NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

ALBANY, NEW YORK

April 29, 2026

11:40 a.m.

REGULAR SESSION

SENATOR SHELLEY B. MAYER, Acting President

ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

P R O C E E D I N G S

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senate will come to order.

I ask everyone present to please rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: In the absence of clergy, let us bow our heads in a moment of silent reflection or prayer.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Reading of the Journal.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Tuesday, April 28, 2026, the Senate met pursuant to adjournment. The Journal of Monday, April 27, 2026, was read and approved. On motion, the Senate adjourned.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Without objection, the Journal stands approved as read.

Presentation of petitions.

Messages from the Assembly.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Cooney

moves to discharge, from the Committee on Transportation, Assembly Bill Number 9259 and substitute it for the identical Senate Bill 8691, Third Reading Calendar 253.

Senator Sepulveda moves to discharge, from the Committee on Social Services, Assembly Bill Number 2332B and substitute it for the identical Senate Bill 5807A, Third Reading Calendar 710.

Senator Comrie moves to discharge, from the Committee on Judiciary, Assembly Bill Number 4871 and substitute it for the identical Senate Bill 3778, Third Reading Calendar 749.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: So ordered.

Messages from the Governor.

Reports of standing committees.

Reports of select committees.

Communications and reports from state officers.

Motions and resolutions.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Good morning, Madam President.

Let's begin by taking up previously

adopted Resolution 1964, by Senator Bynoe, have that resolution's title read and call on Senator Bynoe, please.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1964, by Senator Bynoe, memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 19-25, 2026, as Library Week in the State of New York.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Bynoe on the resolution.

SENATOR BYNOE: Good morning, Madam Chair.

Library Week is as essential now as it was when it was founded. The compulsion for technology to interfere with Americans' reading habits is in a new conflict. In the mid-1950s, research showed that Americans were spending less time on books and more on technology like radios and televisions. Concern over this issue led to the creation of National Library Week, first created and celebrated in 1958.

The American Library Association gave it the theme "Wake Up and Read," believing that once people were motivated to read, they

would support and use libraries.

The conflict between distractions of technology and the importance of reading continues today, requiring library professionals to be nimble and innovative to maintain the relevance of library systems. Libraries have adjusted to changing needs for their communities by offering assistance to meet those needs, including access to broadband and social services.

Despite the continued innovation and introduction of technology, the quest for literacy continues to guide the work of libraries today, as it is the root of human potential. Libraries anchor communities, nourish communities, and give us the strength to grow beyond what we've personally seen. Libraries are where limitations turn into possibilities.

For many children, life experiences may be defined by a small radius, perhaps just a couple of miles from home. Their world may consist of school, places of worship, neighborhood streets, and the occasional visit to the library. But reading changes that reality. Reading expands that radius infinitely. Through

books, a child can travel across continents, across centuries, and into ideas far in the distance.

In 1924, I suspect the benefactors of the Westbury Memorial Library knew that as they invested in a space designed specifically to ensure that young scholars had the ability to have a place of their own, to have experiences that transcend both time and place, making it a historical institution.

And yet literacy has not always been equal throughout history. Communities have worked tirelessly, often quietly and courageously, to ensure that the root of literacy could take place. During times of segregation and exclusion, learning happened in secret rooms and church basements. In fact, the Lakeview Library community, also within the district, wasn't established until 1968, making it one of Long Island's last formed libraries.

Its formation came to reality only after Dr. Martin Luther King visited the community in 1965, in an effort to desegregate the school system, and demanded the same amenities that were enjoyed by neighbors in

communities nearby.

While the traditional libraries of our childhood represent repositories of books, they have evolved into community hubs, technology centers, with librarians often serving as technical experts.

As we look ahead, we honor New York's legacy of persistence and innovation to ensure that the next chapter of our library system is inclusive and accessible and maintains their visionary mission.

In an attempt to meet the challenges of fast-paced social and cultural changes affecting libraries and their patrons, British-born scholar and librarian Michael Gorman articulated five laws that continue to set guardrails for libraries today.

Libraries serve humanity. This law encompasses the assistance of individuals to have lofty ideals and high aspirations.

We must respect all by which knowledge is communicated, is the second law. This law encourages the utilitarian approach to use whatever is effective.

The third law: We must use

technology intellectually to enhance services. This law contends that technology must be used for its benefits rather than adopted for its own sake.

Number four, we must -- we must -- protect free access to knowledge. This law allows us to warn against records being disappeared from shelves in the form of censorship, stating a society without uncensored libraries is a society open to tyranny, a society easier to manipulate, mislead or dominate.

Libraries must continue to be the purveyors of truth. We must honor the past while creating the future. We must balance nostalgia for the pre-digital past with the need to embrace new technologies.

These principles remind us that libraries are not static institutions, they are living systems, constantly evolving while remaining grounded in its purpose.

Today, our responsibility is clear. If we want thriving communities, innovative thinkers, confident individuals, we must invest in our libraries. We must ensure that every person, regardless of background, has equitable

access to literacy, to information, and to spaces that nurture growth.

We must build systems that reflect cultural competency, inclusivity and understanding so that every individual not only has access, but feels that they belong.

And above all, we must support the intellectual freedoms of patrons and libraries' ability to maintain their place in our communities as purveyors of truth.

Thank you, Madam President. I will be voting affirmatively, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Bynoe.

Senator May on the resolution.

SENATOR MAY: Thank you, Madam President.

And I want to thank the sponsor for this resolution.

Libraries are so important. And they're some of the most beloved institutions in our society.

