

STATES OF JERSEY



BUDGET 2004: SECOND AMENDMENT (P.165/2003) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 2nd December 2003
by the Finance and Economics Committee**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The States have already agreed the cash limits of the Committees in approving the Resource Plan 2004-2008. Agreeing to the amendment of Deputy Southern would amount to increasing the budget deficit by £255,000 plus administration costs for each and every year, requiring taxation to be further increased or further cuts in other services to be achieved. Furthermore, it is estimated that the amendment would have manpower implications.

Bringing forward a proposal in this fashion does not allow the States the opportunity to prioritise such a benefit against other States' benefits and services. The Finance and Economics Committee strongly believes that members of the States should consider expenditure priorities against each other, rather than in a piecemeal way, and that they should be provided from within the financial resources available and also agreed by the States in the Resource Plan.

States members will recall that, after consultation with the Senior Citizens Association and others regarding the funds which were earmarked for television licences for the elderly, the view of the States was that targeted health benefit would be preferable to a blanket television licence rebate. In light of this, a pilot primary health care scheme was commenced, which has since secured ongoing States approval and funding.

The Finance and Economics Committee strongly opposes the amendment to increase the approved expenditure and deficit of the States given the financial situation and the clear message from the public to control expenditure.