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NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

ALBANY, NEW YORK

April 16, 2008

11:03 a.m.

REGULAR SESSION

SENATOR JOSEPH A. GRIFFO, Acting President

STEVEN M. BOGGESS, Secretary

## 1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The  
3 Senate will come to order.

4 I ask all present to please rise  
5 and join with me as we recite the Pledge of  
6 Allegiance to our Flag.

7 (Whereupon, the assemblage recited  
8 the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.)

9 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: In the  
10 absence of clergy, I ask that we bow our heads  
11 in a moment of silence.

12 (Whereupon, the assemblage  
13 respected a moment of silence.)

14 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The  
15 reading of the Journal.

16 THE SECRETARY: In Senate,  
17 Tuesday, April 15, the Senate met pursuant to  
18 adjournment. The Journal of Monday, April 14,  
19 was read and approved. On motion, Senate  
20 adjourned.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Without  
22 objection, the Journal stands approved as  
23 read.

24 Presentation of petitions.

25 Messages from the Assembly.

1 Messages from the Governor.  
2 Reports of standing committees.  
3 Reports of select committees.  
4 Communications and reports from  
5 state officers.  
6 Motions and resolutions.  
7 Senator Skelos.  
8 SENATOR SKELOS: Mr. President,  
9 if we could go to the noncontroversial reading  
10 of the calendar.  
11 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The  
12 Secretary will read.  
13 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
14 457, by Senator Saland, Senate Print 7025, an  
15 act to amend the Education Law, in relation to  
16 excluding expenditures.  
17 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Read  
18 the last section.  
19 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This  
20 act shall take effect immediately.  
21 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Call  
22 the roll.  
23 (The Secretary called the roll.)  
24 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 37.  
25 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The

1 bill is passed.

2 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
3 771, by Senator Morahan, Senate Print 1473, an  
4 act to authorize the Village of Greenwood Lake  
5 in Orange County.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: There  
7 is a home-rule message at the desk.

8 Read the last section.

9 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This  
10 act shall take effect immediately.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Call  
12 the roll.

13 (The Secretary called the roll.)

14 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 37.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The  
16 bill is passed.

17 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
18 772, by Senator LaValle, Senate Print 1852, an  
19 act to amend the General Municipal Law, in  
20 relation to allowing.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Read  
22 the last section.

23 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This  
24 act shall take effect immediately.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Call

1 the roll.

2 (The Secretary called the roll.)

3 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 37.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The  
5 bill is passed.

6 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
7 780, by Senator Volker, Senate Print 6739, an  
8 act to amend the Local Finance Law, in  
9 relation to the sale of bonds and notes.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: There  
11 is a home-rule message at the desk.

12 Read the last section.

13 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This  
14 act shall take effect immediately.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Call  
16 the roll.

17 (The Secretary called the roll.)

18 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 37.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The  
20 bill is passed.

21 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
22 781, by Senator Volker, Senate Print 6740, an  
23 act to amend the Local Finance Law, in  
24 relation to the sale of municipal obligations  
25 by the County of Erie.

1                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     There  
2                   is a home-rule message at the desk.

3                   Read the last section.

4                   THE SECRETARY:     Section 2.  This  
5                   act shall take effect immediately.

6                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Call  
7                   the roll.

8                   (The Secretary called the roll.)

9                   THE SECRETARY:     Ayes, 37.

10                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     The  
11                  bill is passed.

12                  THE SECRETARY:     Calendar Number  
13                  782, by Senator Marcellino, Senate Print 6872,  
14                  an act to amend the Town Law, in relation to  
15                  volunteer members.

16                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Read  
17                  the last section.

18                  THE SECRETARY:     Section 2.  This  
19                  act shall take effect immediately.

20                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Call  
21                  the roll.

22                  (The Secretary called the roll.)

23                  THE SECRETARY:     Ayes, 37.

24                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     The  
25                  bill is passed.

1                   THE SECRETARY:     Calendar Number  
2     783, by Senator Seward, Senate Print 6884, an  
3     act in relation to ratifying certain actions  
4     and proceedings.

5                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     There  
6     is a home-rule message at the desk.

7                   Read the last section.

8                   THE SECRETARY:     Section 2. This  
9     act shall take effect immediately.

10                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Call  
11     the roll.

12                  (The Secretary called the roll.)

13                  THE SECRETARY:     Ayes, 38.

14                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     The  
15     bill is passed.

