are standing on a precipice, we are at the cliff edge, whatever metaphor we use, in very difficult financial times.

Just to say another £½ million or £166,000 here or there on a continuing basis, without any real analysis as to how that is going to be funded – it may come from Budget Reserves as was said in the explanatory note and I accept that comment. It could come from that. But we do not have lots  
550 of Budget Reserves and we have lots of potential draws or considerations upon them.

Deputy St Pier is absolutely right. Factually, 2016, the States passed the SLAWS – and it is a horrible acronym as he says – but we all understand what it is and it is something that we have got to address. I make no criticism. There has been criticism of Deputy Roffey's Committee in relation to this. I make no criticism at all of them. They have got a vast – not just this Committee, their  
555 predecessor – amount on their plate every year just to keep the ship on the road. My goodness, we are confusing metaphors this morning but people know what I mean by that.

Deputy St Pier was saying, 'Well, look, they've been derailed a bit because of the hesitancy in relation to secondary pensions and what was said in relation to the Discrimination Ordinance.' That is only this term. That is only two years and 25 days now – because we were told it was two years  
560 and 24 days yesterday – that does not explain the previous four-and-a-bit years.

But this is not a blame game. The reason is the States passed the SLAW Strategy, which is a sensible strategy, but without any idea for how it was to be resourced financially or work-wise. Now the cost of it will run into millions and millions. Deputy Brouard has advised me on that previously and I fully accept what he says in connection with that. We have not costed that out yet. How are  
565 we going to pay for it? But even if we can pay for it, even if all of a sudden we have lots and lots of money, we have got to find the people to be able to resource it. That may be more difficult than finding the money and I am saying the money is going to be difficult.

I have had a message earlier this week from a senior civil servant about this, because obviously we knew that these amendments were going to be tabled, and they are reasonable amendments  
570 to be tabled. There is no criticism by me, saying they are irresponsible, how dare you do them, this is financially silly. They are sensibly put forward because this is a sensible debate. But the fact is, what I am advised is the States have agreed to work on the implementation of a care in the home scheme during 2024 in the Work Plan – that this is it, isn't it? – subject to the work on costs and the funding stream, which are in category 1.

575 The senior civil servant tells me that they are pulling together a list of actions which we need to take in the short, medium and longer term to address long-term care, starting with unblocking beds in the Hospital, attracting people into the profession, while also working again through the funding options for the States to consider long term. It will be a cross-Committee piece of work and needs

580 a dedicated, multi-skilled team to reach a point where we have sustainable decisions on the funding source designed affordable services.

The civil servant said she is trying to actively resource it, expect it to start next January, that is 2023, but again, subject to the caveats – no criticism at all of anybody saying these remarks – if other work concludes as anticipated. She says they would like the detailed work for the States to be back by quarter 1 of 2024 – so another 14, 15 months – and any later is too close to the end of this particular term.

585 So I know people say we have heard that before and that is the real trouble. We have got so much work as an Assembly on our plate, without any idea really as to where we are going to find resources. We are in a very difficult financial position. It may well be that the States will say yes, we will approve either the £500,000 or £166,000 and P&R will have to go away and come back with the money.

It may well be that if either of these amendments are passed that, as Deputy Helyar I think alluded to yesterday when he was presenting so ably the Budget proposals, we may have to come back with some amended budgetary proposals in the next few months to say, 'Well, that's fine, the States have got to find, e.g., another £500,000 per annum and therefore we are going to have to increase duty on petrol' or whatever it may be. I am not saying that is petrol. I am just saying whatever it might be, whatever the issue might be. It has got to be paid for because you cannot keep drawing on reserves because then you will not have any reserves to draw on.

595 So everybody, not just the 30-odd people in this room today who will be making this decision, supports the idea of giving a fillip in some way to carers. But having said over the last two days, pretty consistently – there were not many gainsayers against it – that we really cannot afford to increase our revenue expenses because we saw the figures yesterday. At best we are going to have a modest surplus on revenue, we will have a deficit on capital.

There was the, I have got to say somewhat arid exchange, from Deputy Trott saying well really the deficit is greater because you have got this or other. It does not matter whether it is £43 million or £85 million, it is a lot of money. We have got in and I am quite happy to hear Deputy Inder and Deputy Le Trott ... What is your name? Deputy Trott! If Deputy Trott wants to get up to interject, I have no objection.

**Deputy Trott:** I would be delighted to.

610 I think that is one off the most absurd comments I have heard from Deputy ... let me think – ah yes, Ferbrache, that is it. Of course it matters whether a deficit is £85 million or £49 million. Jeepers!

**Deputy Ferbrache:** Again, I do not want to dwell too much on that. That is completely an arid comment in my view. (*Laughter*) I will just wait for Deputy Trott's loud laughter, which we are all used to in relation to certain matters. But the fact is, whether we are having to have a shortfall of ... Whether we are taking away the revenue and saying that we have got a £30 million surplus on revenue or we need £75 million, the actual figures are £33 million and £76 million, and therefore it is £43 million, and we do not take the investment income at all, and therefore we add another £27 million, £30 million, whatever it is, what difference does it make? It is a *big* shortfall. If we add cost to it that is going to make that shortfall even greater.

620 That will be a decision for this Assembly, probably this morning but certainly today, to make a decision upon. If the States decides it is going to pass Amendment 1 or pass Amendment 2, your £500,000 or £166,000 per annum, so be it. That is the democratic decision of this Assembly and the States of Guernsey will have to work with it and P&R will have to work with it. And they will have to come back, as I said, in relatively early course, and say, 'Of course we fully respect that decision, we have to, that's the democratic decision of the States of Guernsey, but there is not a money tree out there, therefore it has to be paid for.'

625 Therefore, what signal is it going to give to the world at large, i.e. our world, the world of the people of Guernsey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey, that we have any real desire to control expenditure? What we do have? We have got the SLAW Strategy and I repeat I make no criticism of either this

ESS or the previous ones, because it was a vast piece of work, but how are going to address it? We are a long way ... We know the problems generally in relation to our economy, what we do not really have are the answers and what we do not have in this particular context are the resources.

635 So I may be one, I maybe the only one, or I may be in a significant minority, but I will be voting, not because I do not think the carers deserve it, but because we simply cannot afford it, to give beyond a 10% increase. That, though, will be a matter for the people of this Assembly and that decision, of course, is a democratic one.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dudley-Owen.

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Deputy Dudley-Owen: Thank you, sir.

This Proposition from Deputy St Pier and Deputy Queripel is one that I can think everybody in this Assembly would want to vote for, really. I mean, why would you not want to vote for this? We want people to be comfortable in the Island. We do not want people to be struggling unnecessarily.

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The probably I have with this particular amendment is that actually underlying it is a huge amount of technicality, a huge amount of data that I just do not feel that we have at our fingertips and that we can get quickly. The disappointment for me, as someone who does not work in this area – I have never worked on ESS, I had been interested in it and now I wish I had taken a seat there so that I understood better the technicalities for these types of debate. But because of the funding mechanism for these allowances and benefits, there is a lot of learning in this particular Assembly of how funding funnels through for these particular areas of policy.

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What I do not understand, sir, is why Deputy St Pier, and I am not going to have any false outrage at how hypocritical he is or how ironic it is or anything like that, I genuinely do not understand why an amendment was not brought to the Budget in order to pave the way and line-up for this particular amendment being the finale, so that we could have done it in train. So that Deputy St Pier could have possibly amended the ESS budget in the debate that we have just had, in order to position funding that was available to then funnel through for him to lay this amendment. To say, 'Ta-da! There's the big reveal. I've amended and I've moved funding in that particular that pocket over to there in order to be able to get the money across for the either £166,000 that will be required or £500,000 that's required, depending on which amendment succeeds; or maybe not, in this instance.' For me, that would have been a much more logical, sensible and thoughtful way of doing this.

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Deputy St Pier did actually two amendments to the Budget over the last couple of days, so why wasn't there a third, positioning for this particular amendment, which would have made it oh-so much easier for all of us to say, okay, we understand, you have made the money available, you have spoken to Treasury, you have got all your ducks lined up and we can all get behind this, rather than actually making this a really difficult decision. Because of course the intention behind this is laudable and the heart is in the right place and everybody's heart is in the right place in this Assembly. But what we have been left with is a very difficult decision because the money just is not there. It was not lined up when it could have been.

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But I could be completely misunderstanding, because of course I do not have the technical knowledge behind the funding mechanism, which of course Deputy St Pier, as one of our former Treasury Ministers, and Chief Minister, does have. So I would be really grateful if I can have a little bit more explanation on that and possibly Deputy de Sausmarez, as VP – I know there is a little bit of pressure now to speak because obviously the President has already spoken, which I would have appreciated maybe going later in the debate because I think that there are going to be a few questions coming your way – to maybe comment on what I have said. Would that have been a sensible way forward to make it easier for us or am I talking complete poppycock?

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Thank you.

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**The Bailiff:** Deputy Meerveld.

Deputy Meerveld: Thank you, sir.

685 I think one of the things that the public rarely appreciate about being a Deputy is the difficulty of the job, trying to balance the needs of different areas of our community and the devil in the detail of trying to balance the Budget and provide the maximum benefit to the widest group of people we can.

690 I am minded to support these amendments because we have got a States' Resolution that we are going to come back with a package of support which has not come forward because of resource issues. It has been stated many times in this Assembly that people providing this kind of support are saving the States of Guernsey an absolute fortune. If they were to stop doing so, then that cost would cascade, of providing that support, would fall back to the States. And they need more help providing that support.

695 Deputy Roffey seemed to have made contradictory statements during this debate in that on one hand he says, 'Oh well most of them will not benefit from this' but on the other hand, he has also muttered about the fact that there would be a £500,000 cost –

**Deputy Roffey:** Point of correction, sir.

700 **The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** Thank you, sir.

705 I did not say that most would not benefit. I said that 150 of the 567 claimants who are on Income Support will not benefit. The point I was making is that if the intention is to help people who have had to entirely give up work in order to care, they are highly likely to be amongst that 150.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Meerveld.

710 **Deputy Meerveld:** I thank Deputy Roffey for that clarification and I would hope that that would be addressed when proposals come back to the Assembly for a more comprehensive way of supporting supporters in our community. But also, Deputy Ferbrache makes a very valid point about, okay, so if we vote this through, yet again, it is another cost to the States of between £170,000 and £500,000 and how is that going to be funded. As responsible Deputies, we have to consider that every time we look at proposals like this.

715 So I have been looking at the Propositions in the policy letter and I must admit that I am troubled by Proposition 2 and the message it sends. Basically Proposition 2 is looking to remove the Income Support limit to enable the States to support people to a degree of over £50,000 a year because they have large families. The fact is, you have a large family because you chose to have children. You became a supporter ... I do not think anybody chooses to provide support to somebody in need, it is something that you take on as a moral obligation, as a commitment to somebody else.

720 I think it is very difficult to send the message on one hand we are going to lift the limit on the amount of money we will support people with large families, but on the other hand we are not going to support those who have dedicated their lives to supporting others and in many cases have suffered hardships themselves because of it. So I am minded to not vote for Proposition 2, which will have a significant saving, and support these amendments instead, but I look forward to hearing from the rest of the debate.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

730 **Deputy Gollop:** Two or three things people know about me is I am not always consistent – though I am probably not the only one in that respect – and I am not always the most loyal; bit of a maverick Member on ESS. I have been on it 10 years, and its predecessor, so unlike Deputy Dudley-Owen, I should know much more about the technicalities of the Committee. But I do struggle at

735 times, I must admit, with the jargon, which is changing. For example, we used to have Attendance Allowance and now it is renamed as Carer's Allowance and so on.