Libraries truly are one of the last public spaces that we have in America. When so

much has been privatized, the libraries are places where everyone is welcome and where people can find not just books, as the sponsor was saying, but all kinds of other materials, and support the unimaginable variety.

If you're experiencing homelessness and you just need a comfortable chair to sit in for a while, you can come to a library.

If you don't have a computer and a printer at home, you can print out a document that you might need.

If you want to learn about 3-D printing, you can go and learn that at a library.

If you're an older person experiencing isolation, you can join a book club or a knitting club at your local library.

And librarians are remarkably adept at all of the huge range of kinds of demands that they are presented with at any given time.

Libraries are also under threat, partly by the push to privatization in our society, but also by just the fact that the business model of what they do, of sharing information and sharing materials, is not something that the marketplace supports.

So, for example, e-books and audiobooks are very, very popular in libraries, but the publishers charge huge surcharges for libraries to get those materials, something that we are trying to address with some legislation that I have.

But we need to defend libraries, because their public mission is something that serves all of our constituents. It serves our society in a way that very few institutions do.

So I'm proud to support this resolution and to support our libraries.

I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator May.

Senator Martins on the resolution.

SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you, Madam President.

I want to thank the sponsor for the resolution.

I've got to tell you -- fun fact, Madam President. Before my time in Mineola as mayor, and before coming to the Senate, I was on a library board at the Mineola Library, served as president for a number of years, and got to see

firsthand just how important libraries are in our state.

If you want to talk, and we often talk in this chamber about creating lifelong learners, it starts at the library and frankly it ends -- throughout people's lives, they will always connect to their local libraries. We saw it during the pandemic, and we see during times of crisis our libraries also become community centers, emergency centers, places where our communities come together.

And if there's one thing we can do as we grind through the balance of this budget exercise that we're engaged in right now, take a moment -- because this is a great opportunity that the sponsor has brought us with regard to this library resolution -- take a moment to see just how little of our state funding goes towards libraries, and what a difference just an incremental increase in spending for libraries will have in each and every one of our communities.

They are able to do a lot with very little. And it's more than just books, as we've heard before. It's access to materials, they're

community centers, gathering places for our communities.

And so if we just give them a little more, not only for programming but also for capital, so that they can continue to expand their services as technology increases and as they have to adapt some older buildings to newer technologies, they're going to need funding.

And oftentimes in the tug of war that is often our budget discussions locally, libraries don't always fare as well.

And so if we take the opportunity during this budget cycle to prioritize libraries, perhaps give them a little more, that will go a long way across the state -- upstate, downstate, and certainly in our urban areas -- to make a difference in people's lives.

Again, thank you to the sponsor for the resolution.

I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

Senator Cleare on the resolution.

SENATOR CLEARE: Thank you, Madam President.

I rise to thank Senator Bynoe for

that very important resolution today.

And I wasn't going to say anything, but I feel like I have to, because I know the important role that libraries played in my life. As a kid, that was one of the safest places -- one of the few places my mother said we could go. And sometimes we had to go and wait for her to get home from work, and she would meet us there.

But it was definitely a place that opened up my eyes. We could not afford some of the books that, you know, I had access to. And there's a lot of families even today who can't afford to put books in their home. And the libraries do provide that.

We do have to support our libraries and give them more funding. I'm very proud, of course, you know, to represent the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in my community.

So it is about employment opportunities for some people. You know, it's about culture and history and being able to have access to that.

So I really thank you, and I proudly vote aye on this resolution.

I even remember one quick story that -- you know, my mother was like, I'm not getting a newspaper subscription. You know, our school made us do current events, and we couldn't afford to do a newspaper subscription. So guess where I went? To the library.

So thank you so much for bringing this up. And again, I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Cleare.

Senator Helming on the resolution.

SENATOR HELMING: Thank you, Madam President.

I am so excited today to rise and support this resolution, recognizing the vital role that our libraries play in all of our communities.

My mother worked in a library for more than 40 years, so the library became like a second home to me. And it just opened up endless opportunities. As Senator Cleare said, for those who didn't have the financial means to pursue certain opportunities, libraries gave us that equality, if you will.

You've heard many people say that

our libraries are filled with much more than books, and that is so true. In my rural communities, in my small town communities, they're really anchors for people. When I visit the library, I see students getting help doing their homework, getting tutoring, et cetera. I see job seekers there who wouldn't have access to a computer anywhere else, or a printer, developing their workforce skills. And I see seniors staying connected. They're just great places.

What's really exciting to see is how they continue to expand. We hear a lot of talk about affordability right now and how challenging it is for families and seniors. Well, guess what, go to a library, you can pick up a fishing pole. You can go spend your day on the lake fishing and relaxing. You can get passes for area museums. There's just so many opportunities.

And I want to mention how important our libraries are to supporting our local economy -- providing workforce development resources, support for our small businesses, and providing even spaces for innovation and

collaboration to take place. And they do all of this while preserving our history and strengthening the fabric of our communities.

So I want to just take a moment and thank our incredible librarians and their staff for the amazing work they do, and I am proud to vote yes on this resolution. And as Senator Martins said, proud to advocate that all of us in this chamber do everything we absolutely can do to increase funding for our school and our public libraries.

Thank you, Madam President.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Helming.

Senator Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick on the resolution.

SENATOR CANZONERI-FITZPATRICK: Thank you, Madam President.

I too want to compliment and thank the sponsor for bringing this resolution to the floor. So many times I talk to the directors of libraries, and they are not only the managers of books, but they manage facilities. And when there's a toilet that overflows or a roof that is leaking, it's their responsibility.