16                  THE SECRETARY:     Calendar Number  
17     785, by Senator Young, Senate Print 6954, an  
18     act to validate, ratify and legalize certain  
19     actions of the Village of Canaseraga, in the  
20     County of Allegany.

21                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     There  
22     is a home-rule message at the desk.

23                  Read the last section.

24                  THE SECRETARY:     Section 5. This  
25     act shall take effect immediately.

1                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Call  
2     the roll.

3                   (The Secretary called the roll.)

4                   THE SECRETARY:     Ayes, 38.

5                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     The  
6     bill is passed.

7                   THE SECRETARY:     Calendar Number  
8     794, by Senator Morahan, Senate Print 4145, an  
9     act to amend the Mental Hygiene Law and the  
10    Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law, in  
11    relation to discharge.

12                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Read  
13    the last section.

14                  THE SECRETARY:     Section 5. This  
15    act shall take effect immediately.

16                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Call  
17    the roll.

18                  (The Secretary called the roll.)

19                  THE SECRETARY:     Ayes, 39.

20                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     The  
21    bill is passed.

22                  THE SECRETARY:     Calendar Number  
23    795, by Senator Morahan, Senate Print 4351, an  
24    act to amend the Mental Hygiene Law, in  
25    relation to settlement.

1                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Read  
2     the last section.

3                   THE SECRETARY:     Section 2.  This  
4     act shall take effect immediately.

5                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Call  
6     the roll.

7                   (The Secretary called the roll.)

8                   THE SECRETARY:     Ayes, 39.

9                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     The  
10    bill is passed.

11                   Senator Skelos, that completes the  
12    noncontroversial reading of the calendar.

13                   SENATOR SKELOS:     Mr. President,  
14    there will be an immediate meeting of the  
15    Finance Committee in the Majority Conference  
16    Room.

17                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     There  
18    will be an immediate meeting of the Senate  
19    Finance Committee in the Majority Conference  
20    Room.

21                   The Senate stands at ease.

22                   (Whereupon, the Senate stood at  
23    ease at 11:09 a.m.)

24                   (Whereupon, the Senate reconvened  
25    at 11:57 a.m.)

1                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     The  
2     Senate will come to order.

3                   Senator Bruno.

4                   SENATOR BRUNO:     Mr. President,  
5     can we at this time return to reports of  
6     standing committees and return to the report  
7     from the Finance Committee and have it read at  
8     this time.

9                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Reports  
10    of standing committees.

11                  The report of the Finance  
12    Committee. The Secretary will now read.

13                  THE SECRETARY:     Senator O.  
14    Johnson, from the Committee on Finance,  
15    reports the following nomination:

16                  As Superintendent of State Police,  
17    Harry James Corbitt, of Albany.

18                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Senator  
19    Johnson.

20                  SENATOR OWEN JOHNSON:     I rise to  
21    move the nomination.

22                  ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Thank  
23    you, Senator Johnson.

24                  Senator Bruno.

25                  SENATOR BRUNO:     Thank you,

1 Mr. President and colleagues.

2 We are about to act on an  
3 appointment that has been forwarded down by  
4 our leader here, the Governor, David Paterson.  
5 And this is one of the Governor's earliest and  
6 maybe most important nomination and selection  
7 of a leader, in this case to lead the State  
8 Police.

9 We have all been disturbed by what  
10 has gone on over the last 14 months, whatever  
11 they've been, 15 months, and much of it  
12 relating to headlines in what has become known  
13 as Troopergate. Which is, just by the  
14 allegations, disgraceful to the people of this  
15 state, to the power that is vested in  
16 Executive authority, and a powerful force like  
17 the State Police.

18 So this Governor starts clean and  
19 fresh and new, and he brings a real  
20 professional, Harry Corbitt, to lead the State  
21 Police.

22 Now, all of us know the State  
23 Police, by the tens of thousands, with their  
24 families, are honorable people, dedicated,  
25 committed, get up whenever they have to report

1 to duty, put their lives on the line, are  
2 killed in the line of duty, young children  
3 left behind. They are really our first line  
4 of defense for a civilized society here in  
5 New York State and really a model for the  
6 whole world.

7 So for anyone to be speaking in a  
8 demeaning, disparaging way has to be  
9 corrected.

10 There are possibly a few people  
11 where the allegations are they acted  
12 inappropriately -- and maybe criminally, in  
13 one case with me personally, but in other  
14 cases, apparently. And the Attorney General  
15 will get to the bottom of that, I hope, in an  
16 expeditious way.