And the third point is I have not agreed with many of the speeches I have heard, or at least parts of them. I do kind of agree with something Deputy Queripel said because I think we go through phases in the States of following Government Work Plan-type politics or strategic politics or evidence-based politics, or ideological politics even, from more than one side. And I would even  
740 say, sometimes, Civil Service-based politics, without being too specific. But we do not, in my view, have enough gesture politics. Because the gesture, sometimes, sends out a message that makes us more popular.

One problem that every States has is it starts to become unpopular with the half the Island saying it is the worst States ever. I think if we had more of a strategy of communications and, as  
745 Deputy Trott actually said, of conveying the truth about things and the costs ... But on the other hand, sometimes, giving a message, a communication, even a gift, which costs, but maybe does not cost £50 million but costs £1/2 million, I think that is important. It is not just the Members here who care. I think there are Members who are absent today who also spoke about caring issues.

That said, I have got to somehow, as Deputy Meerveld wisely said, strike a balance – and  
750 Deputy Ferbrache really too – strike some kind of a balance. And my thinking is that I signed this report collectively, and yes, I am a bit like the late, great Sir Bruce Forsyth, who always would go, 'Higher! Higher! Higher!' with the numbers on many of these benefits. I will not get on to general debate but we have seen uplifts in things already. But on this issue I wanted it to be more. Perhaps I did not analyse it considerably; of 7% plus 3%.

755 The argument has been made by Deputy Roffey that in *some* cases any uplift will be effectively cancelled out by Income Support for those in the most need. But of course that actually applies to our measure of increasing it by 3% above inflation as well. So that cuts both ways. Presumably, and yes, I have a little bit of sympathy with Deputy Inder, we could all do with more data and more evidence, but that is a Policy & Resources issue that has been spoken about for 12 years. I remember  
760 Deputy then McNulty Bauer wanted more statistical evidence and that goes back a few years.

But we have to believe the figures in front of us – and no reason to doubt them – and as Deputy Roffey explained in the policy letter, it is £100,000 more than just going above RPI if you follow ESS, then on top of that £166,000 approximately, if we vote for the lesser of the two St Pier/Queripel amendments, and £500,000 if we vote for the higher of the two Amendments.

765 Let's think about this: because we have got so many different kinds of benefits, as Deputy Dudley-Owen said, it is a very technical subject, and Carer's Allowance, as it is now called, is actually quite unusual in a number of respects. Deputy Roffey is spot on that the eligibility criteria in Jersey are different. There is something slightly unusual about Carer's Allowance and also Severe Disability Allowance. They are means tested but in a way that I think even some States' Members  
770 would find a little curious.

Because we are increasing the annual income beyond which you would not be eligible for the benefit, if I am correct, from something like £103,700 to £106,000. What that means is that somebody of considerable, or at least moderately very good incomes, reaching six figures, is still eligible for the benefit. So it is not just people on Income Support, it could be somebody with  
775 significant private means, private income, property means, other careers. So it is quite a universal benefit.

I think the message that campaigning Deputies have had is regardless of the means of people the benefit is important and there are other areas in this package, such as capital allowances for medical benefit and for Income Support, which are still quite onerous, even though they are being  
780 uplifted.

So not everybody who is eligible for Carer's Allowance needs it, necessarily, in strict financial terms. Many do. And for many people, I do appreciate that it is an incentive, perhaps, to give up their work. We do not particularly want that, but we need people who care for their loved ones even more, and if the state has to provide care, that comes, I would argue, at a much greater expense

785 and if everybody who currently cares for friends and family stopped caring and we then relied on insurance or the state, the burden ...

I will give way.

**Deputy Soulsby:** I thank Deputy Gollop.

790 Is it not true, though, that people who have Carer's Allowance also can frequently have care provided by HSC?

**Deputy Gollop:** That does indeed occur but again people need respite from care and in many cases HSC have limitations on the care they provide. They might provide so many hours per week and hire a professional focused level, but a carer, a friend or even more a family member, a dad or 795 a mother or a daughter or son or partner, is expected ... well, not expected, but they feel it is their duty to be there 24/7.

So where am I with this on the facts of it? I will give a little, tiny bit of praise for Deputy – as she then was – Michelle Le Clerc and her Committee, because we actually were very mindful of SLAWS. 800 I quite like SLAWS because it reminds me of coleslaw, so it is quite tasty, (*Laughter*) but ... so it is easier to remember than some. But we put the work into SLAWS. Deputy Soulsby and others will remember that. We came to the States, a difficult time in the middle of COVID, a States that had been extended, an election pending, as we heard yesterday, candidates with a very different outlook on fiscal expenditure, etc., and we lost some of that.

805 But we were constantly working on SLAWS and yes we even saw staff retire from the project. When somebody asks, Deputy Queripel, where do the resources come from, the answer sometimes is – it is centralised now to a degree anyway – that a project has to finish to move the next one on. I remember in the last term we spent so long on wellness, living longer and especially SWBIC that we had to put back some on disability and equality. That then became the priority and so some of 810 these things will happen in the fullness of time.

So I disagree with the explanatory note on both of these amendments, therefore, to say:

This review has not yet commenced and there is *no* prospect of ... [a] review starting imminently. It is not reasonable that carers should be prejudiced by the States inability to complete the work it has itself deemed necessary.

Yes, I support the sentiment, but not the implied criticism of our inability. Because the inability was not entirely fair to ESS. And I would say something further, and I am sorry if this sounds a little bit carping ...

815 I will give way to Deputy Oliver.

Deputy Oliver: Thank you.

820 Does Deputy Gollop agree with me that the inability can also stretch to nurses, to everybody, but we need Guernsey as a whole to actually *pay* for these? So it is Guernsey's inability to pay for them because of the tax?

**Deputy Gollop:** Deputy Oliver is quite right. I know her Planning Department suffers at times from lack of resources as well, because that is the nature of things, but if you are comparing nurses with home carers, I think I have already made the point that if people who are currently cared for 825 at home find themselves in a situation where they are institutionalised or in hospital, the cost will be considerably greater.

830 But my other point is of course Deputy Oliver is right, we are all collectively responsible. And if you go back to this phrase 'It is not reasonable that carers should be prejudiced by the States inability to complete the work it has itself deemed necessary' who was in the States last term? I was, but of course we had a Policy & Resources at the time, headed by Deputy Trott and Deputy St Pier and perhaps we should have given more resource then and in the budgets on this kind of issue because it has fallen behind in the times.

835 Deputy Helyar, probably rightly, checked me on being paradoxical and contradictory yesterday, but I found that perspective from other Members, too. Because we have heard quite a lot of calls from not necessarily people on the left, but also on the right, to increase medical support for GPs, to support allowances for carers, and they all have to be paid for. So here I am wanting it to go high but knowing that as a collective Member of Social Security, we do not endorse as a Committee – Deputy Roffey has made this extremely clear – uncosted expenditure that goes beyond the fiscal envelope.

840 So I am going to abstain on the £½ million amendment as a bridge too far but support, with a degree of reservation, the cheaper of the two options. Because I think an extra uplift to carers, personally, would enable people, perhaps who are trying to balance work and home and making really tough decisions and trying to be there for their loved ones rather than bringing in professional resources all the time, it would give them hope, it would give them support and actually would perhaps alleviate the expanding cost of living at the moment.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir.

850 Yesterday, my friend Deputy Helyar laid an excellent Budget, which was accepted by most of us. One thing he did say, which stuck in my mind, was that he was going to monitor the cost-of-living crisis and would bring in an emergency Budget if necessary. I welcome that and I think that is very important and very wise.

855 Another thing that was said yesterday and I think it was the person tabling this amendment, Deputy St Pier ... I think he voted against the Budget and he described it as irresponsible. Here we are today, sir, the Budget was agreed yesterday, and we are trying to raid the Budget Reserve Fund. Well, I do not know what you would call that, but anyway, I do not think it is particularly bright or clever. Something else that happened yesterday, sir, I think you told me I had missed my chance, it was the wrong time. In many ways this amendment has missed its chance. It should have gone 860 yesterday in the Budget. I would agree with what I have heard from a couple of other speakers.

I am a bit of a wordsmith and I noticed that there is a new word that has been introduced into the English Oxford Dictionary and it is 'permacrisis'. All one word, sir. This sums up where we are in the world at the moment. We have got Brexit, we have got COVID, we have got the Ukrainian war, we have got the rise in fuel prices, we have got mortgage rates going up, we have got an energy 865 crisis, we have got legacy issues, too, sir. We have got an ageing demographic, interest rates being reviewed in UK today, almost certain to go up to combat inflation, the US as well, sir. I think, sometimes, this States tries to have a go at one another and beat each other up and you have got to wake up. You have got to look around.

870 I see some of us were getting the blame for all the problems – it is just plainly ridiculous – that have been caused in the last two years, two months. These problems have been brewing for a long time now and we have all been aware of it. But the permacrisis is what we are currently going through in Guernsey. Jersey is going through it. The Isle of Man is going through it, sir. Ireland, England and Scotland, sir. Yesterday, Scotland announced £400 million worth of cuts to health and care and that is part of a £1 billion series of cuts that they have to introduce to fill their black hole. 875 That is where we are going. These are the times we are living in and this is what we have got to consider.

When I was young and in business, I was very gung-ho and very go-ahead and I wanted to do far more than we could afford to do. But I learnt that I had to financially discipline myself and I am afraid this States needs to learn that. It needs to financially discipline itself too. It needs to balance 880 the books. It needs to be responsible. We all want to help the carers, we think the world of them. We would pay them their weight in gold if we could afford it. But we have got to be sensible and we have got to bear this in mind as we move forward.

That is all I am going to say on it, sir, but I think in that very short and concise speech, we are going through a permacrisis. There is a geopolitical ... There is war going on. We are going through

885 difficult times and we have got to be sensible. We have got to balance the books and it might very well be, sir, that we have to introduce things which I stood against and my fellow party members stood against.

Cutting costs: I still think there are opportunities. I see a lot of opportunities in this States. Growing the economy: I do see lots of opportunities and we are going to have to do that. But we  
890 are also going to have to balance the books and we might have to introduce a GST, particularly if those first two I mentioned have failed and others perhaps have not been as acceptable to make those savings as quickly as we should have done.

So more than headwinds, we are in difficult times, but it is not just Guernsey. It is everywhere and we should look around at those other governments – and I am blown away that Scotland is  
895 cutting health and care by £400 million – and we should bear that in mind and we should not forget. That is where we are, that is this permacrisis.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Mahoney.

900 Deputy Mahoney: Thank you, sir.

Briefly, it is interesting to hear so many speaking yesterday of the dangers of more and more spending. Now we have this Amendment 1 and the follow-up Amendment 2 should Amendment 1 fail, to add another £500,000 to the spending, unless Members can come up with an idea to raise  
905 those additional funds from somewhere. So it has certainly been interesting to match the speeches of yesterday with the voting records on this or the next Amendment should this one fail.