So they've become really jacks-of-all-trades to make sure that the facility operates, staff is managed, and the interior of books and movies and such are managed.

I have very fond memories of when my kids were little, taking four of them to the library, knowing that they could all rent their own movie for a dollar and I didn't have to go out and buy DVDs or the VHS tapes, because the library had them all.

So I've recently had a new respect, because now my libraries have requested Narcan kits. And I'm proud to work with OASAS to make sure that our libraries have Narcan. And it's a shame, but it's the reality that they are community centers, they need AEDs, they need Narcan. And I am very happy that they've reached out and asked for what they need.

They do so much with so little. And it's important that as we're working on a budget that we remember our libraries and make sure that they have the financial resources to continue being the community centers that they've become.

I proudly vote aye.

Thank you, Madam President.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

Senator Cooney on the resolution.

SENATOR COONEY: Thank you, Madam President.

Let me extend my sincere thanks to Senator Bynoe for her sponsoring of the resolution, but also for her leadership on Libraries.

Like many of you, we all had our commitments and our stories and our beginnings with libraries, but my work in public office in state service started at age 16 when I worked at the Douglass branch library as part of the Rochester Public Library system.

And I want to thank all of the staff and librarians as part of the Monroe County Library system, which I proudly help represent.

One point I think was missed during our conversation so far on the floor. Libraries are serving populations from so many different backgrounds.

And in this moment in time in this country, it is important to recognize the role that libraries have with our youngest learners,

because we know that early literacy is the indicator for high school graduation.

And I want to thank again Senator Bynoe for recognizing that libraries are our public library systems, our school-based library systems, innovative programs like Dolly Parton's Imagination Library -- all of these collectively work together to provide literacy opportunities for our youngest learners.

But it's not just our youngest learners that we want to focus on. We also want to focus on our adult learners. And part of that adult population are our new Americans. How many of us have libraries in our districts which are leading the way to provide training and education programs to take that citizenship test, to become part of this great democracy and part of this great country.

Libraries have been doing that work for years. And we recognize them and we thank them this week, and we will continue to do that work with them.

Madam President, I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

Senator Rolison on the resolution.

SENATOR ROLISON: Thank you, Madam President.

And Senator Bynoe, thank you for bringing this resolution forward.

I heard a term that -- actually I wanted to speak on libraries to begin with, but I thought about a fond memory of a library for me.

Now, of course -- and I really was not a great student during my years of high school, and I didn't really go to the library. And in 1974 I was doing a report and I needed to go to the Adriance Memorial Library in the City of Poughkeepsie, not far from where I lived.

So my mom had a 1969 Chevelle at that time, and I went to the library and did whatever I had to do and probably didn't do it that well. However, I was at the library.

And on the way home it started to snow, I slid off the road and hit a guardrail with my mom's car and put a dent in the right quarter panel.

Drove it home, and I told my mom, I said, Mom, I put a dent in your car by the Adriance -- actually, by the Poughkeepsie Rural

Cemetery. That guardrail is still there.

And she said to me, she goes, "You know, Robert, the car's going to be okay. I am just really happy that you went to the library."

(Laughter.)

SENATOR ROLISON: And that was my mom, true and true, always supportive, thinking of the good things.

And then fast forward so many years later, especially after becoming the mayor of the City of Poughkeepsie, and Adriance Memorial Library there, and they've done additions on it over the years -- and we've heard it here in the chambers, all the things that the libraries do for others. It's not the library of 1974 for me. It's a library for the community of today.

And then having the honor to get up here with all of you in 2023, many of our mobile office hours for the Senate office are in libraries throughout the district. So I've gotten to go to so many all these years later.

And as we've heard, just all of the community activity; they are hubs, they are safe places, they are places where everyone is welcome and everyone can do the same thing there. And

the services that they provide are invaluable. That can't be done by other community-based organizations.

So I wanted to just say to all of the libraries across the state, but especially in the 39th District, and to all the folks that work there, volunteer there, and donate to our libraries: Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Rolison.

The resolution was previously adopted on April 28th.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Let's now move on to previously adopted Resolution 1931, by Senator Cooney --

Change of plans. Previously adopted Resolution 1711, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton. Please read that resolution's title and call on Senator Scarcella-Spanton.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1711, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton, celebrating the courage and bravery of New York State's

Korean War Veterans, and recognizing the men and women who served with dignity and honor during that historic time period, at the Senate's Korean War Veterans Celebration on April 29, 2026.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Scarcella-Spanton on the resolution.

SENATOR SCARCELLA-SPANTON: Thank you, Madam President.

Today we recognize and honor the service and sacrifice of Korean War veterans, often called the Forgotten War veterans.

This resolution ensures their contributions are formally acknowledged and remembered by this body and for future generations.

Nearly 1.8 million Americans served in the Korean War, including tens of thousands from right here in New York State. More than 36,000 American servicemembers lost their lives, and over 10,000 were wounded during that conflict.

The legacy of Korean War veterans continues through their commitment to service, family, and community. As you may see today,

over the last few years unfortunately the population of our Korean War veterans has very much dwindled, and I think it's getting increasingly more difficult to have them come here.

But that's why it's more important, now more than ever, that we preserve their legacy and continue sharing their stories.

I encourage everyone to visit the beautiful display on the fourth floor. Thank you to Ale -- wherever she is in this room, somewhere -- and her team in making sure that they showcase mementos and relics from the Korean War time and those who served in it.

