

1 NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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3  
4 THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

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8  
9 ALBANY, NEW YORK

10 May 4, 2026

11 11:22 a.m.

12  
13  
14 REGULAR SESSION

15  
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18 SENATOR ROXANNE J. PERSAUD, Acting President

19 ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

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

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

4 I ask everyone to please rise for  
5 the presentation of colors.

6 (The Color Guard entered the chamber  
7 and proceeded to the front, presenting colors.)

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: I ask  
9 everyone to remain standing to recite the Pledge  
10 of Allegiance.

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

13 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:  
14 Lieutenant Colonel Jason Hesseling, chaplain of  
15 Fort Drum, will deliver today's invocation.

16 Chaplain?

17 CHAPLAIN HESSELING: Please bow  
18 your heads and pray with me.

19 Divine Father, Creator of all, we  
20 ask Your blessing today upon this Senate chamber  
21 for wise deliberations and effective actions for  
22 the communities they represent.

23 We seek Your blessing as well upon  
24 the 10th Mountain Division and the soldiers and  
25 families who call her home. We honor her legacy.

1 Born in the snowy peaks of the Rockies, forged in  
2 a fire of the Italian Alps, she has found her  
3 home in the North Country.

4 We remember that our strength is not  
5 merely in ruck and rifle, but in our character,  
6 the same character reflected in the resilience  
7 and pioneering spirit of the Empire State.

8 We pray that the bonds of friendship  
9 and the strength of faith continue to meet the  
10 call of our great nation: For our communities  
11 and neighbors who open their hearts and homes to  
12 military families, for our soldiers who protect  
13 our borders, and for our civic leaders, who  
14 govern for all and secure the freedoms we defend.

15 We place all these diverse needs in  
16 Your unified hands. Help us to bridge  
17 divisiveness and the competing requirements with  
18 the same spirit of cooperation that exists  
19 between the 10th Mountain and the great State of  
20 New York.

21 May our work today be worthy of the  
22 legacy of those who have served before us, and  
23 endure long after those who follow. Keep us  
24 safe, keep us united, and may we always strive  
25 towards the highest ideals of justice and peace

1 in our climb to Glory.

2 We ask this and all great things in  
3 Your holy name. Amen.

4 (Response of "Amen.")

5 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Color  
6 Guard, retire the colors.

7 (The Color Guard lowered the colors  
8 and exited the chamber.)

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Reading  
10 of the Journal.

11 THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Friday,  
12 May 1, 2026, the Senate met pursuant to  
13 adjournment. The Journal of Thursday, April 30,  
14 2026, was read and approved. On motion, the  
15 Senate adjourned.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Without  
17 objection, the Journal stands approved as read.

18 Presentation of petitions.

19 Messages from the Assembly.

20 The Secretary will read.

21 THE SECRETARY: Senator Sanders  
22 moves to discharge, from the Committee on  
23 Environmental Conservation, Assembly Bill  
24 Number 1388A and substitute it for the identical  
25 Senate Bill 3179B, Third Reading Calendar 101.

1                   Senator Bailey moves to discharge,  
2                   from the Committee on Codes, Assembly Bill  
3                   Number 1422 and substitute it for the identical  
4                   Senate Bill 4525, Third Reading Calendar 614.

5                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    So  
6                   ordered.

7                   Messages from the Governor.  
8                   Reports of standing committees.  
9                   Reports of select committees.  
10                  Communications and reports from  
11                  state officers.

12                  Motions and resolutions.

13                  Senator Gianaris.

14                  SENATOR GIANARIS:    Good morning,  
15                  Madam President.

16                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Good  
17                  morning.

18                  SENATOR GIANARIS:    Amendments are  
19                  offered to the following Third Reading Calendar  
20                  bills:

21                  By Senator Baskin, page 11,  
22                  Calendar 180, Senate Print 6009A;  
23                  Senator Myrie, page 17,  
24                  Calendar 412, Senate Print 2539B;  
25                  Senator Martinez, page 28,

1 Calendar 668, Senate Print 9326;

2 Senator Kavanagh, page 34,

3 Calendar 763, Senate Print 8527A;

4 And Senator Rivera, page 23,

5 Calendar 556, Senate Print 1911A.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
7 amendments are received, and the bills will  
8 retain their place on the Third Reading Calendar.

9 Senator Gianaris.

10 SENATOR GIANARIS: I wish to call  
11 up the following bills, which were recalled from  
12 the Assembly and are now at the desk:

13 Senate Bill Numbers 7328A, 2280B, and 120A.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
15 Secretary will read.

16 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
17 147, Senate Print 7328A, by Senator Hinchey, an  
18 act to amend the Public Service Law.