I think it was summed up well by Deputy Dudley-Owen. Deputy St Pier could, in the same way that when you arrive at a hotel and they ask for a print of your credit card in case you go raiding the minibar late at night to have a preauthorisation of any ... He could yesterday, or at any time in  
910 the last month or so, have put in an amendment to say, 'and because of the stuff that we're talking about after the Budget, I'd like a preauthorisation of £½ million to cover that, should the Assembly vote that through.' And actually, if that had happened, I suspect this would have actually been quite an easy vote today. If the money had already been in the bank and authorised, I suspect this would have been a much briefer debate. But he could have done that, he did not do that.

915 He could have suggested – I am making the numbers up – 50p on a bottle of wine, an additional 20p on cigarettes, whatever the numbers would be, to make that – nods and shaking heads going on over the other side – whatever it needed to be to add additional amounts to either petrol or cigarettes or wine and beer, whatever it was, whatever raised an extra £500,000. But he did not. I think Deputy Dudley-Owen already asked Deputy St Pier to speak to that when he sums up. If he  
920 did not, then I am asking him to do so, as to why he did not just get a credit card preauthorised.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

925 **Deputy Trott:** Thank you, sir.

I genuinely was not intending to speak, but I do think I need to offer my friend Deputy Ferbrache opportunity, because he said it was arrogant to call out the inconsistency –

**Deputy Ferbrache:** Point of correction, sir.

930

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction.

**Deputy Ferbrache:** I said arid; A, R, I, D.

935 **The Bailiff:** It was the word used by Deputy Ferbrache.



**Deputy Trott:** Then I misheard. And arid means dry, I believe? Okay. Well, I do not think it is dry. I certainly did not think it was arrogant. Because I called out an inconsistency in the Budget messaging that told us that our structural deficit was £43 million in the foreword and not the much  
940 higher amount of £80 million to £85 million. That is not an arid point. That is a very significant point.

He said, and again I may have misheard, sir, but I think Deputy Ferbrache said it does not matter whether the deficit is £76 million or £43 million and started bandying around figures. Well, sir, it matters a very great deal to me. A difference of £33 million is a very significant sum, which I suspect matters to our community at large.

945 We were told yesterday in the Budget – and I make reference to the £500,000, sir, in case you think I am straying – that growth in ETI raises £2.5 million. So the £33 million, which is the difference, is the equivalent of 13.2% real growth rate in our ETI tax take, or around a 3% rise in the basic rate of personal Income Tax.

I know Deputy Ferbrache, who has a very difficult job, does appreciate the difference and  
950 £33 million is a sizeable sum. So I give him the opportunity, should he wish, sir, I would be happy ... I cannot offer to give way, but if I see him rising, sir ... I do not see him rising, he does not want to. So let me then finish by saying it is a quite absurd thing to say. He will probably live to regret it. I will remind him of it on several occasions in the past ... in the future! (*Laughter*) It has been a long week!

955 I have reminded him in the past that £33 million is a lot of money, as is £24 million for that matter. But I will remind him in the future and also the fact that he was given a perfectly legitimate opportunity to say that he had made a mistake and that £33 million was a very significant sum of money. No, it is not to be, sir. There we are.

Thank you very much.

960

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

I have been listening to the debate and I notice that a few Deputies have asked the question,  
965 more or less: how is this going to be funded? I have written down Deputies Meerveld, Ferbrache, Vermeulen, Dudley-Owen and Mahoney have more or less asked similar questions, how would we fund this. Listening to Deputy Gollop, who I think gave a very good explanation, a very in-depth explanation, of the difficulties that ESS has faced, fundamentally, caring at home can be seen as an alternative to residential care. In his speech Deputy Queripel said that he would like this benefit to  
970 be £400 a week and still save the States £500 a week. I think, really, that is part of the answer about how this would be funded.

We are all waiting for SLAWS' review, which will analyse the economics of care provided by volunteers or care provided at home or residential care and that will give us all a very good, or  
975 I hope it will give us all a very good understanding of the benefits and the costs involved in each case. It is my view that care provided at home is probably going to cost much less and it is certainly going to cost much less if it is provided by, effectively, volunteers who are almost unpaid, providing this care.

That is very significant in some cases because residential care can cost up to £1,000 a week and,  
980 in the greater part, the States can pick up the bill for that. But in many cases, people do not want to go into a care home or do not want their loved ones to go into a care home, but it is the only option on offer. It is the only option the States is able to provide.

Of course, like many Members, I would like to have that detailed analysis of where the costs lie and what the economic benefit is of each option. But in the absence of such detailed analysis, I think we have to use a bit of intuition, like entrepreneurs would use a bit of intuition about guessing  
985 about where something is costly and where something is value for money and use that business sense, if you are just looking at it from a financial point of view.

There is a lot of guesswork involved in that but, to my mind, the cost of £½ million for a year, which is proposed, if it costs £1,000 a week for somebody in residential care, does this potentially

990 save 10 people from being in residential care? I think it potentially could and in that case it could  
be justified. It would be useful, of course, to have that sort of analysis to know with some certainty  
but, in the absence of it, I am minded to support the Amendment for that reason.

But I think it is worth noting that people who care for their loved ones do go through an  
enormous amount of effort and put in an enormous amount of work for it and it is a virtually unpaid  
thing. I people do it out of love, really, out of care for their family members. I am often struck, when  
995 you watch the news for example, you see the news from Ukraine, war-torn country, and you quite  
often see people who are enduring shelling, do not have basics, hiding in basements, do not have  
water and electricity and are really suffering under this bloodthirsty war of conquest. And quite  
often people ask, 'Well, why are you staying here? Why are you staying in this war zone?' and they  
say, 'Well, I've got to care for somebody. I've got to care for my mother, she can't move.'

1000 I think that really brings home what people will endure, what people will go through to look  
after people and that with that in mind it is worth supporting people, where we can, to look after  
their family members, who of course have much less to suffer here but will go through a lot in order  
to care for that family. For that reason, I think it is worth voting and I shall be supporting the  
amendment.

1005 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Murray.

**Deputy Murray:** Thank you, sir.

1010 I am very sympathetic to the intent, absolutely. Who would not be? We all are. Without a doubt,  
in my rookie opinion, Deputy St Pier has gone about this very much the wrong way. I think  
Deputy Dudley-Owen explained quite reasonably and rationally the timing on this is completely  
wrong. This could have been prepared for. We could have considered appropriately and I am quite  
sure, probably, that it would have been acceptable and the money would be made available  
1015 somehow or other.

But that is not what he has chosen to do and in that regard he is in an unusual position in here,  
insofar as most of us have got Committee business. It is very challenging, it keeps us very tied up.  
I do not think Deputy St Pier has actually got Committee business so he is to some extent a free  
agent in that regard. I would like to suggest that perhaps following yesterday's conversations that  
1020 we had and were difficult, they were uncomfortable, but today is a new dawn. The sun is out. The  
difference between yesterday and today is that today what we do now is we take something away  
when we add something. We do not keep adding. We do not keep increasing the Budget. There is  
no money to pay for it.

Because everything that we add today comes out of the taxpayers' pocket and I think that is the  
1025 problem. We know there is going to have to be pain and if we are going to add to it we are going  
to have to start thinking about what we can do without. If I had been Deputy St Pier, given that he  
might have some time on his hands, I would have made the effort to come to Committees and  
I would have made his case and I think he would have got quite a reasonable response. It would  
not have been easy for any of us to give up anything from what we are doing in our portfolios at  
1030 this point in time, but that is the approach I would like to see many people come to, rather than  
just come at the last minute.

Yesterday, I think it was Deputy Ferbrache mentioned the difficulty we are going to have when  
we have that conversation about tax. We do not want to find ourselves in a position of last-minute  
amendments that seek to derail (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) or cause immense damage, because there  
1035 will be difficult enough conversations in their own right. So in that spirit of trying to do things  
collegiately, together, I would suggest that is the approach to take in future. It should have been  
the approach taken in the past. Learn from this and do it in the future.

I am going to actually, surprisingly, give Deputy Roffey my support on this one. I am going to  
give him the credibility that perhaps some of his cynicism yesterday expressed towards Education  
1040 in terms of what we are doing and our direction of travel, that he knows what he is doing. Because

I think this is a very complex issue. I think as we have heard from a number of speakers who know more about this than I do, and the impact of what is being proposed at the moment is not entirely clear to me, but if there is one person in the room, it will be Deputy Roffey who will be able to understand the ramifications of that. I give him that confidence.

1045 So if my understanding is correct, I believe that the Committee, the ESS Committee, are going to oppose this amendment. And if that is the case, I will also oppose it on the basis of the promise that he has made to this Assembly this morning that he will come back with an approach, that we will look at this in more detail and try to make this more equitable in the way that it is actually administered.

1050 I think that is the thing that we have to do today, because this is the wrong way to approach trying to help people. I want to help people. And I would have thought, in Deputy St Pier's position, with the vast experience he has got in this Assembly and previous ones, he would understand the best way to achieve this objective, if that is in fact his objective. And I think it is. I think he is genuine in that regard, but this is *absolutely* the wrong way to go about it. With this proximity to a Budget, 1055 as Deputy Dudley-Owen said yesterday, this could easily have been solved and it may very well delay the delivery, to some extent, of the benefit that he seeks that we would all like to see until we hear back from ESS in due course, and that is very unfortunate.

That, quite frankly, if this does not succeed, will be at Deputy St Pier's door, because I think he could have succeeded if he had done this properly, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and it has not 1060 happened. But that is the past; that was yesterday. Today, I would like us to go forward, but I would like us to go forward much in the same way as my colleague Deputy Vermeulen has said: we are in a permanent state of crisis now. Every penny counts. You cannot go to the piggy bank of the Reserve to say, 'Oh, it'll come out of that.' You need to give us some indication of where the money is going to stop going in order that we can cover this.

1065 I would hope, with the speeches we have heard from Deputy Queripel and many others, this is a very deserving cause. I am very sad to have to say that I cannot give it my support at this stage, because I would wish to. And it will be at the expense of something else. I am quite prepared, in my position on the Education Committee and also on DPA, if it is £100,000 from five Principal 1070 Committees or however we split it, then we would find that money somehow or other. Something would have to give, of course, but I feel very much for carers too. I understand that. But this is not the time and it is not the place.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Helyar.

1075 **Deputy Helyar:** Thank you, sir.

Deputy St Pier opened, in his remarks about the amendment, by saying that various people might stand up and say it is hypocritical to bring this amendment after his comments in the Budget yesterday. I suspect that he will say it is possible to distinguish the difference between calling out 1080 an addition in costs and bringing this amendment because it is perfectly possible to say that this is a matter of prioritisation, and I completely accept that.

There have been some comments about how does the Budget Reserve work, how is this actually paid for, so I thought I would just give a very brief technical explanation. So the Budget Reserve is there for the purposes of funding unexpected costs or overruns on work which is included in the Budget. So it is for one-off costs. It is not there to fund annual costs. This will be an annual cost, if 1085 it is accepted. I have to say I do not accept either amendment. I accept the work that has been done with ESS to do the work in this policy letter. It has been very thoroughly tested and as much as can be afforded has been included in the original Proposition. So I will not be supporting either of the amendments.