I especially am thinking of all my constituents who have served, especially Charles Navarino, who was our Veteran Hall of Famer back in 2023.

And I want to make sure that this resolution serves as a reminder of their service and their sacrifice, and that will never be forgotten.

I'm honored to support this resolution and to express our enduring gratitude to our veterans' service to our nation.

Thank you, and I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

Senator Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick on the resolution.

SENATOR CANZONERI-FITZPATRICK: Thank you, Madam President. Thank you to the sponsor for bringing this resolution to the floor.

It is referred to often as the Forgotten War. And what we do here today is so important for those veterans.

As the daughter of a Korean War veteran who served in the United States Coast Guard, we understood the global significance in our house about that war and, more personally, the lasting impact on those who did not return home.

I want to say thank you to my dad, Joseph Canzoneri, 92 years young. Thank you for your service to our country. I'm always so proud of him and what he has done and continues to do in active service in our American Legion and making sure our younger veterans know that their service is important to the community.

We must ensure that their stories

are preserved for future generations.

Thank you, Madam President. I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

Senator Harckham on the resolution.

SENATOR HARCKHAM: Thank you, Madam President.

And I want to thank Senator Scarcella-Spanton for bringing this resolution, for her leadership on the committee.

I want to thank our Majority Leader and you, Madam President, for helping over the past few years to honor the memory and the service of our Korean War veterans who are here in New York, those that have survived.

And as you mentioned, Senator, the numbers have dwindled. You know, my father, I've mentioned on the floor, served in combat in World War II but was later called back for Korea as well. And much of that generation is gone.

And it was an incredibly -- I mean, all wars are challenging, but it was incredibly challenging. They were undersupplied, often in frigid conditions. And, you know, they just -- our troops just accomplished so much in a heroic

fashion.

And the brutality of that war we cannot forget. You know, we often say we've got to remember the past so, you know, history doesn't repeat itself.

And so I join with colleagues in remembering the honor and the sacrifice and the service of those veterans. And as was mentioned, it is so important to tell those stories, to keep the stories alive and put the human face on it.

So thank you for the resolution. I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Harckham.

Senator Borrello on the resolution.

SENATOR BORRELLO: Thank you, Madam President.

I also rise to thank the sponsor for this. And I want to recognize, memorialize one of my constituents, also a cousin of mine, Peter Carlo, who passed away a few months ago at the age of 94, a Korean War veteran and a man so dedicated to his family and community.

He distributed over 300 American flags. If there was a building or a school or a

place that didn't have an American flag, Peter Carlo made sure that they did.

And every day on Memorial Day he made sure that every single veteran's flag in the Jamestown Cemetery had a -- every veteran's grave had an American flag placed on it on Memorial Day to honor their service and sacrifice.

He was a great American. Wounded in combat, came back, became a successful business owner and gave back to his community, the story of so many of our great American veterans.

And God bless Peter Carlo and his family, and God bless those that served in our United States armed forces.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

Senator Ashby on the resolution.

SENATOR ASHBY: Thank you, Madam President.

I too rise to thank Madam Chair for this resolution and to honor all those who fought in the Korean War and their families. And the 2,300 New Yorkers who died in Korea during that conflict.

And in 1951, during this time, the

Chinese were in fact trying to surround U.N. forces after a bitter, bitter winter campaign, as has been mentioned by previous speakers. Ill-equipped, and they continued to fight on.

And just as they continued to fight on, we will continue to remember them. Even though they are not in this chamber with us today, their sacrifice, their intent, what they've done for this country will not be forgotten.

I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Ashby.

Senator Mattera on the resolution.

SENATOR MATTERA: Thank you, Madam President.

I just want to say that this is a very proud day especially, you know, for us to honor all of our Korean War veterans. And I want to thank the sponsor for bringing this forward here today.

Somebody that's very, very special to me that's at the State Home at Stony Brook, my Uncle Louie, Lou Maters. He's very proud, there he is like the mayor over at the Vets Home, which

is a premier vets home. Every vets home should be just like Stony Brook, because we have a director named Fred Sganga that is there, and he makes it special for all of the veterans.

And there it is, my Uncle Louie at 93 years old, he's going to be 94 this year, is very proud to be there as a resident. And you know, you sit there and you go to the Memorial Days, you go to the Veterans Days. And one thing about this Vets Home, you know, even the food is good. I've got to tell you, he actually doesn't even complain about that, being an Italian.

But this is very, very special for me today too, to mention my Uncle Louie, mention all the veterans that are at that State's Home.

But it's a very, very proud resolution, and I just want to say I vote aye.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Sanders on the resolution.

SENATOR SANDERS: Thank you, Madam President.

When we speak of the Korean War, we

are often speaking of some of the fiercest fighting that we really don't speak of. The Chosin Reservoir that had been spoken of earlier is one of the most storied battles that the Marine Corps and others fought in.

As a matter of fact, it's where the most decorated Marine, Chesty Puller, received most of his decorations. He was in charge of the exodus from that area.

And when he got there, it was so out of control it looked like we are going to lose. And he stopped it from being a rout and turned it into a retreat.

His officers said to him: Wait a minute, wait a minute, Marines don't retreat. What are you doing? He said to them, famously, "We're not retreating, we're fighting in a different direction." And he led the battle out of there.

This is why every Marine Corps base has a pit bull -- that's our symbol -- and the pit bull's name on every base is Chesty, after Chesty Puller, the most decorated Marine.

I absolutely vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

Senator Rolison on the resolution.

SENATOR ROLISON: Thank you, Madam President.