17 But we are honoring and recognizing  
18 a new leader. And he's here with his wife,  
19 Earline.

20 And when I say we have a  
21 professional, we have a man who started as a  
22 sergeant. I started as a sergeant in the  
23 infantry; he, in the State Police. Went on to  
24 become lieutenant, captain, major, colonel.  
25 Retired some years ago. Stayed active in the

1 community, dealing with young people, violence  
2 and the avoidance of violence in our schools,  
3 much to his credit.

4 So when the Governor looked around  
5 at who was a person who'd come up through the  
6 ranks, knows the system inside and out, Harry  
7 Corbitt came to the top. The Governor wasn't  
8 in office two days when he talked to me about  
9 doing something to return credibility of the  
10 State Police to the people of this state.

11 So I am proud that I am here and  
12 speaking in favor of approving this  
13 nomination. And I know there are many people  
14 on the floor.

15 And, Superintendent-to-be, if  
16 people don't get up, it's not because they  
17 don't want to say nice things. Because  
18 they're very conscious of all the State Police  
19 on the road writing tickets.

20 (Laughter.)

21 SENATOR BRUNO: So take it for  
22 granted that everybody here applauds you, your  
23 work, your life, and this nomination, whether  
24 they're on their feet or not.

25 I believe your stepson is here.

1 And that's John, that is here. Welcome.

2 And Mae Francis, your  
3 mother-in-law?

4 COLONEL CORBITT: She's not here.

5 SENATOR BRUNO: Not here.

6 COLONEL CORBITT: She's in  
7 Buffalo.

8 SENATOR BRUNO: But she's very  
9 supportive.

10 (Laughter.)

11 SENATOR BRUNO: And for a  
12 mother-in-law to be supportive, Earline,  
13 that's good work. That's good work. Because  
14 of all of us would aspire to our  
15 mother-in-laws being partners and supportive.  
16 So that says something for you and for your  
17 family.

18 So, Mr. President and colleagues,  
19 again, it's my honor and my privilege to move  
20 one of the Governor's first and most important  
21 nominations to be the Superintendent of State  
22 Police.

23 Thank you.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Thank  
25 you, Senator Bruno.

1                   Senator Smith.

2                   SENATOR SMITH:       Thank you very  
3 much, Mr. President.

4                   To my colleagues and my friends, to  
5 Superintendent Corbitt's wife Earline, John,  
6 and Mae Francis Castelbury, who is in absentia  
7 but still supports Colonel Harry Corbitt, let  
8 me say this is a historical day on two fronts  
9 for this chamber.

10                  One, for our good friend, our  
11 former colleague, the Governor, Senator  
12 Paterson, this is his first nominee who has  
13 gone through the process.

14                  And it's also a first for an  
15 African-American to be the Superintendent and  
16 also to be confirmed by this body.

17                  I would be remiss and I would be  
18 chastised by my colleagues if I did not  
19 take -- especially Ruth -- if I did not take  
20 this moment to offer a sense of pride for  
21 those of us in the African-American community  
22 that understand more so what it takes to move  
23 through the ranks of law enforcement, to move  
24 through the ranks of the military, to be able  
25 to go beyond and retire and then be called

1 back to a position where not only are you  
2 respected, but you now have a double  
3 challenge.

4 Obviously Senator Bruno talked  
5 about some of the challenges that are before  
6 us in terms of our troopers. And so not only  
7 have you been called back to duty for the  
8 purpose of providing one of the best police  
9 forces in this state with some direction, but  
10 you also now have to rebuild a lot of that  
11 integrity and respect which many people had  
12 some questions about.

13 And as we still are on the heels of  
14 some reports and anticipation of some  
15 investigations being completed, we also know  
16 that without our state troopers there are a  
17 number of people throughout this state,  
18 including those in the State of New York, who  
19 are the beneficiaries of Operation IMPACT and  
20 what the troopers do throughout this state,  
21 and we are ever grateful for that.

22 Joe talked about how the  
23 Superintendent has such a distinguished  
24 career. And I just want to acknowledge some  
25 of those, because I think many of you have

1           gone through the hearings and you asked a lot  
2           of hearings and made a lot of statements -- as  
3           Joe said, and I agree, you still going to get  
4           your parking ticket or your speeding ticket no  
5           matter how fast you travel.