1090 The political cynic in me says that this is a delicious amendment because I think the intention of it is not necessarily just to ... It has a duplicate outcome. If it is successful, then it will apply higher payments to carers, and that is not a bad thing in itself. But what it does is it draws out the constant

paradox that the Assembly has when it is faced with having to make difficult, emotional decisions about costs. Because that is what this is about, isn't it?

1095 I come from a carer family. My father had MS for 10 years. So I know what it is like to live in a carer's environment. We were slightly better off than those who are the end of this kind of receipt, but I do know what it is like. It is very difficult. Who could argue with paying a little bit more? Who could argue? Well, it has to come from somewhere and that is the problem, isn't it? Because many of those who would have been complaining, I suspect, about costs yesterday, as Deputy St Pier will no doubt accept, will probably vote for this amendment. Because they cannot not.

1100 Because on the one hand they want all the positive outcomes. They want to see the popularity of the public standing behind and saying, 'We're cutting costs!' but at the same time they want to make sure they are not unpopular by not giving carers a few more pounds. But, sir, this has to come from somewhere.

1105 We can probably cope with the £500,000 this year from the Budget Reserve. There is probably wriggle room in the Budget Reserve to pay for it once – *this* year. *Next* year, if we want to pay for it, I thought I would give some examples of what we have to do. We have got a choice, here. That we can either cut Committee budgets' non-formula-led spend, or we can put up customs duties. Those are our two options in the absence of the conclusions we might reach from the Tax Review.

1110 So what does that mean? That means 1.9p a litre on fuel next year – forever. We are not spending this money once, we are spending it *forever*. Because once these allowances go up, they do not come down again. So this will cost every member of the public. Some other examples. If we were to cut 0.11% across the non-formula-led expenditure this year, which is £469 million, that means a cut of £230,000 from the Health budget, or £90,000 from the Education budget, per year, forever.

1115 We have got to the point where, as I explained yesterday, we are likely to turn out next year at a zero position. No surplus, because the investment returns are highly unlikely. Deputy St Pier explained very clearly that almost all of the risk was downside. That is perfectly correct. It was identified in the Budget, it was identified in my speech.

1120 We have reached a position where we cannot add to something without taking away from something else or putting tax up. I just want Members to be cognisant of that when they make their decision today. I think I have explained the process for it. These have real costs. If we were to do it across the board on all of the Customs duties this year, the Budget would have included 0.9p extra on a litre of petrol, 7.6p extra on 20 cigarettes and 0.6p extra on a pint of beer. All of those things together to pay for this one thing; and roughly half of that if the second part of the Amendment is accepted.

1125 So there are consequences to the decision. I just want Members to make their decision cognisant of the fact that, as I said yesterday, we have reached the end of the road.

Thank you.

1130 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

1135 I will try to respond fairly succinctly to some of the main themes that have cropped up in debate, although at times I do feel as though it is more about the subtext of what is going on under this subject rather than the issue in hand on the surface of these amendments. They are certainly very emotionally attractive amendments, definitely. As many people have commented, it is very difficult not to feel compassion for people who are in receipt of Carer's Allowance and to want to do as much as we possibly can. But I think some of the fiscal argument has been well made by Members of P&R in particular, and others.

1140 Really this comes down to a few different issues. First of all is about the effectiveness of these amendments. So will they help the people that those bringing the amendment and those wanting to support the amendment most want to help? As Deputy Roffey explained when he opened, it definitely will help some people, but it definitely will not help those who have had to give up work in order to care for people on the whole. Because every pound that is increased on the Carer's

1145 Allowance side of the ledger will be decreased pound for pound on the Income Support. So there will be no net benefit to people who are in receipt of both Carer's Allowance and Income Support. I hope that makes sense.

For that tranche of people, which is, as per the current claimants, 150 people who are in receipt of both Carer's Allowance and Income Support, they will not see any benefit at all from either of these amendments. However, the larger proportion of people – I think that is a remaining 1150 417 claimants – will see a benefit from both of these amendments and that is where the fiscal impact comes in.

The fiscal impact has of course been clearly outlined in the Rule 4(1) information in the Amendments. And of course these are estimates as well. So it is estimated that Amendment 2 will 1155 have an impact of around £166,000 per annum, as Deputy Helyar has just explained, and Amendment 1, which is the more generous – if I can put it that way – of the amendments, would have an impact of around £½ million.

It is also important to reiterate that these are of course estimates. These claims are not set in stone. We do see variation in the number of claimants and I think it is relevant that Carer's Allowance 1160 is the fastest-growing budget area within ESS at the moment. We have seen a 23% increase since 2017 and 15% of that 23% increase has been since 2020. So it is a fast-growing area.

This brings me to a comment that Deputy Inder – who is not in the Assembly right now – made. I think it is important to clarify the difference between the 6,000 carers that the Carers' Alliance refer to and the 567 claimants of Carer's Allowance. There is a very fundamental difference between those 1165 two things. We are not comparing apples with apples if we are comparing those two figures. We do not have 5,500 carers who are eligible for Carer's Allowance just not claiming it. The carers that the Carers' Alliance are referring to are carers of all different sorts.

The people who are eligible for Carer's Allowance have a very high bar to reach in order to be eligible for that allowance. They have to be caring for someone who themselves is in receipt of 1170 Severe Disability Allowance. That has got certain criteria around it; it is a high level of care, high level of dependency. So there is a high bar to be met in order to be eligible for Carer's Allowance, but it is also the fastest-growing area within the ESS budget in that respect.

There is one other correction that I do need to make, with respect to Deputy Inder's claim. I think he claimed that we spend hundreds of thousands of pounds on consultants. That is just not correct 1175 at all. We spend comparatively little on consultants. We spend, certainly in this policy area ... we do not spend much in any policy area, but in this policy area we spend some, certainly nowhere near hundreds of thousands, on the minimum Income Support Review, which is roughly once every 10 years, and every five years we spend on an actuarial review as well. Those are both really important and necessary bits of work to make sure that our work is as accurate as it can be. So 1180 hopefully that clarifies a few things then.

Deputy Meerveld as well. He commented that he would rather focus money on carers than on the measure proposed in the policy letter on removing what is colloquially known as the benefit limitation. And he said that people on the whole do not choose to become carers. Well, I would 1185 argue that children do not choose to be born into families whose income is beneath their own financial requirements. So that is probably for the next debate.

But essentially this just comes down to a judgement of the Assembly. The Committee has, in its original Propositions in the policy letter, proposed an above-RPIX increase on Carer's Allowance, in order to provide people in receipt of that very important Allowance more. These amendments seek to go further and it is really just a matter for this Assembly to decide which is the more appropriate. 1190 Ours are costed, and I really cannot speak to Deputy Dudley-Owen's question; I think that has really been answered or addressed by others who have spoken from P&R, but certainly the amendments make no pretence about the fact that this money may need to come from the Budget Reserve.

I give way to Deputy Queripel.

1195 **Deputy Queripel:** Sir, I thank Deputy de Sausmarez for giving way.

I am afraid I was writing something when I think she said 417 carers would benefit if the Amendment succeeds. Could she just clarify that, please?

Thank you.

1200 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes. That is obviously a snapshot of current claimants, but yes, there are 417 – according to my calculations – claimants who are not also in receipt of Income Support. So they are in receipt of Carer's Allowance but are not also in receipt of Income Support. So I hope that does clarify the matter for Deputy Queripel.

1205 Actually I am glad that he stood up, because it reminded me he was obviously the first person to speak in debate on these after Deputy St Pier opened and it does give me an opportunity to remind Members that I started out when I spoke talking about whether or not these amendments were the most effective way of providing additional support to carers. And it is an opportune moment to remind Members of the assurance that Deputy Roffey gave when he spoke, very early, with respect to that earnings disregard. That is a really targeted way to make sure that those people  
1210 who have had to give up work in order to care for a loved one will in fact benefit.

Deputy Roffey, just to remind Members, gave the assurance that if the full review of Carer's Allowance has not taken place, by this time next year, effectively, then in the next uprating report, we will have done the work to include a proposal on the earnings disregard that would ensure that those who are in receipt of both Carer's Allowance and Income Support, because they are the  
1215 people who have had to give up work in order to care for a loved one, will actually benefit more from Carer's Allowance. And would benefit from any additional increase in that Allowance.

So I hope that makes sense. It is quite a technical area. I am really grateful to the Assembly's patience in going through these and it is just a matter for the Assembly. It is a judgement call and a matter for the Assembly to decide.

1220 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Brouard.

Deputy Brouard: Thank you, sir.

1225 This has, I do not know whether it is true or not and I hope Deputy St Pier can convince me ... This just looks a little bit like gesture politics and I would like to understand that the evidence is for £114.88 and £105.69. As a gentleman who always calls out for evidence, who wants to see the results and the whys and the wherefores, what is particularly significant of £114.88 and £105.69? What is the science behind it? What is the evidence that makes that particular figure work? I think, despite  
1230 what he will say in summing up to answer that question, I have got a feeling I am going to probably stick with ESS and waiting for a fuller review because I just think this looks like something before Christmas.

Thank you, sir.

1235 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

I was not really going to speak, but I have to because I need to declare interest. I will declare my interest now because I am not going to speak in general debate. My son is in receipt of Severe  
1240 Disability Allowance and in reference to this I am in receipt of about 38% of Carer's Allowance. I do not get full Carer's Allowance, not because I do not do the prescribed amount of hours, it is because the Department interprets the legislation differently to how I think it should be interpreted, but that is something for another day! *(Laughter)*

1245 I am going to abstain purely because of the situation I am in. If Amendment 1 is successful, I have got an extra £9 a week; I will get an extra £6 if Amendment 2 is successful. I think it was pointed out that at the moment, under £91.90, £2.62 an hour is if you do the minimum of 35 hours. Mine would

be £1 an hour. There is 168 hours in a week and myself and my son's mother do all of the caring. We do not get any help from the States. Anyway, that is by the by.

1250 People will vote how they will. I am listening to both sides of the argument and I understand both sides of the argument. I know it has got to be paid for somewhere by someone and I understand that all those people on Income Support, it will make no difference to them whatsoever. And you would have thought that they are the people who would need the money more.

1255 But there is also this middle Guernsey that we talk about. There are a lot of people that are struggling to provide the care. They still need to get out and do some work, etc. as many hours as they can. It does not affect me because I am salaried – I am quite lucky in that way – but a lot of people need to balance their caring responsibilities with their earning requirements. That is very difficult. And I really applaud Deputy St Pier and Deputy Queripel for bringing these proposals. I am not going to encourage people to vote either way, people will make their own minds up, but it has  
1260 been a very interesting debate.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Alderney Representative Roberts.

1265 Alderney Representative Roberts: Thank you, sir.

I have got to speak on this because my late wife would kill me if I did not. I would like to commend Deputy Queripel on his speech on his experience as a carer, in his younger days. It is no easy task for either party. And well done to him. It is a task known only to those who have been carers; who know those waters and have sailed those waters. You are only a carer if you really care.

1270 I was a carer for my first wife Anna. We had a long history together of 38 years and if I said we ever had a cross word, I would be a liar. When I met her, she told me she was 17. Her father told me she was 15! But as a carer, I cared. So I have tremendous sympathy for people in that position, whether professional or not.