And thank you to the sponsor for again bringing this forward and giving us all the opportunity to remember and reflect upon the sacrifices that were made on behalf of our country, other countries, and fighting for people that they didn't even know.

And my dad served during the Korean War. My godfather, my dad's best friend, Bill Sherry, served during the Korean War. And I know I've told this story before, but I always think it bears repeating, especially today, is that they both served. And then they met each other at Providence College; they became roommates. And then they both graduated from Providence. My dad went on to Fordham Law School. And then they both end up settling in Poughkeepsie.

We were neighbors. He became my godfather, Bill Sherry. And because my parents were only children, he was my uncle. And all of his children were my cousins. And they were the best of friends forever.

And over the years, with all the time that I spent with the Sherry family, and they spent with us, I didn't really know anything the service that they both provided during the Korean War.

And again, I've said this before, I never even heard them talk about it, and they were together all the time.

So when you think back on all of those individuals -- and individuals today who serve, who sacrifice so much, and the families that have sacrificed even more -- in many respects it is a fitting and honorable thing to do, for us to pause and reflect on them.

So again, thank you to the sponsor, because today, with all the other things that we will do and the things that we think about and the things that we have to do in the future, I get to think about my dad and my Uncle Bill.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Rolison.

Senator Chan on the resolution.

SENATOR CHAN: Thank you,

Madam President.

I want to thank Senator Scarcella-Spanton for bringing forth this resolution.

I want to thank my fellow jarhead on the other side of the aisle for bringing the attention to the Frozen Chosin, is what we called it, Chosin Reservoir. I was going to speak about that.

I personally first learned about the Korean War through a TV show in the '80s called MASH. And I'm sure many of us remember that show; it was very popular.

Then when I graduated as the Honor Man of my platoon in basic training in the United States Marines, I heard stories from a gentleman by the name of General Stephen G. Olmstead, who was at the Frozen Chosin.

And subsequently, when I hit the fleet, there were still Korean veterans laying around in the '80s, Korean War veterans.

So I just wanted to let everybody know that every one of those veterans that I met from Korea are still ready to defend the nation with their lives. And I am forever grateful.

And I am also ready to defend this nation with my life. I'm sure Senator Sanders on the other side, as well as our fellow veterans in this Senate, all feel the same way.

Thank you very much.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Chan.

The resolution was previously adopted on March 10th.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: At this time, while we're awaiting some additional guests, we're going to take up the reading of the calendar, please.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 253, Assembly Bill Number 9259, by Assemblymember Magnarelli, an act to amend the Vehicle and Traffic Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This act shall take effect one year after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Cooney to explain his vote.

SENATOR COONEY: Thank you, Madam President.

Seat belts prevent tragedies. Seat belts get passengers home safe. Seat belts save lives.

Two years ago, together, working together, we spearheaded legislation to require seat belts for passengers on charter buses. This legislation came in the wake of a horrific crash on Long Island that left two adults fatally injured on a school trip.

We knew that we needed to do more as a state to help keep passengers safe. We knew that we needed seat belts, which are shown to reduce fatalities by 44 percent and severe injuries by 45 percent on these buses.

But since that legislation was passed, most passengers still aren't aware that it's required to put their seat belt on when on these charter buses. They are not aware of the

risks.

Last year, we saw another horrific crash, this time in Western New York, that left five passengers dead on their way home from a trip to Niagara Falls.

Safety must continue to be a top priority, and that means doing a better job of spreading awareness of our safety laws.

This legislation would mandate that bus drivers hold pre-trip safety briefings with their passengers, telling them that buckling up is not a choice, it is the law in New York and that they can pay fines for not following the law.

Too many New York families haven't had a loved one return home on a chartered bus trip, and we have to do something about this. It's a grief that no one should have to endure.

So let's pass this bill, keeping our passengers safe in New York, and protecting all New Yorkers from harm on their travels throughout our state.

Madam President, I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Cooney to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 498, Senate Print 1982A, by Senator Harckham, an act to amend the General Municipal Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 498, voting in the negative:

Senator Brisport.

Ayes, 57. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 640, Senate Print 6494, by Senator Cleare, an act to amend the Insurance Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This act shall take effect on the 180th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Cleare to explain her vote.

SENATOR CLEARE: Thank you, Madam President.

I rise in support of Senate Bill 6494, which will require commercial insurance policies in New York to cover doula services as part of maternity care.

Every birthing mother deserves equal support that begins with this bill. Doulas are trained professionals who provide physical, emotional, and informational support throughout the entire pregnancy process, even after birth.

Doula services have statistically and scientifically proven to improve physical and psychological outcomes for both the mother and the baby. In other words, doulas provide

essential services, and essential services must be covered, particularly if we are to address issues of maternal mortality and morbidity in Black and other communities of color.

I encourage my colleagues to think about the mothers and families who are enduring a life-changing experience with the current added-on stress and financial burden that are brought onto them when they realize their choice of a doula is disregarded from the perspective of insurance companies.

Whether a mother chooses to give birth at a hospital or at home with a doula, insurance companies must treat all births the same and provide all mothers with equal support. They, their families, and the child deserve no less.

I'll be voting aye, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Cleare to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 640, voting in the negative: Senator Walczyk.

Ayes, 57. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 710, Assembly Bill Number 2332B, by Assemblymember Berger, an act to amend the Social Services Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the 30th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Murray to explain his vote.

SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you, Madam President.

We have a problem in New York right now. We've been talking about this problem. And the problem is we are far behind in technology when it comes to these EBT cards.