6                         And, Superintendent, if anyone  
7           calls and says "Can you help me out," my  
8           license plate is S3.

9                         (Laughter.)

10                        SENATOR SMITH:        But 1978,  
11           Military Intelligence Division of the Army.  
12           Was assigned to the barracks at Waterloo.  
13           Lieutenant, captain, major, and also a  
14           commanding officer for Troop T. As Deputy  
15           Superintendent of Employee Relations, he also  
16           served as the Division's Labor Management  
17           Officer. Directed the Division's Personnel  
18           Section and State Police Academy Training  
19           Programs. Sergeant, lieutenant, Chief  
20           Inspector of Internal Affairs. A member of  
21           NOBLE, Senator Adams. And it just goes on and  
22           on and on.

23                        I'm not sure where you -- how did  
24           you get all this time to do this. And I guess  
25           your wife didn't see much of you. She says

1 no, she didn't, huh?

2 Well, we thank you, Earline, in  
3 particular. Because many of us who are  
4 married also understand the sacrifice that you  
5 give in terms of allowing him to be out there  
6 in the public -- long hours, long days. Have  
7 to come back home, have to nurture him, given  
8 what he's been through that day.

9 And so we appreciate that. And we  
10 just ask that you continue to nurture him so  
11 when he comes home, he'll feel okay when he  
12 has to come back that next day and do his job.

13 But I will tell you the most  
14 enjoyable thing that I can say about the  
15 colonel -- and I had this experience, and I  
16 look to have many more -- is that from time to  
17 time I'm up here on Sunday. And it's just  
18 nice to see that he goes to the same church  
19 that I go to, Macedonia.

20 So we pray together, for the  
21 members that are here. And if any of you want  
22 to have an opportunity to talk to the  
23 Superintendent outside of his normal moment,  
24 come to Macedonia on Sunday about 11 o'clock,  
25 and you -- Joe? No? Come to Macedonia, and

1           you'll have an opportunity.

2                       But I want to extend, on behalf of  
3           our conference, the Senate Democratic  
4           conference -- I know my colleagues spoke to  
5           you and spoke on your behalf, and some of them  
6           were speaking today -- that we are very  
7           excited and very proud of this moment for you  
8           and your family, and we stand ready to be  
9           supportive of you and all the state troopers  
10          as you go forth and do your job.

11                      God bless.

12                      COLONEL CORBITT:        Thank you.

13                      ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:    Thank  
14          you, Senator Smith.

15                      Senator Nozzolio.

16                      SENATOR NOZZOLIO:        Thank you,  
17          Mr. President and my colleagues.

18                      The true heroes in America are  
19          those that each and every day lay their lives  
20          on the line for the protection of others. The  
21          heroes aren't the celebrities, they're not the  
22          people on the cover of People magazine.  
23          They're the brave men and women who each and  
24          every day serve their communities, their  
25          states, their nations by giving of themselves.

1                   And that's why I rise with great  
2                   pride today to endorse a wonderful nomination  
3                   by Governor Paterson who he himself, each and  
4                   every day, Harry Corbitt, for the last 42  
5                   years, has given of himself in service to his  
6                   nation, to his state, and to his community.

7                   A real hero who got a Bronze Star  
8                   serving our nation in Vietnam. A real hero  
9                   who each and every day, in his career as a  
10                  State Police officer -- a career that I'm very  
11                  proud began in the 54th Senatorial District,  
12                  in the Waterloo trooper barracks in Seneca  
13                  County -- who rose through the ranks, as  
14                  Senator Bruno described, from road patrol to  
15                  sergeant to one administrative and leadership  
16                  capacity job after another.

17                  Who now, as Governor Paterson's  
18                  nominee, will be leading the great men and  
19                  women of the New York State Police, who are  
20                  all heroes in our eyes, who each and every day  
21                  lay their lives on the line for us. Real  
22                  heroes, real men and women who are heroes who  
23                  have, I know, been disparaged in their own  
24                  mind because of what has transpired over the  
25                  last few months.

1                   This is a very critical juncture in  
2                   the history of the New York State Police. It  
3                   requires an individual to be the leader who  
4                   understands from top to bottom, bottom to top,  
5                   the needs of the troopers who serve in this  
6                   capacity. One who will be candid and  
7                   forthright and stand tall and be independent  
8                   and show leadership, because leadership is  
9                   necessary.