1275 I cannot *not* vote because of my history. I would also encourage Deputy Aldwell to consider to vote for this for the sake of others, for other carers, and she is also a carer who I know cares. I know our financial position, but we will have to support rises in taxation in the looming debate. It is not about votes, it is about people. You should vote with compassion and with care, and not always think of your personal standing within the electorate. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

1280 Balance the books in fair fashion. We really must support P&R and Deputy Helyar when the time arrives and be strong again. It is not about votes: it is about good governance. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Book balancing and strong and hard decision. I may not be at that debate, because I have got an impending election in Alderney, so December might be last month here. (*Interjection*) My caring career ended on 15th of 2009 in October. My wife Anna suddenly died in my arms at my own house.

1285 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** I do not see anyone else rising to speak, so I will turn back to the proposer of these two Amendments, Deputy St Pier, to reply to debate, please.

1290 **Deputy St Pier:** Thank you, sir, and thank you to everybody who has participated in the debate and perhaps also I should begin by thanking Alderney Representative Roberts and Deputy Leadbeater for sharing their personal experiences.

1295 Deputy Brouard asked, 'What is the evidence?' and he may not have perhaps picked up when I opened the debate I said that the evidence was the same evidence as that which pertains to the Committee's own proposal for £101.09, on page 30 of the policy letter. In other words, as I said when opening, it is subjective. It is not an objective assessment. So the only response I can give to him is to repeat what I said in opening.

1300 Deputy de Sausmarez said, and built on what Deputy Roffey had said, that this will help some but not all. I think we have identified it will help 417 carers presently, taking a snapshot of 110-or-so who are on Income Support will not benefit. But that for me, sir, the fact that some people will not benefit because the current rules are subject to the review, which I will return to in a minute, that every pound added will be taken away in Income Support, that is not a reason, that is not a good enough reason not to support the 417 who *will* benefit. (**Deputy Queripel:** Hear, hear.)

1305 As Deputy de Sausmarez said, this is in respect of ... She described it as a high bar. This is in respect of the people who have the most severe disabilities in order that they can qualify for Severe Disability Allowance and therefore for the carers who are giving the most amount of care, by definition of those for whom they care being the most severely disabled.

1310 Sir, Deputy Murray said that I do not carry any Committee responsibilities and of course, at the moment, he is absolutely correct in that statement. He also said, as a self-proclaimed rookie, that he felt that I had gone about it in the wrong way and he referred to the proximity to the Budget. He may be unaware but the two policy letters were intentionally brought together to be debated in the same special sitting. In previous years they had always been separated precisely for the reasons that one does flow into the other. I will return to the challenge from Deputy Dudley-Owen in a moment as to why a third amendment was not brought to that Budget.

1315 Deputy Murray also said we cannot keep adding. Of course we did not just add £166,000 yesterday, or even £500,000 yesterday. We added £48 million yesterday without taking away anything. He also said this is complex. It really is not that complex. I think it has been very well articulated by the Committee. It will impact those who are not in receipt of Income Support and I do welcome the indication from the Committee, by the President speaking so early in the debate, that there will be a review of the amount that will be disregarded. I think that clearly is a very positive development and if that is a consequence of bringing these amendments, that is certainly one very positive outcome and I welcome the Committee's work on that.

1320 I also should acknowledge, as he said, he very clearly articulated the story of SLAWS from 2016 and I accept Deputy Gollop's criticism that perhaps the explanatory note did not give clear enough recognition to the work that had gone on in that period. But as Deputy Roffey himself said, of course that focused on professional care, not the Carer's Allowance. So I think it is still fair to say that the expectation that Carer's Allowance would be reviewed as part of that work from 2016 going on is still an outstanding piece of work. I think that has at least been acknowledged.

1325 He also I think has made it very clear that this will not benefit those who are losing earnings. All I can say is this amendment has not been brought because it is all about those individuals. But I do accept that point. Deputy Ferbrache said that, in essence, everybody can sympathise with this Amendment and, forgive me, another Member also used that same term. All I would say is that is simply not enough. I think sympathy is not enough at this point. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

1335 I am also grateful to Deputy Ferbrache, again, prompted by this amendment, and that is positive to at least get the undertaking or the understanding from the Civil Service as to their expectations of how to progress this work. He described it as being that there are short-, medium- and long-term workstreams and all of that of course is very good to hear. But in his own language, it is certainly not action this day and certainly, as he will be the first to acknowledge, it is not going to come too quickly. When he says we have heard it all before, he is right. We have heard it before and we do need to see the outcome of that.

1340 I do also just apologise to Deputy Gollop for any implied criticism in the explanatory note. There was not intended, as I tried to make clear in my opening speech, for there to be criticism of the Committee and if the explanatory note suggested that, then I do apologise for that. I hope I have made that position clear and I do thank him for his support on Amendment 2.

1345 Deputy Meerveld I think certainly hit one nail on the head in terms for the savings to the States being huge, from the work that carers do, which really leaves me to address the key issue, which is the funding one. It has been raised I think first and very clearly, and a very good challenge ... Deputy Oliver also made the point, in essence, where the money is coming from; Deputy Dudley-



Owen, 'Why wasn't there a third amendment?'; I think Deputy Mahoney's preauthorisation challenge, as if this were a credit card.

So I think it is incumbent on me to explain the process of how Budgets work from here and therefore why an amendment was not needed yesterday. If Deputy Dudley-Owen still has yesterday's 2023 Budget Report in front of her, either on-screen or in paper form, at page 26, there is the table that was approved, I think by Proposition 17, which sets out the quantum of cash limits across all spending Committees. And there is a line in there about halfway down for £67.9 million for Employment & Social Security, formula-led. That is where this Allowance, Carer's Allowance will sit.

The one thing that I can tell you about budgets – anyone who has ever prepared a budget – is the outcome is never the same as the Budget. So we can be quite sure that when the 2023 Accounts are prepared in 2024, the outcome for the formula-led line halfway down there will not be £67.9 million. It may be a little bit more; it may be a little bit less.

We need to then put in context that the way the States' procedures will work is if this Assembly approves either of these amendments today, the Treasury team at Frossard House will tell ESS at Wheadon House that, 'What you need to do is you need to live within that £67.9 million budget.' To put that in context, £½ million is 0.7% of that £67.9 million and £166,000 is 0.2% of that £67.9 million.

If, as the year trundles along, ESS in their monthly reports, as they start to forecast towards the end of the year, think that the consequence of this amendment is going to take them over £67.9 million, then they will rock up to P&R and say, 'We think we're going to overspend this £67.9 million authorised by the States of Deliberation on the beginning of November and we need £166,000 or £500,000' depending on what is approved or whatever it might be ... It could be £50,000 if there have been underspends elsewhere in the Budget. But if they think there is a need, 'We'd like you to consider the use of the Budget Reserve.' That is how the Budget Reserve is accessed. It is not accessed today, if the States approve this Amendment. It is accessed at some point in the future if the Committee cannot live within its Budget.

Back in the day, Deputy Trott and I sparred, when I was the Minister for Treasury & Resources and he, I think, was probably sitting where Deputy Murray or Deputy Moakes was – I cannot remember exactly where – and he made a comment in a Budget debate about it all being in the roundings. He got much stick from me about that and it is a comment which I frequently remind him of. But in the context of a Budget of £573.1 million for the States overall, and in the context of a Committee limit of £67.9 million – in other words, either 0.2% or 0.7% of that budget – then this amendment is *de minimis*. In other words, frankly, it is not appropriate or necessary to bring an amendment to yesterday's Budget to preauthorise in the way that Deputy Mahoney described.

So if I seriously believed that there was a major threat to ESS's ability to live within that £67.9 million, then bringing an Amendment to raise Fuel Duty by an extra whatever ... And by the way, just as a point of correction, £166,000 is a third of the £500,000, not 50%, as Deputy Helyar said – or 'approximately half', he said – in terms of if you were trying to raise the revenue. It would not need its impact on some of the examples he gave. But the point is it is simply not necessary in the context of a Budget of the size that we are talking about.

So I do urge Members, sir, to support Amendment 1 and if they feel disinclined to do so because they feel that is a little bit too much and that the threat to that £67.9 million line is too great, then I do encourage them to support Amendment 2 at £166,000, 0.2% of that Budget. It is and should be perfectly manageable. The Committee will not be delivering a result which is exactly in line with that Budget and on that basis it is not inconsistent, as I think a number of speakers have said already, with what I said during the Budget debate yesterday.

I thank Members for the debate and look forward to their support for one of the Amendments.

**The Bailiff:** Well, Members of the States, we will come to the vote. First of all, on the Amendment numbered 1, which would have the effect of changing the amount of Carer's Allowance in that table

1400 to £114.88. Hopefully everyone's machines are working and I would invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

*There was a recorded vote.*

Not Carried – Pour 5, Contre 25, Ne vote pas 6, Absent 4, Did not vote 0

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>
Deputy Fairclough	Deputy Brouard	Deputy Aldwell	Deputy Bury	None
Deputy Gabriel	Deputy Burford	Deputy Blin	Deputy Le Tocq	
Deputy Matthews	Deputy Cameron	Deputy Gollop	Deputy McKenna	
Deputy Queripel	Deputy de Lisle	Deputy Leadbeater	Deputy Taylor	
Deputy St Pier	Deputy de Sausmarez	Deputy Meerveld		
	Deputy Dudley-Owen	Deputy Prow		
	Deputy Dyke			
	Deputy Falla			
	Deputy Ferbrache			
	Deputy Haskins			
	Deputy Helyar			
	Deputy Inder			
	Deputy Kazantseva-Miller			
	Deputy Le Tissier			
	Deputy Mahoney			
	Deputy Moakes			
	Deputy Murray			
	Deputy Oliver			
	Deputy Parkinson			
	Alderney Rep. Roberts			
	Deputy Roffey			
	Alderney Rep. Snowdon			
	Deputy Soulsby			
	Deputy Trott			
	Deputy Vermeulen			

1405 **The Bailiff:** So the voting on Amendment 1, proposed by Deputy St Pier, seconded by Deputy Queripel, is as follows: there voted in favour, 6 Members, against 25 Members, 6 Members abstained, 4 Members were absent at the time of the vote. Therefore I will declare Amendment 1 lost; which means we now turn, Members of the States, to Amendment 2, which is the slightly lower amount of £105.69. This is also proposed by Deputy St Pier, seconded by Deputy Queripel. Will you please open the voting, Greffier.

*There was a recorded vote.*

Not Carried – Pour 11, Contre 21, Ne vote pas 4, Absent 4, Did not vote 0

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>
Deputy Fairclough	Deputy Brouard	Deputy Aldwell	Deputy Bury	None
Deputy Gabriel	Deputy Burford	Deputy Blin	Deputy Le Tocq	
Deputy Gollop	Deputy Cameron	Deputy Leadbeater	Deputy McKenna	
Deputy Matthews	Deputy de Lisle	Deputy Meerveld	Deputy Taylor	
Deputy Prow	Deputy de Sausmarez			
Deputy Queripel	Deputy Dudley-Owen			
Alderney Rep. Roberts.	Deputy Dyke			
Alderney Rep. Snowdon	Deputy Falla			
Deputy Soulsby	Deputy Ferbrache			
Deputy St Pier	Deputy Haskins			
Deputy Trott	Deputy Helyar			
	Deputy Inder			
	Deputy Kazantseva-Miller			
	Deputy Le Tissier			
	Deputy Mahoney			
	Deputy Moakes			

Deputy Murray  
Deputy Oliver  
Deputy Parkinson  
Deputy Roffey  
Deputy Vermeulen

1410 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 2, proposed by Deputy St Pier and seconded by Deputy Queripel, there voted in favour, 11 Members; against, 21; there were 4 abstentions this time; and 4 Members were absent. So I will also declare Amendment 2 lost, which means that the original Propositions remain unchanged and we now move into general debate on them.  
Deputy Queripel.