19 Calendar Number 289, Senate Print  
20 2280B, by Senator Webb, an act to amend the  
21 Executive Law.

22 Calendar Number 627, Senate Print  
23 120A, by Senator Cleare, an act to amend the  
24 Public Service Law.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Move to

1 reconsider the votes by which these bills were  
2 passed.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
4 Secretary will call the roll on reconsideration.

5 (The Secretary called the roll.)

6 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 59.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
8 bills are restored to their its place on the  
9 Third Reading Calendar.

10 SENATOR GIANARIS: I offer the  
11 following amendments.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
13 amendments are received.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,  
15 at this time I want to thank our leaders from  
16 Fort Drum for their indulgence, but we have a  
17 noon deadline for the budget extender, so they  
18 are going to watch us do our business for a few  
19 minutes, and then we'll hear the remarks we've  
20 been waiting for from Fort Drum leadership.

21 So to start, there will be an  
22 immediate meeting of the Rules Committee in  
23 Room 332.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: There  
25 will be an immediate meeting of the

1 Rules Committee in Room 332.

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: The Senate will  
3 stand at ease.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
5 Senate will stand at ease.

6 (Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease  
7 at 11:28 a.m.)

8 (Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at  
9 11:32 a.m.)

10 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
11 Senate will return to order.

12 Senator Gianaris.

13 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,  
14 there's a report of the Rules Committee at the  
15 desk. Please take that up.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: All  
17 those in favor of accepting the report of the  
18 Rules Committee please signify by saying aye.

19 (Response of "Aye.")

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Opposed,  
21 nay.

22 (Response of "Nay.")

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
24 report of the Rules Committee is accepted.

25 Senator Gianaris.

1 Oh, yes. The Secretary will read.

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

5 Senate Print 335, by  
6 Senator Gianaris, an act to amend the  
7 General Business Law;

8 Senate Print 10166, by  
9 Senator Serrano, an act making appropriations for  
10 the support of government;

11 Senate Print 10167, by  
12 Senator Serrano, an act providing for the  
13 administration of certain funds and accounts  
14 related to the 2026-2027 budget.

15 All bills reported direct to third  
16 reading.

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Now I move to  
18 accept the report of the Rules Committee.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Now we  
20 ask: All those in favor of accepting the report  
21 of the Rules Committee, please signify by saying  
22 aye.

23 (Response of "Aye.")

24 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Opposed,  
25 nay.

1 (Response of "Nay.")

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
3 report of the Rules Committee is accepted.

4 Senator Gianaris.

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: Let's take up  
6 the supplemental calendar, please.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
8 Secretary will read.

9 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
10 880, Senate Print 10166, by Senator Serrano, an  
11 act making appropriations for the support of  
12 government.

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

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: There is  
17 a message of necessity and appropriation at the  
18 desk.

19 SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to accept  
20 the message.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: All  
22 those in favor of accepting the message please  
23 signify by saying aye.

24 (Response of "Aye.")

25 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Opposed,

1       nay.

2                       (Response of "Nay.")

3                       ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    The  
4       message is accepted, and the bill is before the  
5       house.

6                       SENATOR LANZA:    Lay it aside.

7                       ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Lay it  
8       aside.

9                       THE SECRETARY:    Calendar Number  
10      881, Senate Print 10167, by Senator Serrano, an  
11      act providing for the administration of certain  
12      funds and accounts related to the 2026-2027  
13      budget.

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

16                      ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   There is  
17      a message of necessity at the desk.

18                      SENATOR GIANARIS:    I move to accept  
19      the message.

20                      ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   All  
21      those in favor of accepting the message please  
22      signify by saying aye.

23                      (Response of "Aye.")

24                      ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Opposed,  
25      nay.

1 (Response of "Nay.")

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
3 message is accepted, and the bill is before the  
4 house.

5 Read the last section.

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

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the  
9 roll.

10 (The Secretary called the roll.)

11 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce  
12 the results.

13 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 59.

14 Excuse me. In relation to  
15 Calendar 881, voting in the negative:  
16 Senator Weik.

17 Ayes, 58. Nays, 1.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
19 is passed.

20 Senator Gianaris, that completes the  
21 reading of the supplemental calendar.

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please move to  
23 the reading of the controversial supplemental  
24 calendar.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The

1 Secretary will ring the bell.

2 The Secretary will read.

3 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
4 880, Senate Print 10166, by Senator Serrano, an  
5 act making appropriations for the support of  
6 government.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Senator  
8 O'Mara, why do you rise?

9 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,  
10 Madam President. Would Senator Serrano yield for  
11 some questions.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Will the  
13 Senator yield?

14 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
16 Senator yields.

17 SENATOR O'MARA: Good morning,  
18 Senator. Thank you.

19 Here we are on Monday, well over a  
20 month past the budget due date now, enacting our  
21 ninth budget extender of this season.

22 My read of this extender says we're  
23 adding another 3.1, approximately, billion  
24 dollars in additional spending authority,  
25 bringing our total for the extenders to just shy

1 of \$20 billion for the month that this budget has  
2 been late.

