

STATES OF JERSEY



BENEFITS PAID BY THE HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY COMMITTEES: PROTECTION (P.116/2003) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 23rd September 2003
by the Employment and Social Security Committee**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Employment and Social Security Committee strongly oppose Deputy Southern's proposition because it is overly restrictive.

The States has already agreed in principle to extensive reform of the means-tested welfare and benefit system. To do this in one step may be too harsh for some families, so the Committee is minded to make changes, in a phased manner, to some non-contributory benefits before the low income support system is implemented.

The Committee is also tasked with reducing benefit expenditure, and is to review both the Disability Transport Allowance and Christmas Bonus as a result of the last Fundamental Spending Review and 2004 cash limits.

In addition, nearly all the Committee's benefits are driven by statute and all require States agreement before changes can be made. The Committee is therefore satisfied that any changes to eligibility criteria or unusual reductions in rates will have to be approved by the States, and therefore be subject to scrutiny by States members as to hardship, equity and fairness to the general body of the population.