1415 **Deputy Queripel:** Sir, thank you.  
I have given Deputy Roffey prior notice of the questions I am about to ask, so hopefully he is in a position to answer them.

Starting with what we are told in paragraph 2.76, where we are told in the last sentence, given the low levels of Extra needs allowance claims, the allowance is not going to be uprated in 2023. Sir, in relation to that, I have spoken to at least a dozen people recently who were not even aware the allowance exists, because they said no one had informed them about it, and they only became aware of it when I was speaking to them about Income Support applications.

1420 It could be a case of a need to publicise the Allowance a lot more, so that is my first question to the President, sir: how do ESS publicise that Allowance? I ask that because it concerns me that so many people I have spoken to are not aware of it and I ask it in the knowledge that we are told in paragraph 2.85 that ESS are considering how better to promote Income Support this winter. But they do not make a mention of doing that for the extra needs allowance. That is not a criticism, sir, I hasten to add. I am genuinely trying to help, here.

1425 Paragraph 2.96 tells us that further work will be carried out to define what energy poverty looks like here in Guernsey. I have a lot of experience of that. As most people know, I set up the Age Concern Guernsey Fuel Fund and I ran it for six years. It was set up to provide financial assistance to pensioners who struggle to pay their fuel bills in the winter. I reluctantly had to give up running it because it became too time-consuming, but I want to assure everyone it is still running. All a pensioner struggling to pay their fuel bills needs to do is call the Age Concern Chairman, Mr Dave Inglis, on 263228 and submit an application.

1430 Moving back to the issue of what fuel poverty looks like here in Guernsey, I can tell ESS what I saw in dozens of homes, if not hundreds, when I visited the homes of applicants to our fund, in the hope this helps in ESS in some way. But I am sure I am not the only Member of the Assembly, sir, who has seen what I am about to describe. In this case, it is pensioners of course, because it is a pensioners' fuel fund.

1440 Pensioners will be sitting in front of a one-bar electric fire, wearing hats, coats, scarves, gloves, blankets over their legs, clutching hot-water bottles and drinking hot drinks in a desperate attempt to stay warm on a cold winter's day. That is, of course, if they got out of bed, because bed is the warmest place to be when the rest of the place is so cold. That is what energy poverty looks like for *some* of our pensioners and if any of my colleagues think I am exaggerating, sir, I can give them the phone number of my right-hand man on the Fuel Fund for six years and he will verify every single word of what I have just said.

1445 But actually, sir, I do not need to tell ESS what fuel poverty looks like here in Guernsey. They already know. I have worked with staff at ESS on dozens of occasions over the years in attempts to secure Income Support, and consequently the Fuel Allowance, for Islanders; pensioners struggling financially. I am sure other Deputies have done the same. And not once has ESS failed to deliver. The staff have always been considerate and compassionate and 100% professional at all times. In fact, they bend over backwards to help.

1450 So I would like to take this opportunity to not only put my thanks to the staff on record, but also ask Deputy Roffey and his Committee, through the chair, to pass on the immense gratitude of all of those Islanders to the staff who have helped them over the years, please. Actually, sir, I have said

this before, and I am delighted to say it again: I have cost ESS *hundreds* of thousands of pounds over the years! I do not feel the need to apologise for that because every single penny of that money has gone to the most needy and the most vulnerable out in our community.

1460 The next issue I want to focus on is the issue of free TV licences, covered in paragraphs 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3. We are told in those paragraphs that the BBC give free TV licences to pensioners of 75 years of age and over in Guernsey and in Alderney, if they are in receipt of Income Support. We are also told in those paragraphs that ESS fund TV licences for pensioners up to 75 years of age if they receive Income Support and the cost of doing that is anticipated to be £7,000 in 2023.

1465 As we all know, Islanders who are in receipt of Income Support are the most needy in our community. There are also many others who are just above the threshold for Income Support who struggle to survive financially. In relation to that, is the President able to tell me, please, how many pensioners under-75 currently in receipt of Income Support have their TV licence funded by ESS? Is he also able to tell me how many pensioners over-75 currently in receipt of Income Support receive free TV licences from the BBC? Could a pensioner who does not qualify for Income Support but finds themselves struggling to survive financially make a claim under the Extra Needs Allowance I referred to earlier, for money to cover the cost of the TV licence?

1470 In asking that question, sir, I am only too aware we are told in paragraph 2.6 that such a claim needs to arise from a medical condition or a disability. On that note, some of our pensioners with medical conditions and disabilities only have the television for company and hardly see anyone all day – day in, day out. So they cannot afford to be without their television. I realise the Allowance is of up to £20 a week, but of course a pensioner could save that up over a number of weeks until such time as they have enough money to pay for their TV licence.

1475 I am only too aware that could be considered to be bending the rules a little bit, but as I said earlier, in my experience of working with staff at ESS, they are prepared to bend over backwards to help. So I thought it was at least worth asking that question, sir.

1480 Staying with the issue of TV licences for pensioners, paragraph 6.2 tells us that following a recommendation made by the Committee, the Policy & Resources Committee have sent a formal request for the simple payment plan for TV licences to be extended to cover the entire Bailiwick. Paragraph 6.3 tells us that officers in the UK are continuing to work with the BBC to establish the process and timescale required for the extension of the simple payment plan.

1485 It is understood the BBC has highlighted a number of operational challenges, which continue to be addressed by officers at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport at the time of writing. That sounds like a really involved process for a plan that is known as a simple payment plan. So can the President tell me, please, what this simple payment plan is all about?

1490 Sir, moving towards a close, I want to commend ESS for adopting such a compassionate approach to the most needy out in our community at this difficult time. I also want to put on record thanks to the Guernsey Welfare Service for the sterling work they do out in the community. And if we look at paragraph 2.14, we see that demand for support from their food bank has increased from 450 households in 2019, to 584 in 2021 and that those figures will increase again in 2022. So all credit to all of those involved with the Service and if anyone listening does not know their contact number, sir, it is 07839724300.

1495 Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

1500

**Deputy Inder:** I was going to try Rule 26(1), sir, just in case.

**The Bailiff:** Well, will those Members who wish to speak in debate please stand in their places? Is it still your wish? (**Deputy Inder:** Yes, sir.)

1505

Members of the States, the motion is that subject to hearing from somebody from P&R, possibly, and also the President of the Committee, that no one will be able to speak in the debate and the debate would be closed after those and vote would take place. Those in favour; those against?

*Members voted Contre.*

**The Bailiff:** I will declare that lost.  
Deputy de Lisle.

1510

**Deputy de Lisle:** Thank you, sir.

I note in the introduction to Income Support on page 37 that Income Support was introduced on 6th July 2018 as the replacement for the Supplementary Benefit and Rent Rebate system. We know that in the year following the change, 900 family household units were placed on Income Support, in addition, as a result of this change. Since then, 2018, Income Support has grown from

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£40 million to near £50 million in the Budget for 2023 – quite an increase.  
I am grateful to Deputy Roffey in reading out the letter from one constituent, whereby I believe that half of the costings of that particular family were in terms of rental costs, if not in that particular case, certainly in other cases. People complained at the time that they were unable to afford market rents for their social housing – market rents placed on social housing tenants – and have had to claim welfare benefits as a result. In fact, because they could not pay the new rental amounts, they had to succumb, not always in terms of their wishes, to Income Support. In terms of actually in the old terms claiming Supplementary Benefit, which they did not really want to find themselves doing.

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Just to look at this, because I would like Deputy Roffey to comment on this, now we bring in, let's say, under £20 million from social housing rents as a result of putting on market rents, but then we are spending £50 million on Income Support. Should we be going back on that 2018 replacement of Supplementary Benefit and Rent Rebate by Income Support? Should we be reversing that?

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What amount, in fact, of that £20 million is coming from, really, a couple of areas of support? I am talking in terms of table 15 on page 34, the 'Jobseeker', 'low earner' and the 'Single parent', £19.1 million is there within the Income Support claims. So it is a question to be considered and also, given the rising numbers on Income Support and the increased cost of Income Support, what is being done to reduce the benefit claimants, to cut the welfare bill and to make families more self-reliant?

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I know that the Department has introduced measures already. What I would like to know is what further measures might come in and what, perhaps, the Department is already considering bringing in, in order to reduce the number of benefit claimants, in order to cut the welfare bill and to make families more self-reliant? I just wonder whether people are trapped in this whole Income Support saga in that it is very difficult for them to earn additional monies in order to release themselves from Income Support.

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Thank you, sir.

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**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

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**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

I will be supporting the Social Security paper. I did want to speak about the Income Support limit, which I was very keen and very pleased to see that Deputy Roffey has removed, or will be removing in this policy letter. I think it is high time that it was removed. It does not really have any great effect; I think its public perception has a much bigger effect than what it actually does. The only thing that it really does is limit the amount of help that can be provided when there are large families.

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I am sure people might think that that was worth doing at some point, but it really does not seem like a very nice thing for the States to be doing. It seems a little bit like it was borne of some concern that people had around the middle of the 20th century that the world was becoming overpopulated. In the 1960s there was this book about 'the population bomb' and everyone got

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very scared that the world population was going to increase at such a rate that it would consume everybody's resources and some people worried that the population was growing too high.

Of course China had this one-child policy, which they instituted in the 1980s, and I think this policy was borne out of those sorts of ideas. People thought the wrong sorts of people were having too many children. It is very unfortunate that that is the sort of thinking that was probably behind, or certainly in the back of people's mind when they were thinking, 'Well, let's limit the amount of benefits that people can have so that there won't be so many children.' It is the wrong type of thinking and I am very glad to see it be removed and the small cost that it incurs, I think, will provide some benefit to that small number of families.

That was the only part of the policy letter that I was going to address. The other Propositions I will be supporting.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Tissier.

**Deputy Le Tissier:** Thank you, sir.

I am not going to speak for very long, as I commend shorter speeches to most Deputies. Unfortunately, Deputy St Pier is not here, that mentioned I only had short speeches. So it is unfortunate that he is not here to hear this. But just as a general comment, I think some working families are going to be looking on, perhaps envy is the wrong word, it is too strong a word, but looking on at benefits being increased by 7% and they are seeing their income reducing. I think it is down 2.8% on average in Q2 this year.

But that is not my main point, because one can argue that until the cows come home. The point I wanted to make was to do with the so-called benefits cap. If the benefits cap is removed, in my view, it becomes more opaque and is definitely not transparent, because in the past the Assembly has had a chance to look at the maximum allowance and pass comment on it. If it is removed, we are never going to see that again.

Perhaps Deputy Roffey could confirm that that understanding is correct, that we will never be asked again to look at the benefits cap. And if that is the case, how are we going to monitor how much we are paying to ... The statistics that we receive at the moment, how are we going to receive those in the future? I think it is important that we do try and keep an eye on what is going on because at the moment, if this goes through, we will be delegating this to ESS, which I am not sure that we want to do, whilst we want to continue to monitor how the Budget is increasing, decreasing or whatever.

