

File before us, then we're going to make the big fights, the big attacks, the big change that will have to be made on Select File, and that's where they should be. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Wesely, did you wish to speak again?

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members, again I appreciate Senator Byars' comments in support, and I hope you had a chance to listen to his, I think, very impassioned plea for support for this. I do want to respond to a couple of things. First off, Senator Coordsen talked about the additional money and growth in the budget. As I answered with Senator Schellpeper, this is not trying to get new and additional money into the budget for services for the developmentally disabled. This is just trying to restore the base that was there last year, that was cut under the original bill, 541 I believe it was, by 3 percent. This bill, 330, restores a half of that cut. I'd like to restore it completely. So we're not talking about the growth of government and the growth of expenditures. We're simply trying to hold the line on an area that is already woefully underfunded. You know about the waiting list, you've all heard about those. Those are a serious problem, and an incredible hardship to those who are suffering from developmental disabilities. But the problem is only going to get worse. Here in Lancaster County, the Lancaster County Office of Mental Retardation is looking at a \$600,000 deficit, this county alone, just to maintain the current level of services because of increases in salary, because of workers' comp increases, because of health care increases, there's health care again. And as a result they are looking at separating off from the county for the first time in a couple of decades because they simply can't make it work. And they're struggling through this, they don't know what to do. But Lancaster County alone, if we wanted to fully fund their needs to hold the line and serve people as they are currently, would need 600,000 more dollars. This is 187,000 more for the whole state, just to keep us where we're at in state funding. This is way below where we need to be, with the current funding we're below, with what we need out there we're way below. This is still providing hardship to hundreds of people across the state not able to access services, and perhaps dozens, if not hundreds more that might possibly lose services because we aren't increasing the funding as adequately as we need to to continue services. So we are in a serious, serious problem with services for developmentally disabled. And I don't think this