We're still using the magnetic strips that are being skimmed, and in the past

three years the most needy New Yorkers have lost nearly $40 million in their benefits, mainly SNAP benefits. The last thing we need to do right now is give the vendor another excuse to delay what has already been delayed.

So while I don't say this is a good or bad bill, I think we need to hold off, get the chip technology situation under control, get that fixed, then maybe put something else on the agenda for these vendors.

For that reason, I'll be voting no.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Murray to be recorded in the negative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 710, voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Gallivan, Griffo, Lanza, Mattera, Murray, O'Mara. Ortt, Rhoads, Tedisco, Walczyk and Weik.

Ayes, 45. Nays, 13.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 736, Senate Print 9098, by Senator May, an act to amend Chapter 683 of the Laws of 2023.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 736, voting in the negative:

Senator Martinez.

Ayes, 57. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 748, Senate Print 3413, by Senator Jackson, an act to amend the Civil Practice Law and Rules.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 749, Assembly Bill Number 4871, by Assemblymember Dilan, an act to amend the Judiciary Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 760, Senate Print 7053, by Senator Webb, an act to amend the County Law.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Lay it aside for

the day.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is laid aside for the day.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 768, Senate Print 6745, by Senator Stavisky, an act to amend the Education Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 5. This act shall take effect on the first of January.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 773, Senate Print 200, by Senator Martinez, an act to amend the Navigation Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 773, voting in the negative:

Senator Walczyk.

Ayes, 57. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 779, Senate Print 6952B, by Senator Sanders, an act to amend the Highway Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 779, voting in the negative:

Senator Brisport.

Ayes, 57. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 805, Senate Print 2633A, by Senator Gonzalez, an act to direct the Department of Health to complete a report on the impact of hospital closures.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 821, Senate Print 9835, by Senator Addabbo, an act to amend the Public Service Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the

last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

Senator Gianaris, that completes the reading of today's calendar.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President, now let's return to take up previously adopted Resolution 1931, by Senator Cooney, read that resolution's title and call on Senator Cooney, please.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1931, by Senator Cooney, memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2026 as Sikh Heritage Month in the State of New York.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator

Cooney on the resolution.

SENATOR COONEY: Thank you, Madam President.

Sikhism is known for upholding the principles of equality, service, compassion and justice. These are the principles that Sikh New Yorkers carry with them every single day.

And it's these principles that have allowed the Sikh community to create such a positive impact on our state.

This community is growing stronger every single day, with a dedication to charity and selfless service. Sikhs work to make sure every member of our community is cared for. Sikhs are also valued members of our growing AAPI population.

With a fast-growing population comes the need for greater representation. That's where leaders like Judge Vik Vilkhu in my district in Rochester come in. Judge Vilkhu became the first member of the Sikh community elected to the bench in New York State.

Designating April as Sikh Heritage Month is about celebrating milestones like these, reflecting on the vibrant culture, history, and

traditions of this important community, and honoring the achievements of all Sikh New Yorkers.

Madam President, today we welcome a number of members of our Sikh community across New York State here in the gallery. And it's my honor to introduce this resolution and make sure that Sikh New Yorkers feel seen and heard in the New York State Senate.

Madam President, I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Cooney.

Senator Sanders on the resolution.

SENATOR SANDERS: Thank you, Madam President.

I want to commend Senator Cooney for this resolution.

I too have had the pleasure of getting to know the Sikh community. I had Richmond Hill for a long period of time, and the Sikh community has been fantastic and really taken me under its wing.

One of the things I like most about the community is that they have a -- I don't want to call it a feeding program. I will call it a

soup kitchen, a kitchen where everybody can come to and, regardless of whatever your religion is, whatever your ethnicity, you can sit down and you can get a wholesome meal and be well-fed.

I've found that to be an incredible addition to our community, especially in times where people find themselves pressed and stressed and may not have the money that they need. There's always that kitchen that they can go to.

So I'm very grateful for, again, Senator Cooney and for the community as a whole, and I vote aye on this also.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Sanders.

Senator Liu on the resolution.

SENATOR LIU: {In Punjabi.}

Madam President, I am very proud to stand up in support of this resolution. I want to thank Senator Cooney.

The Sikh American community is very vibrant in Queens as well as the rest of the state. They have contributed so much to the vitality of our state and the economy, the academia, the professionalism. They serve in all different kinds of professions as well as have

different kinds of businesses.

And I also want to remind people that in the aftermath of September 11th, the Sikh American -- no community was literally brutalized as much as the Sikh American community, because of sheer misunderstanding and misidentification.

So it's important that we remember what the Sikh community means to us and what they've been through, and that we hold great value in them being our neighbors, friends and partners.

Madam President, thank you very much.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Liu.

Senator Gounardes on the resolution.

SENATOR GOUNARDES: Thank you, Madam President.

I want to thank Senator Cooney for this resolution.

When I was in law school, one of the projects I got to volunteer and do some pro bono work on was a case that was brought by the Sikh American community to challenge the

military's ban on them serving because of their beards and their headgear, the turban.

And it was -- we spent months working on that case. I had a chance to work alongside many accomplished lawyers from that community who, you know, impressed upon me just the community's incredible dedication to serve, to serve others, to be part of the fabric of this country.

And I left that experience with a deep appreciation and respect for the Sikh community's continual dedication to this country, to being part of what this country means -- regardless of where you come from and when you came here, there is a place for you here.

And ever since that time, 15, 16 years ago or so, I always think back fondly on that experience and really want to commend the members of the community who are today to join us, and again Senator Cooney, for recognizing the incredible contributions that this community has to offer, not just to our state but to the entire United States of America.