Just one comment that Deputy Roffey did make was that there is still going to be a cap, but I think that is a little bit disingenuous, because it is an individual cap based on the needs of each family. So if a family has a massive requirement, then of course it will go up to whatever. To me, that is not a cap at all.

That is all, really, I wanted to say. It is the removal of the cap and the lack of transparency going forward that concerns me.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dyke.

**Deputy Dyke:** Thank you, sir.

I thank Deputy Roffey for his paper, which in many areas is quite clear. There is one area that perhaps – he cannot do it now – he could circulate more information, namely in regard to how this table of goods and services is made up for minimum Income Support. We did have an interesting meeting at the Legislation Review Committee earlier in the week, where the civil servant from his Department who was responsible for putting it together was giving us information on various other things. We always go off piste and had a very interesting discussion about, but most of the Deputies

here do not have the benefit of that and even there we did not actually see the table. So that further information circulated to Deputies might be interesting for everyone.

1610 That was my first point. Second point: could I question administration costs on page 33 of his paper? They seem to jump from £1.6 million in 2022 to £2.1 million in 2023, which is a 30% increase of £500,000. I do not know if he will be able to explain that or perhaps do something about it; £500,000 would have paid for that Carer's Allowance increase at the higher level. So at this time I think we do not want to see very large increases in administration costs. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

1615 Next point: resolution 2. Deputy Le Tissier has touched on it, I have a problem with it again. It actually feels like *déjà vu* all over again talking on this subject, so I guess I will get it in the neck but never mind. To recap, over the last few years, we have raised the benefit cap in real terms by 21%, about three years ago, and then a second increase of 5% a couple of years ago. We have added the inflationary increases and now, as at October of this year, it is at £980 per week, or around £51,000 per annum. And it is fully inflation-proofed. Bear in mind that the median wage, now, is around  
1620 £37,000 and it is not inflation-proofed at all.

I think the latest news on inflation, which I read from *The Guernsey Press* yesterday – and I have not checked through our official figures – is that in the first quarter of this year, real wages dropped, relative to inflation, by 1.4% in the first quarter and 2.8% in the second quarter. So most of the working punters out there are suffering right now. Deputy Roffey now wishes to raise the cap  
1625 entirely. He has given his reasons, I know he is genuine, but I do think he is wrong, respectfully, for a number of reasons.

Public perception is one. Obviously, we should not always be guided by public perception, if we think the public is completely wrong, when we should go out and explain to them why they are completely wrong. But at this particular time, this timing is immaculately bad, when, in the current  
1630 Budget, we are putting up taxes quite considerably on various people, in particular the TRP. There are other tax increases in there: withdrawal of mortgage allowances for buy-to-let, that sort of thing. So we are putting up taxes, we are threatening GST, and at this very same time we are telling people out there, who are suffering and paying their taxes and working, that we are taking the benefit cap right off.

1635 I do not know why we are doing it now. I do not think it is a good idea in principle and I think that this timing at this moment is particularly bad. So that is one thing: people out there are suffering. Deputies may remember that we had a nice, quite analytical email distributed to all Deputies from a nice lady out there in the public concerning the unfairness of Social Security charges for the self-employed. I thought she made interesting points and took it upon myself to  
1640 organise a meeting with her and a couple of other Deputies. That was very interesting.

She is a bookkeeper and accountant on a very small basis, and works for about 130 small, sole traders and traders with possibly one employee. She herself is working full time. She herself was a carer to her mother for many years, with her only benefit being the care allowance, income really quite modest. She and her sole traders, the typical income range, before expenses, so it is not profit,  
1645 seems to be around £50,000 or up to £80,000 in her client base. So out there, we are looking at people whose turnover before expenses is not much higher than this £51,000 benefit cap.

So I do find it very difficult to see how we can justify doing this right now, given our financial problems, aside from questions of balance and fairness. I would, as an aside, mention to Deputy Roffey that the lady concerned was not very impressed with his off-the-cuff remark that she  
1650 was very well off and had a good deal on Social Security costs.

So that is one thing: perception and timing. The second thing is cost. We are in challenging times, we are trying to keep the Budget down. We say we are going to keep costs under control but we never do. Here is a new proposal that, according to the paper, will cost us another £237,000 per  
1655 year. Not such a big number, you might say, but it will not stop there. I will come to this. Once this cap, if this cap is removed, you will find more families, inevitably, as night follows day, start sliding up through where the cap would have been. So I think we will find, not only more families getting into this sort of difficulty, but we will find more costs going on to the Budget, as the bigger families

begin to increase in number. That is my second point, the cost, which presumably we are concerned about right now.

1660 But the big point from me is personal responsibility and moral hazard. At the moment, we seem to have a limited number of families reaching what I would say is a most generous cap of £980 per week, with four, five, six or seven children. Should we really, unintentionally, increase incentivisation for some families to have more and more children, with the responsibility for paying for them shifted to other people, who themselves are paying tax, cannot afford housing and may not be able to  
1665 afford even one child? Possibly they might have one child or two children and then have to stop where they are.

At some point one must draw a line. The UK has a cap of two children, ours is well above that, although the regimes are calculated in a slightly different way. Where you get into these situations you have further problems. The outcomes for children in these very large families with problems  
1670 and difficulties do tend to be ... their outcomes are much worse in terms of health, educational outcomes, substance abuse, etc. So it is not, at the end of the day, a good idea to incentivise people into these situations where they might not otherwise be. That would be irresponsible.

In that regard, I would recommend to Deputies that they read James Bartholomew's *The Welfare of Nations*, which explores how overgenerous benefit regimes have developed over the years and how well-intentioned policies have had rather bad unintended consequences. There is a very big  
1675 issue there.

And there are more knock-on effects. You may remember the housing needs indicator, dated March of this year, put together by E&I and presented to Development & Planning, and I assume they put it together with input from ESS. Planning has not at this point approved that document. In  
1680 fact, we have sent it back with comments. No doubt we will hear back from E&I at some point. But what is interesting about this, the housing needs indicator of March, it proposes that the private-sector housing market needs 141 private bedroom houses by 2040 and not one – zero – five-bed or five-plus-bedroom houses. The social sector, on the other hand, requires, apparently, until 2040, 277 four-bedroom houses and 146 five- and five-plus-bedroom houses.

1685 So what future are we contemplating for ourselves here, when it would appear that we need no large houses for private families going forward but we need this rather huge number of social houses in that space? And that is in addition to the much smaller one-, two- and three-bedroom units that I do not have the figures for.

Deputy Roffey reminded us, quite rightly, that some of these families, but not all of them, may  
1690 be working to a greater or lesser extent. And in that regard, I thoroughly support the increase in the earnings disregard. I think that is a good thing, to help encourage people take responsibility and have more capacity to increase their earnings.

I suspect after I have spoken there will be a lot of hyperbole about intolerable poverty, which is  
1695 *not* a defined term. There are all sorts of ways to define poverty. The common practice is to define property by reference to relative poverty, not actual poverty, so that it can be and has been said that there is more poverty in Guernsey than there is in India. That has actually been said based on that definition of poverty. You can have all sorts of definitions of poverty but I think it is not really fair to say that you can define having an income of £51,000 as poverty. That is really so difficult, as  
1700 a matter of common sense, to justify. They do have a saying in Texas: you can paint your grandmother yellow and call her the school bus.

A balance must be struck. At the end of the day, one has to look at the figures. One must look at median earnings, the fiscal issues in the private sector and balance that against what we spent on social benefits. We must be responsible. I will quote from ESS's mission statement of their special purpose. It commences, ESS's purpose is:

To foster a compassionate, cohesive and aspirational society in which responsibility is encouraged ...

1705 And I do think the word 'responsibility' is important.

So those are my views. Last time around, when I made similar points, I was written off as the Sheriff of Nottingham and some wealthy guy who neither knows nor cares how the other half live.



1710 Not so. I care a lot. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) And I also know how the other half live. Like Deputy Ferbrache, I was brought up in *very* impecunious circumstances. Like Deputy Helyar, my father was a fireman. I have lived in social housing, starting off in one of those asbestos prefabs that was thrown up after the war, with no insulation and no heating, and then going on to much cheaper accommodation, which was *even* worse, on the basis that my father was desperately trying to save up for a deposit for a house. I think some of our families are probably in a similar situation now.

1715 At that time, this dreadful property we had was a semi-basement, no fitted bathroom and the bath was a tin one in the kitchen heated by paraffin. So I do know what it is like not to have money and I do know how it is like to be short of funds. I thought I would make that point before everyone starts hitting on me on social media, as they did last time.

1720 My point is that we have to balance care and compassion with common sense and with our fiscal responsibility to our entire community and I think that Resolution 2 tips the balance too far in terms of compassion, as against our overall duties.

Thank you – and I would ask if that could be voted on separately.

**The Bailiff:** We now adjourn to 2.30.

1725 **Deputy Oliver:** Sir, could I just put the motion that we just finish this, because we have now only got the finishing up speech, really, to do and the vote.

**The Bailiff:** Let me at least see. How many people still want to speak in general debate?

1730 Well, Members of the States, I will put to you the motion that we hear from the President of the Committee and then do the voting. Those in favour; those against?

*Members voted Pour.*

**The Bailiff:** Very well. I will invite Deputy Roffey to reply to the debate.

**Deputy Roffey:** I will try and go as quickly as I can, although Deputy Queripel did start with five questions and he did submit them to me in advance, so I will answer them.

1735 How is the Extra Needs Allowance publicised? It is certainly on the Income Support page on gov.gg. I also remind him that I took the opportunity of specifically promoting it in my update statement to the States at the last Meeting. Claims officers are certainly mindful of the Allowance when taking new claims and reviewing existing claims for Income Support, and make claimants aware of the Allowance if they think they may have the sort of need that would result in being able to claim that extra Allowance, which is energy, clothing, laundry or dietary costs.

1740 What I would say is that in view of the cost-of-living crisis that is going on, the Income Support team is currently working very closely with the States' communication team on plans to promote not just the Extra Needs Allowance, but also the medical cover and the Winter Fuel Allowance, to make sure everybody is aware of them.

1745 On TV licences, there are currently 71 customers who are over pension age but under 75 and in receipt of Income Support who are having their TV licences funded by ESS. The BBC pay for 423 households who are over 75 and in receipt of Income Support for their TV licence. He asked whether the Extra Needs Allowance could be used to pay for a TV licence. No, I am afraid not. It is specifically for needs that result in extra energy, clothing, laundry or dietary costs and unfortunately television, although I take his point about it being company, does not fall under any of those headings.

1750 The simple payment plan – he asked what it was – is specifically for those in financial difficulty and not only are they able to spread the payment over a fortnightly or monthly payment plan, which I know you can do a monthly payment plan anyway, but it has got extra added flexibility. For instance, if a payment is missed, it can be spread across the remainder of the plan, instead of having to pay double in the next monthly payment. So there is further information, I am told, to be available if you look at, 'What is the TV Licensing Simple Payment Plan?' TV Licensing page online. So I hope

that answers those questions. Of course I will pass on his compliments to the staff at ESS; that goes without saying.

