

STATES OF JERSEY

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BENEFITS PAID BY THE HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY COMMITTEES: PROTECTION (P.75/2003) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 15th July 2003
by the Connétable of St. Martin**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The proposition affects the Parishes to the extent that Parish welfare for those not born in the Island [non-native welfare], whilst administered by the Connétables, is funded by the States through the Employment and Social Security Committee. Welfare for those born in the Island [native welfare] is funded by ratepayers. It must be emphasised that there is no difference in the rates of welfare paid to natives and non-natives. The distinction is only in respect of the source of funds to meet that cost. Historically the welfare rates have been increased in October each year in line with cost-of-living increases. The increase is agreed between the Employment and Social Security Committee and the Comité des Connétables.

The wording of the proposition is that there should be “no reductions in the current level of payments made to the recipients of benefits ...” [emphasis added] which could be interpreted that even if an individual’s circumstances improve, the level of benefit paid cannot be reduced in the period specified. The public and private sector housing rental schemes and many non-contributory benefits, including welfare, are means-tested and the level of benefit must continue to be adjusted, both up and down, in line with an individual’s changed circumstances. This could not happen if the proposition is approved.

Accordingly the Connétables do not support the proposition.