10                   After meeting with Harry Corbitt,  
11                   with Colonel Corbitt for an extended period of  
12                   time and meeting with him in an open committee  
13                   hearing yesterday for over an hour and a  
14                   half -- where he was given many questions on  
15                   many subjects from members of both sides of  
16                   the aisle in, I believe, a very thorough  
17                   way -- he, Harry Corbitt, answered each  
18                   question with candor, honesty, and when he did  
19                   not have a command of the individual facts,  
20                   said so.

21                   For that, we respect a great deal.  
22                   And for that, he received the unanimous  
23                   endorsement of his nomination by the Senate  
24                   Crime Victims, Crime and Corrections  
25                   Committee.

1                   This critical time, in one of the  
2                   most, I believe, profound answers to the many  
3                   questions that were given to Colonel Corbitt,  
4                   was that why would he, after such a long and  
5                   distinguished career, why would he decide to  
6                   take on this challenge. Did he have any  
7                   second thoughts, after many years of his very  
8                   successful career serving his nation and his  
9                   state and, most recently, his community as  
10                  heading school safety -- which all the members  
11                  of our side of the aisle and the other side of  
12                  the aisle, I know every member of this Senate  
13                  is very concerned about, school safety.  
14                  That's where Colonel Corbitt most recently  
15                  spent his service, locally.

16                  But he answered the question why  
17                  are you taking on this challenge, I thought,  
18                  with an extremely profound answer. He said  
19                  that a person he was mentoring and mentored  
20                  through time asked him to come back because he  
21                  owed it to those he was mentoring and for  
22                  those he was serving.

23                  I think that is a tremendous answer  
24                  to a very profound question and says a lot  
25                  about the character of a man who cares about

1       those people that he helped bring along. And  
2       that a true leader doesn't leave when it's  
3       time to lead. And that that, I think, is a  
4       measure of the individual that we all can be  
5       very proud in supporting.

6                   That's why, Mr. President, I'm  
7       proud to recommend, as the committee advised  
8       the Senate, as the Committee of Crime and  
9       Corrections, in doing a very thorough review  
10      of this nominee, is proud unanimously to  
11      support this next superintendent of our  
12      New York State Police -- the heroes, the men  
13      and women who are heroes, a hero himself,  
14      Harry Corbitt.

15                   Thank you.

16                   ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:     Thank  
17      you, Senator Nozzolio.

18                   Senator Adams.

19                   SENATOR ADAMS:        Thank you,  
20      Mr. President.

21                   I think that this is one of the  
22      times that our colleagues from both sides of  
23      the aisle, we come together with a common  
24      denominator of how important it is that we  
25      deal with the issues of public safety. And I

1 commend the Governor for making this his first  
2 appointment, and for us to have it move  
3 through with Chairman Nozzolio and myself as  
4 the ranking Democrat, that public safety is  
5 important to us all.

6 And although I take special pride  
7 that Colonel Corbitt is an African-American  
8 taking this position, I fully understand that  
9 when you start the process of donning a  
10 uniform -- if it's a green fatigue in military  
11 service, or if it's a gray or blue uniform in  
12 law enforcement -- the ethnicity comes off and  
13 integrity comes out to light. And clearly  
14 Colonel Corbitt is a reflection of that.

15 And the question was raised for  
16 several months who's at the wheel, who's  
17 driving the vehicle of public safety  
18 throughout this state.

19 Clearly, we know that we have the  
20 right person that is at the wheel in driving  
21 this vehicle. And why is this important?  
22 Because often when mistakes are made within a  
23 particular profession, the entire profession  
24 is tarnished. It's hurt.

25 The PBA and other agencies that are

1 put in place to protect the men and women who  
2 wear law enforcement uniforms, they often are  
3 demonized by the behavior of the numerical  
4 majority that does not give a clear reflection  
5 of the countless number of men and women who  
6 would don a vest, a uniform, and say "I'm  
7 going to serve and protect."

8 And when you think about Senator  
9 Leibell and Senator Robach and Senator Volker  
10 and Senator Larkin and myself, who at one time  
11 or another took upon that admirable position  
12 of being in public service to the public, we  
13 realize how important it is, and our families  
14 and what that impact is to our families.