1760 Deputy de Lisle was, I thought, slightly confused. He said he is worried because people cannot afford to pay the full market rent – it is actually less than the actual market rent, but it is the term that is used – for their social housing, and therefore are needing to claim a benefit. And says, ‘Should we go back to the rent rebate?’ Rent rebate was a *benefit*. People used to get two benefits. Ben, as it was called, and rent rebate. Not only does it simplify it by having as one, but it is much fairer because, uniquely, people living in the private sector, in private rental, could not get that benefit of  
1765 the rent rebate but they can get the Income Support. So we now have a level playing field between States’ housing, GHA housing and the private sector.

1770 Deputy Matthews thinks that the income limitation was all about trying to stop people having too many children. I do not think it was, even though listening to Deputy Dyke it sounds like the wrong families having too many children, but I will come on to that in a second. I think it was more to do with when SupBen was regarded as an out-of-work benefit and because it was an out-of-work benefit, it was felt it was important that nobody should get more through that benefit than somebody who was in work.

1775 I think it was originally tied to a tomato greenhouse workers’ wage in the agreement, but of course we have moved on from that because, actually, Income Support is an in-work benefit. You can get it if you are not able to work, but many people who do work are actually just getting a top up. So I think that was the history.

1780 Deputy Le Tissier: I do take his point that average earnings currently are going up less than inflation and benefits are going up with inflation. And I have to say that *if*, and I hope it will not happen, but if that carries on for two or three years, I think we will have to revisit the indexing of benefits. But I would remind him that in normal circumstances, for many years, benefits have been going up by far less than average earnings. We have tended, over the long term, to go up by more than inflation. But if this is the new normal then we would have to revisit that, but I hope very much that is not the case.

1785 Deputy Le Tissier, you will still be able to monitor how much we are spending on Income Support, that will still be in the uprating report on a yearly basis. There still will be maximums but, as has been explained I think by Deputy Le Tissier and Deputy Dyke, the maximums will not be arbitrary. They will be sensitive to the individual circumstances of a family. At the moment, we have the ludicrous situation where we treat a two-child household far more generously than a three- or four-family household because that is how the arbitrary limit works.

1790 Deputy Dyke wants to know more about how all this table of goods and services works. Well, there is no secret. If any Member wants, contact the secretary of ESS and we will send you with them out in full. Time is getting on, so I do not want to say too much, but I can tell you it really does drill down into very fine margins.

1795 So I have got here part of the table, which is for parents with four children. So if you have got two parents with four children, their allocation for white cabbage is 75p a week, for fresh carrots is 54p a week, for onions, shallots, leeks – fresh, in brackets – 89p a week. So you are going to get pages and pages of that if you want to know how it works, but if you are that interested, great. ESS loves to open up its work for people to see and we are happy to share that.

1800 He referred to admin costs, but I think he was a bit disingenuous. I do not know why it is so low this year, but actually, he gave the impression that admin costs were going up over the years. If you actually look at that table he referred to on page 33, it is quite the opposite. If anything, in 2019, it was £2.3 million, in 2020, it was £2.2 million and it will be £2.1 million next year, is the estimate. There is just a freak year, and I do not know ... (*Interjection*) It could be something to do with the health fund, I am not sure; I will look into it and let people know. But it certainly is not a trend of  
1805 forever increasing.

He said the timing is bad, but I do not think it is. This is not a hugely expensive move, this business of removing the weekly income limit and I think you have quoted £250,000-odd and said that was not much. It is actually quite a lot less than that. That is the combined cost of removing

1810 the weekly income limit and the minimum income standard (MIS) adjustments, the 10-yearly adjustments that have been bedded in.

I think it is something like £160,000 and it is so much better than every year having this debate and doing 10%, 5%, whatever, and it is the final approach. But the thing is the cost is fully funded in the revenue Budget that was given to ESS yesterday. That is the difference perhaps to the Amendments that Deputy St Pier brought today. This was all agreed with P&R and was embedded in that Budget and therefore I think it should go ahead.

1815 Of course, if people vote against ... No, I am not going to give way in view of the time and people's indulgence. If people vote against option 2, not only will they not be removing the weekly income limit, they will actually, in real terms, be reducing it by 8%. Because nobody has brought an amendment to put it up by RPIX instead. They are just saying – a couple of people, I hope not many – they are going to vote against it, which actually means a significant reduction.

**Deputy Dyke:** Point of correction, I think.

1825 **The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Dyke. Why is Deputy Roffey – (**Deputy Dyke:** Resolution 2 –) Just a minute. Why is Deputy Roffey misleading or making an inaccurate statement?

**Deputy Dyke:** I think he is misleading, making a mistake inadvertently on what Resolution 2 says:

To remove the income support limit of weekly income for a person living in the community, with effect from 6th January ...

It does not say to not have the RPIX increase.

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**The Bailiff:** That is not a valid point of correction. It would simply leave in place, if Proposition 2 were not carried, the current regime, which is set out in the – I think the 8% might be a bit wrong in terms of numbers, but never mind – it would leave in place the statutory regime that is currently there.

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**Deputy Roffey:** Yes, it would leave in place the weekly income limit, which was set at this time last year. I think the latest inflation figures show RPIX at 8% – that is what I understood. That is where my conclusion ... My point was if people did not want to remove it and wanted to actually keep it the same in real terms, they could have brought that amendment. They have not. It will mean in real terms it would actually go down.

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Deputy Dyke: as I said, it was ... I do not know. This characterising of people with poor families, that they are going to have solvent abuse and they are going to have all sorts of things. I know he does not like the pasting he took on social media but he does not half bring it upon himself. I just think that is so ... And I am not encouraging it, by the way, I hope nobody gives him any abuse on social media, but that is just so unfair.

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Members of ESS, I know people may mock the fact that it is a focus group, but we have met with quite a significant number of families who are impacted by the weekly income limit – decent, hardworking people, both partners working, very often families that have come together, would have cost us more if they had stayed apart. It is *utterly* unfair to characterise them in the way that was done this morning.

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As for the Housing Needs Indicator suggesting we need some more large social housing units, we do. Not because we are expecting a lot more large families, but because we have been at fault in the past for really providing just carbon copy three-bedroom houses throughout our estate. As a result, we have now quite a lot of over-occupying. The larger families that have always been with us have always been crammed into houses that are too small, that dining rooms are being used as bedrooms and we want to do something about that. Actually doing that would try and solve some of the social problems that Deputy Dyke was referring to.

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1860 As I said, we have talked about this long and hard with P&R. They are not that open-handed, actually – I am not blaming them for that, they have got a job to do. As custodians of the public purse, we have convinced them that this is absolutely the right way to go. We are convinced it is absolutely the right way to go. If we do not do it, we will perpetuate the fact that children, and it is no fault of their own, they just happen to be in relatively low-income families that happen to have three or four siblings will *not* be able to have the sort of life that we would expect from any Guernsey child. I really urge you to vote for Proposition 2 and of course all of the other Propositions.

1865 **The Bailiff:** Well, Members of the States, I understand that there ought to be a separate vote on Proposition 2, but in respect of Propositions 3 to 12, is there any request to take any of those discreetly? No. In that case, we will start with a vote on Proposition 1 on its own.

Greffier, Proposition 1, please; will you open the voting?

*There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 32, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 1, Absent 4, Did not vote 3

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>
Deputy Aldwell	None	Deputy Blin	Deputy Bury	Deputy Dudley-Owen
Deputy Brouard			Deputy Le Tocq	Deputy Inder
Deputy Burford			Deputy McKenna	Deputy Parkinson
Deputy Cameron			Deputy Taylor	
Deputy de Lisle				
Deputy de Sausmarez				
Deputy Dyke				
Deputy Fairclough				
Deputy Falla				
Deputy Ferbrache				
Deputy Gabriel				
Deputy Gollop				
Deputy Haskins				
Deputy Helyar				
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller				
Deputy Le Tissier				
Deputy Leadbeater				
Deputy Mahoney				
Deputy Matthews				
Deputy Meerveld				
Deputy Moakes				
Deputy Murray				
Deputy Oliver				
Deputy Prow				
Deputy Queripel				
Alderney Rep. Roberts.				
Deputy Roffey				
Alderney Rep. Snowdon				
Deputy Soulsby				
Deputy St Pier				
Deputy Trott				
Deputy Vermeulen				

1870 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 1, there voted in favour 32 Members; no Member voted against; there was 1 abstention; 7 Members were absent at the time of the vote; and therefore I declare Proposition 1 duly carried.

We will next have a vote on Proposition 2, taken in isolation, please.

*There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 22, Contre 9, Ne vote pas 2, Absent 4, Did not vote 3

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>
Deputy Aldwell	Deputy Dyke	Deputy Blin	Deputy Bury	Deputy Dudley-Owen
Deputy Brouard	Deputy Ferbrache	Deputy Prow	Deputy Le Tocq	Deputy Inder
Deputy Burford	Deputy Haskins		Deputy McKenna	Deputy Parkinson
Deputy Cameron	Deputy Helyar		Deputy Taylor	
Deputy de Lisle	Deputy Le Tissier			
Deputy de Sausmarez	Deputy Mahoney			
Deputy Fairclough	Deputy Meerveld			
Deputy Falla	Deputy Oliver			
Deputy Gabriel	Deputy Vermeulen			
Deputy Gollop				
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller				
Deputy Leadbeater				
Deputy Matthews				
Deputy Moakes				
Deputy Murray				
Deputy Queripel				
Alderney Rep. Roberts.				
Deputy Roffey				
Alderney Rep. Snowdon				
Deputy Soulsby				
Deputy St Pier				
Deputy Trott				

1875 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 2, there voted in favour, 22 Members; against, 9 Members; there were 2 Members abstaining; 7 Members absent at the time of the vote; and therefore I will declare Proposition 2 duly carried.

Finally, Propositions 3 to 12, the remaining Propositions taken *en bloc*.

*There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 34, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Absent 4, Did not vote 3

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>
Deputy Aldwell	None	None	Deputy Bury	Deputy Dudley-Owen
Deputy Blin			Deputy Le Tocq	Deputy Inder
Deputy Brouard			Deputy McKenna	Deputy Parkinson
Deputy Burford			Deputy Taylor	
Deputy Cameron				
Deputy de Lisle				
Deputy de Sausmarez				
Deputy Dyke				
Deputy Fairclough				
Deputy Falla				
Deputy Ferbrache				
Deputy Gabriel				
Deputy Gollop				
Deputy Haskins				
Deputy Helyar				
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller				
Deputy Le Tissier				
Deputy Leadbeater				
Deputy Mahoney				
Deputy Matthews				
Deputy Meerveld				
Deputy Moakes				
Deputy Murray				
Deputy Oliver				
Deputy Prow				
Deputy Queripel				

Alderney Rep. Roberts.  
Deputy Roffey  
Alderney Rep. Snowdon  
Deputy Soulsby  
Deputy St Pier  
Deputy Trott  
Deputy Vermeulen

1880 **The Bailiff:** The voting on Propositions 3 to 12 inclusive is as follows: there voted in favour, 33 Members; nobody voted against; nobody abstained; but the 7 Members are still absent. And therefore I will declare all of those Propositions duly carried, which means that all 12 Propositions have been carried.

That concludes the business for this Meeting, so Greffier, if we can close the Meeting with the grace, please.

*The Assembly adjourned at 1.02 p.m.*