I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

To our guests from the Sikh community, thank you for being here today. You are seen and heard. We ask for you to rise to extend the cordialities of the house to you.

Please rise and be recognized.

(Standing ovation.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The resolution was previously adopted on April 28th.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: The sponsors of all of today's resolutions would like to open them for cosponsorship.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The resolutions are open for cosponsorship. Should you choose not to be a cosponsor, please notify the desk.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: At this time we're going to pause very briefly and stand at ease while the Minority has a very quick conference.

And so the Senate will stand at ease until 12:50.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senate will stand at ease until 12:50.

(Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease at 12:33 p.m.)

(Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at 1:20 p.m.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senate will come to order.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President, there will be an immediate meeting of the Committee on Rules in Room 332.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: There will be an immediate meeting of the Rules Committee in Room 332.

SENATOR GIANARIS: The Senate will stand at ease.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senate will stand at ease.

(Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease at 1:21 p.m.)

(Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at 1:32 p.m.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senate will return to order.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,

there's a report of the Rules Committee at the desk. Please take that up.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Stewart-Cousins, from the Committee on Rules, reports the following bills:

Senate Print 10102, by Senator Serrano, an act authorizing the South Country Central School District to finance certain deficits;

Senate Print 10103, by Senator Serrano, an act making appropriations for the support of government.

Both bills reported direct to third reading.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to accept the report of the Rules Committee.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: All those in favor of accepting the report of the Rules Committee please signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The report of the Rules Committee is accepted.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up the supplemental calendar.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 877, Senate Print 10102, by Senator Serrano, an act authorizing the South Country Central School District to finance certain deficits.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Is there a message of necessity at the desk?

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: There is a message of necessity at the desk.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to accept the message.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: All those in favor of accepting the message please signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The

message is accepted, and the bill is before the house.

Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Murray to explain his vote.

SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you, Madam President.

I want to thank all of my colleagues, but I want to start the list with thank you to the Senate Majority Leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and her staff.

I want to thank the Governor and their staff, our Minority Leader Ortt and our staff here, as well as the Assembly Speaker and their staff and my Assembly partner over there, Assemblyman Joe DeStefano.

I know folks are -- some might say, you know, we're -- this is a bailout. It's not. It's a rescue. I've never seen something this bad before in all my years in elected office,

where this school district runs out of money next week. Literally runs out of money, cannot pay to keep the lights on, cannot pay the teacher salaries, cannot pay for anything.

Yes, obviously there was mismanagement. We'll get to the bottom of that. But right now we've got to make sure these kids can finish out their school year. And that's what this will help to do.

So I thank my colleagues, I thank everyone involved. This has been months we've been working on this. But I'm glad we've reached this resolution and that we will be able to make sure that these kids get the education they deserve.

So I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Murray to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 877, voting in the negative: Senator Weber.

Ayes, 57. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 878, Senate Print 10103, by Senator Serrano, an act making appropriations for the support of government.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Is there a message of necessity and appropriation at the desk?

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: There is a message of necessity at the desk.

SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to accept the message.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: All those in favor of accepting the message please signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Opposed, nay.

(Response of "Nay.")

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The message is accepted, and the bill is before the house.

SENATOR LANZA: Lay it aside.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is laid aside.

Senator Gianaris, that completes the

reading of the supplemental calendar.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please go to the reading of the controversial supplemental calendar.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will ring the bell.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 878, Senate Print 10103, by Senator Serrano, an act making appropriations for the support of government.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator, why do you rise?

SENATOR O'MARA: Yes, Madam President. Will the sponsor yield for some questions?

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Serrano, do you yield?

SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The sponsor yields.

SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you, Senator.

Here we are on our eighth extender, now officially one month late on this year's

budget. Can you give us a general outline of what's included in this extender? And how long is it extending government operations?

SENATOR SERRANO: Through you, Madam President. You're correct, Senator O'Mara, this is our eighth extender. It does get us to $16.7 billion, which includes $1.4 billion in new spending. It does take us to Monday, May 4th.

And this extender, as in the others that we've had before us, is generally how we will keep our government running short of having a final enacted budget.

And some of the items that are covered in this budget include payroll costs; Judiciary costs; general state charges; payments for Social Security; State Education payments; Department of Health -- WIC, CHP payments; Department of Labor payments; Office of People With Developmental Disabilities, and so on.

There are a number of critical items that are covered in the bill before us.

SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you, Senator.

Madam President, will the Senator continue to yield?

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Do you continue to yield?

SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senator yields.

SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

Senator, do we have any table targets yet for the joint budget conference committees to work on?

SENATOR SERRANO: Through you, Madam President, no, we do not.

SENATOR O'MARA: Through you, Madam President, if the Senator will continue to yield.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Do you continue to yield?

SENATOR SERRANO: Yes. Yup.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senator yields.

SENATOR O'MARA: Do you have an expectation of when we might have table targets for the budget committees to work on?

SENATOR SERRANO: Through you, Madam President. You know, I believe that we are certainly moving forward in the right direction.

There are a number of issues within this budget that we are getting to conclusions, hopefully in short order. And I think at that time we will start to see some of these numbers coming together.

But at the present moment we do not have that.

SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

Madam President, if the Senator will continue to yield.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Do you continue to yield?

SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senator yields.

SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, you know, without going through each of these open policy issues that we're all pretty much aware of -- with the CLCPA, with tax increases, with auto insurance reform, SEQR reform, New York for All -- how close can you tell us that we are to at least a conceptual agreement on all of these issues so that you can have something for us to report?

SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,

Madam President. You are correct, there are a number of outstanding issues. These issues are certainly things that have taken up a good amount of time in this budget. We are moving closer to resolution. I cannot give you a proper timetable.

But it is important to note that the bill before us does not contain any of those policy issues. This is just covering the issues that I outlined, but also ensuring that we can have a functioning state government, at least until next Monday.

SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

Madam President, if the Senator will continue to yield.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Do you continue to yield?

SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senator yields.

SENATOR O'MARA: I agree, Senator, that we should be continuing to extend government operations while this budget is pending. But, you know, one month late at this point is concerning with the lack of reported progress,

anyways.

Do you anticipate we will have resolution on these outstanding issues by the end of next week?

SENATOR SERRANO: Through you, Madam President. I cannot give you a definite time frame of when this budget will be done.

But it is clear that the amount of time that this has taken is because this is a very complicated endeavor. A budget like the one that we are putting together here has to be in the best interests of all New Yorkers, accounting for things like economic development, our parks, arts and culture, education.

And while deadlines are certainly important, I think that it is equally if not more important that we have a good budget that reflects the priorities of the New Yorkers, of the constituents that I represent in the 29th Senate District, and certainly across the State of New York.

SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you, Senator.

That's all I have, Madam President. Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator O'Mara.

Senator Helming, why do you rise?

SENATOR HELMING: Thank you, Madam President. If the sponsor will answer a question.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Serrano, do you yield?

SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senator yields.

SENATOR HELMING: Senator Serrano, I understand your response to Senator O'Mara that we're moving closer to a budget but you can't provide anything more specific about when we'll see a final budget for review.

But can you tell me, is there anything in this extender for the Rural Health Transformation funding?

SENATOR SERRANO: Through you, Madam President. I did outline at the beginning of our discussion, when I was answering Senator O'Mara, on some of the sort of top-line issues that are here.

But this is what you would call a

clean extender. To my knowledge, the funding that you speak of is not included in this extender.

SENATOR HELMING: Madam President, on the bill, please.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Helming on the bill.

SENATOR HELMING: So that is correct, that there is nothing in this extender for the Rural Health Transformation funding.

And I am growing increasingly concerned as we get more and more like these vague answers about when we'll see a budget, because that Rural Health Transformation funding is critically important, especially in my district.

I think many people here know that back in December our state was awarded $212 million by the federal government, and the money is sitting here.

But my understanding is that that funding's appropriated in the DOH budget under certain federal funds, and the budget needs to be passed for this funding to flow.

Madam President, I'd offer this.

These hospitals, our community health centers, our Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers and others, they worked very hard, they competed for this funding, and they won it through a very rigorous federal process.

They need the Governor and the Legislature to take this seriously, to come to an agreed-upon budget. Because every week that we move further and further away from an agreed-upon, we're risking this money.

It's my understanding that there's a hard deadline of September 30, 2026, for this money to move. After that, CMS can redistribute the unspent funds to other states. We do not want that to happen.

I also wanted to offer that every extender is bringing more uncertainty and real consequences for all New Yorkers. Sometimes in the responses that we get to these budget questions, it doesn't feel like there is an understanding that there are real consequences.

You know, I hear legislators speak all the time about affordability and what they're doing to address affordability. But the longer this process goes on, the longer it's taking for

us to take real action to provide relief to people.

This late budget is putting pressure on local budgets and the decisions that impact taxpayers. Local governments and school districts are making decisions without knowing what support they can expect from the State of New York. And those decisions can lead to higher property taxes or cuts to services.

Right now -- this has been discussed -- our schools are preparing for budget votes on May 19th. They are legally obligated by next week to publish their budgets, and they don't know their final state funding.

That means they're either forced to guess: Raise taxes to be safe, or risk cuts later on. Either way, our taxpayers and our students are going to feel the impacts of that.

And because of the late budget and the uncertainly it creates, I'm hearing from municipalities who are looking at either delaying or putting off entirely important infrastructure work, including, you know, repairing our roads, our bridges, or doing important flood mitigation work.

The Comptroller has warned in the past that delays in the budget and contracting process can slow payments to nonprofits and service providers and put real strain on the organizations that deliver critical services.

And then you couple that with what I brought up about the Rural Health Transformation funding just sitting there, not going out where it's desperately needed to make sure that our hospitals that are struggling can keep their doors open, can continue servicing people.

So, Madam President, I'm going to be voting yes on this extender because I think we need to absolutely keep government running, but I'm here to strongly suggest that there are real consequences with this late budget. The Governor and the leaders of the Legislature need to get their acts together and get something to us hopefully next week and no later.

Thank you, Madam President.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Helming.

Are there any other Senators wishing to be heard?

Seeing and hearing none, debate is

closed.

Senator Serrano.

SENATOR SERRANO: Madam President, upon consent, we've agreed to restore this bill to the noncontroversial calendar.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill has been restored to the noncontroversial calendar.

Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 16. This act shall take effect immediately.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

Senator Serrano, that completes the reading of the noncontroversial calendar.

SENATOR SERRANO: Is there any further business at the desk?

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: There is no further business at the desk.

SENATOR SERRANO: I move to adjourn until Monday, May 4th, at 11:00 a.m., with the intervening days being legislative days.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: On motion, the Senate stands adjourned until Monday, May 4th, at 11:00 a.m., with the intervening days being legislative days.

(Whereupon, at 1:46 p.m., the Senate adjourned.)