15 This is the perfect person for the  
16 right time, the right person at the wheel to  
17 drive and improve how we feel about our State  
18 Police. We can look at his military  
19 involvement and his volunteer and his service  
20 in Vietnam. We can look at what he has done  
21 as a state trooper. Not only does he  
22 understand the academic aspect of it, as being  
23 an individual who taught State Police  
24 officers, but he also served. He also served  
25 and understands the difficulties of driving up

1 and down our highways and making sure our  
2 highways and our byways and our communities  
3 are safe.

4 But he also did something that's  
5 important that's fitting for now. He served  
6 in the Internal Affairs Bureau, the police of  
7 the police. The highest level of integrity of  
8 the men and women who we give the  
9 responsibility to ensure the awesome amount of  
10 power that we give law enforcement personnel,  
11 that they will not abuse that power. That was  
12 his responsibility as the chief, to ensure  
13 that corruption didn't exist.

14 Now, we can all pretend that  
15 nothing was wrong prior to his appointment.  
16 But the reality, something was wrong. When  
17 men and women are put in charge of policing  
18 the people and they abuse that power in any  
19 way -- if it's targeting legislators or if  
20 it's going after one or two individuals that  
21 should not be targeted for any particular  
22 reason -- you need someone there that's going  
23 to come with the responsibility that Colonel  
24 Corbitt has to bring back the trust that we  
25 have in law enforcement.

1 I'm happy that this is the choice  
2 that is desired. I'm happy that he's a member  
3 of an organization that I'm part of, National  
4 Black Law Enforcement Executives. I'm happy  
5 that he has decided to come back and  
6 participate in the entire process of policing  
7 our state. I'm happy what he has done to deal  
8 with the issues of racial profiling. I'm  
9 happy what he has done to deal with the issues  
10 of safeguarding our school and the public  
11 school system. I'm happy that he decided once  
12 again to come out of retirement.

13 And you always look down your bench  
14 of possibility when you need a great ball  
15 player to build a team around. We have a  
16 marquee player here. The state troopers have  
17 their own modern-day Air Jordan, and we're  
18 going to make sure that we bring home the  
19 ring.

20 Thank you, Colonel Corbitt.

21 COLONEL CORBITT: Thank you.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Thank  
23 you, Senator Adams.

24 Senator Stachowski.

25 SENATOR STACHOWSKI: Yes,

1 Mr. President, I too would like to rise to  
2 second the nomination of Harry Corbitt.

3 Obviously, if for no other reason,  
4 he's a Buffalo guy. All us Buffalo guys get  
5 up and support the Buffalo guys when they're  
6 as qualified as Mr. Corbitt is. A wonderful  
7 military career, just a classic State Police  
8 career. Terrific accomplishments which were  
9 mentioned before.

10 I also found it interesting in  
11 hearings, and when I heard about Senator  
12 Nozzolio's hearings, that he has the support  
13 of all of the bargaining units, which is  
14 somebody that bargained against them in one of  
15 his positions. To have their support I think  
16 is also very important.

17 I also think it's extremely  
18 important that a man of his quality accepted  
19 to be the superintendent at a time where we  
20 need somebody special. And he also becomes  
21 Senator Paterson's first appointed person that  
22 passes through the Senate.

23 And I think that in the long run he  
24 will show to be worthy of this honor. I think  
25 that we are lucky that Senator Paterson -- I

1 mean Governor Paterson; years of calling him  
2 Senator Paterson -- Governor Paterson sent his  
3 name up and that he agreed, when Governor  
4 Paterson called upon him to take this  
5 position, to take it.

6 For those all those reasons, I'm  
7 glad to have had this opportunity to second  
8 this nomination.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Senator  
10 Marcellino.

11 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you,  
12 Mr. President. I rise to second the  
13 nomination also.

14 Colonel Corbitt, I wish to thank  
15 you. I did so in the Finance Committee, but  
16 I'll thank you on the record for your service  
17 to our nation and to our state. It's  
18 exemplary.

19 I listened to Senator Smith go  
20 through all the different jobs that you've  
21 held in your career. Some might suggest you  
22 had a problem holding a job, but not me.  
23 That's certainly not my concern.

24 You clearly, clearly are the right  
25 person at the right time. You are charged

1 with leading what I believe to be one of the  
2 preeminent if not the preeminent police forces  
3 in our nation. And I know, because I've had  
4 personal contact with your members as I travel  
5 up and down the Thruway. And I have always,  
6 always found them to be courteous and  
7 professional. Somewhat exasperated with me  
8 occasionally, but courteous and professional.

9 Sir, I wish you well. I  
10 congratulate you for your appointment. I  
11 congratulate Governor Paterson for making a  
12 fine choice. God bless you.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Senator  
14 Thompson.

15 SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you,  
16 Mr. President. Thank you for the opportunity  
17 to say just a few kind words.

18 As my colleague from Western  
19 New York, Senator Stachowski said, it's always  
20 great to have someone from your hometown who  
21 is rising to a serious position of leadership  
22 and responsibility.

23 One of the things that I was  
24 pleased to hear about today was about his  
25 commitment to the school resource officer

1 program which is in many of the schools. I  
2 have at least two school districts, one in the  
3 town of Grand Island which really looks  
4 forward to that program.

5 The other thing that I'm hopeful  
6 and optimistic about is his commitment to look  
7 at urban violence. Many people have heard me  
8 talk about this on the floor of the Senate,  
9 that if we're really going to turn around  
10 neighborhoods in inner cities across upstate  
11 New York, we must address the problem of urban  
12 violence.

13 And I believe that there is a role  
14 that the State Police has played, it can  
15 continue to play and expand upon so that we  
16 can reduce the number of drive-by shootings,  
17 random violence at nightclubs and bars and  
18 playgrounds and parks and all different places  
19 that I believe reduce property values,  
20 threaten the quality of life, and increase the  
21 exodus of people not only out of cities but  
22 out of the first-ring, second-ring suburbs and  
23 in New York State as a whole.

24 So I look forward to him doing a  
25 great job, but also helping to partner with

1 local governments and local law enforcement  
2 agencies so that the State Police can play an  
3 even bigger role in solving crimes, unsolved  
4 homicides, and improving the quality of life  
5 in many of our struggling upstate cities.

6 Thank you, and I stand in support  
7 of his nomination.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Senator  
9 Leibell.

10 SENATOR LEIBELL: Thank you,  
11 Mr. President.

12 I rise in support of this  
13 nomination. And we can all thank Governor  
14 Paterson for sending us over such a  
15 well-qualified nominee.

16 We've heard the comments from our  
17 colleagues today. And Senator Johnson in  
18 Finance, Senator Nozzolio in Crime and  
19 Correction, they conducted extensive review of  
20 the candidate's qualifications. And I would  
21 say to you that I think we'd be hard-pressed  
22 to find anyone who's going to come before us  
23 during this session who will have a better  
24 resume than this appointee.

25 Let me say to you that there is no

1 more important agency than this one, the  
2 New York State Police. This is our "Long Gray  
3 Line" in New York State. This is the  
4 preeminent law enforcement organization. This  
5 is the organization that is respected and held  
6 as the standard for state police throughout  
7 the United States of America. And it's  
8 considered to be one of the finest law  
9 enforcement organizations in the world.

10 We are today giving to you,  
11 Colonel Corbitt -- we're going to give you  
12 very shortly command of this organization. It  
13 has had a brilliant history. It will have an  
14 even more brilliant future. Every great  
15 organization has its challenges; this  
16 organization will be no exception. But it  
17 will be up to those challenges, I have no  
18 question about that.

19 And with Senator Adams, when he was  
20 ranking on the Homeland Security Committee, we  
21 worked closely with the New York State Police.  
22 They briefed us, they advised us, and they  
23 gave us the intelligence that we needed in  
24 order to do our job.

25 This is a great organization, and I

1 want to lend my support to this nomination.

2 We have a great nominee here.

3 Thank you.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Senator  
5 Robach.

6 SENATOR ROBACH: Yes,  
7 Mr. President, let me, too, enthusiastically  
8 show my support for this nomination.

9 There is no question that at the  
10 cornerstone of any society has to be public  
11 safety, so this is important in so many ways.

12 Mr. Corbitt's resume, I won't  
13 reiterate it, clearly shows that throughout  
14 his career he has risen to whatever the  
15 challenge is and moved up through the ranks.  
16 And I like that too, because I like promoting  
17 from within. I think it not only is qualified  
18 people, but also builds morale. And in this  
19 case, we are doing that.

20 Continuing on the comments of my  
21 colleague Senator Leibell, he is absolutely  
22 right that the State Police really is looked  
23 at as the best of the best when it comes to  
24 policing. You will now become the leader of  
25 what I believe is one of the best police

1 organizations, run almost in a paramilitary  
2 style, with a history of results, acting  
3 professionally and doing great things. And  
4 that is truly, truly important.

5 So we want to congratulate you, I  
6 want to congratulate you and say, as you take  
7 this very, very important mantle, your job  
8 will be important for the public, but I do  
9 feel it's very important that each of us and  
10 collectively have a good relationship with  
11 you, whether it's a legislation we need to  
12 collectively do to make the public safer, or  
13 put the resources in the right place to help  
14 you and your men and women do the job to keep  
15 all New Yorkers safe.

16 So I wish you well. I make my  
17 pledge here to work with you to that good goal  
18 of the best public safety we can have here in  
19 the State of New York with you, Mr. Corbitt,  
20 at the helm. Godspeed.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Senator  
22 Young.

23 SENATOR YOUNG: Thank you,  
24 Mr. President.

25 I rise to add my voice to the

1 chorus of support for Colonel Corbitt to  
2 become the next superintendent of the State  
3 Police.

4 He spoke very personally and  
5 eloquently during the Finance Committee  
6 meeting just a few moments ago. And one of  
7 the things that really struck me was that he  
8 spoke about his mother and he spoke about how  
9 she taught him his work ethic, how hard she  
10 worked when he was a youngster -- she was a  
11 single mom, and she worked at several jobs --  
12 and the challenges that she faced.

13 And, Colonel Corbitt, I want to  
14 assure you that your mother raised you right.  
15 She did a fantastic job. And your entire  
16 family, I know, is extremely proud of your  
17 accomplishments.

18 One of the things that also struck  
19 me is that Colonel Corbitt is a great leader.  
20 He has the professionalism, he has the  
21 strength, but he also has the humility that is  
22 necessary to be a great leader. He spoke  
23 about his service in Vietnam very briefly,  
24 that he earned a Bronze Star. But that  
25 humility is necessary when you're leading the

1 fine men and women of the State Police here in  
2 New York State.

3 I come from an area that was  
4 traumatized during the manhunt ordeal of Ralph  
5 "Bucky" Phillips. And I saw firsthand the  
6 dedication that our state troopers exhibit  
7 every day. They got up in the morning, they  
8 did their jobs, they put themselves in harm's  
9 way, they grieved when we lost Trooper  
10 Longobardo and when Trooper Baker was severely  
11 wound during that manhunt. But it shows the  
12 dedication that they have to protect and serve  
13 the people of this state.

14 So I want to thank all of the state  
15 troopers for what they've done. And I will  
16 never forget the night when Bucky Phillips was  
17 apprehended. The people of Chautauqua County  
18 lined the rural roads, all the way from  
19 Pennsylvania north, to applaud and cheer our  
20 state troopers for their brave service.

21 So thank you for your willingness  
22 to lead this great force. We have had issues  
23 that I know you will resolve. And I too, like  
24 Senator Leibell, look forward to a very, very  
25 distinguished and bright future under your

1 leadership for the State Police.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Thank  
3 you, Senator Young.

4 Senator Bruno.

5 SENATOR BRUNO: Can we at this  
6 time move the nomination, Mr. President.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Thank  
8 you, Senator Bruno.

9 The question is on the nomination  
10 of Harry James Corbitt as Superintendent of  
11 State Police. All in favor signify by saying  
12 aye.

13 (Response of "Aye.")

14 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:  
15 Opposed, nay.

16 (No response.)

17 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:  
18 Congratulations, Harry James Corbitt. You are  
19 now confirmed as Superintendent of the  
20 New York State Police.

21 (Extended applause.)

22 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Again,  
23 we acknowledge and welcome his wife, Earline;  
24 his stepson, John.

25 We wish him well, and

1           congratulations.

2                       (Applause.)

3           ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:       Senator  
4           Bruno.

5                       SENATOR BRUNO:       Mr. President, is  
6           there any further business at the desk to take  
7           up at this time?

8                       ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:       There  
9           is not, Senator Bruno.

10                      SENATOR BRUNO:       Mr. President,  
11           there being no further business to come before  
12           the Senate, I would move that we stand  
13           adjourned until 3:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 29th,  
14           intervening days to be legislative days.

15                      Thank you.

16                      ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:       On  
17           motion, the Senate stands adjourned until  
18           Tuesday, April 29th, at 3:00 p.m., intervening  
19           days being legislative days.

20                      (Whereupon, at 12:32 p.m., the  
21           Senate adjourned.)

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