3 Can you tell us today where we stand  
4 on the budget progress? And when do you expect  
5 us to have the final nine budget bills in place  
6 for us to consider?

7 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,  
8 Madam President.

9 Senator O'Mara, we are certainly  
10 moving along in the right direction. You are  
11 correct, this is our ninth budget extender. And  
12 it does appropriate for the continuation of state  
13 government to allow for funding for important  
14 things like payroll costs, SUNY pensions, WIC  
15 payments, Department of Labor, transportation,  
16 Department of Veterans' Services, and many other  
17 items to ensure that our government can function  
18 accordingly.

19 To answer your question, we are  
20 certainly moving in the right direction. I don't  
21 have a definitive timetable as to when this  
22 budget negotiation will conclude and we will vote  
23 on the additional -- the remaining of our budget  
24 bills.

25 However, this certainly allows for

1 us to get to that moment.

2 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,  
3 Senator.

4 Madam President, if the Senator will  
5 continue to yield.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Does the  
7 Senator yield?

8 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
10 Senator yields.

11 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, on the  
12 major policy issues that we've discussed in every  
13 one of these extenders that are out there --  
14 primarily, the auto insurance reforms being  
15 discussed, the streamlining of SEQR, the New York  
16 for All, the CLCPA changes -- what can you report  
17 to us today on the progress of nailing down those  
18 policy issues and getting ready to move forward  
19 with the rest of the budget?

20 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,  
21 Madam President.

22 Senator, negotiations on all of  
23 those outstanding items continue in earnest. I  
24 believe that there has been progress made on  
25 these very important issues.

1                   But just to remind everyone that  
2                   these are not the issues before us at this moment  
3                   in this bill. This bill is what is known as a  
4                   clean extender to continue with the functioning  
5                   of our state government.

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

8                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Does the  
9                   Senator yield?

10                  SENATOR SERRANO:   Yes.

11                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   The  
12                  Senator yields.

13                  SENATOR O'MARA:    Do we have table  
14                  targets yet for the joint budget conference  
15                  committees to start working on?

16                  SENATOR SERRANO:   Through you,  
17                  Madam President. Yes, we do, Senator. We have a  
18                  total table target of \$380 million, which  
19                  accounts for various amounts of funding across  
20                  state government.

21                  SENATOR O'MARA:    Thank you.

22                  Madam President, if the Senator will  
23                  continue to yield.

24                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Does the  
25                  Senator yield?

1                   SENATOR SERRANO:    Yes.

2                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    The  
3   Senator yields.

4                   SENATOR O'MARA:    And how will that  
5   additional spending be divvied up amongst the  
6   various tables, the various joint budget  
7   conference committees?

8                   SENATOR SERRANO:    Through you,  
9   Madam President.  This amount that I mentioned,  
10   \$380 million, represents a modest increase over  
11   last year, similar to last year in the way that  
12   it was divided amongst the tables.

13                   I don't have specific numbers for  
14   that, but it will be similar to what we've had in  
15   years prior.

16                   SENATOR O'MARA:    Thank you.

17                   Through you, Madam President, if the  
18   Senator will continue to yield.

19                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Does the  
20   Senator yield?

21                   SENATOR SERRANO:    Yes.

22                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    The  
23   Senator yields.

24                   SENATOR O'MARA:    Since we have  
25   table targets today, for the first time in over a

1 month of the budget being late, can you tell us,  
2 with that additional 380 million, what the total  
3 spending of this budget is going to be this year?

4 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,  
5 Madam President.

6 Senator, at this point, without a  
7 final budget to vote on, it's difficult to give  
8 you that exact amount. But certainly if you look  
9 at what the Executive Budget had and what we as a  
10 Senate one-house and what the Assembly had, it  
11 will be somewhere within that ballpark.

12 But at this point it would be  
13 premature for me to give a number.

14 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

15 Madam President, if the Senator will  
16 continue to yield.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Does the  
18 Senator yield?

19 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
21 Senator yields.

22 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, with  
23 regards to the New York for All proposals that  
24 are being discussed, it was reported either today  
25 or over the weekend that it's being discussed

1       that we will be not allowing our counties, our  
2       county jails to hold those under ICE detention.

3               Can you tell us if that is actually  
4       being discussed and whether that's been agreed  
5       to?

6               SENATOR SERRANO:   Through you,  
7       Madam President.  As I mentioned a minute ago,  
8       there are negotiations happening in earnest.

9               But just to be clear, the budget  
10      bill -- the extender bill before us does not  
11      speak to that issue.  So what we're voting on  
12      does not contain any of those policy issues.

13              SENATOR O'MARA:   Thank you,  
14      Senator.

15              Madam President, on the bill.

16              ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Senator  
17      O'Mara on the bill.

18              SENATOR O'MARA:   Here we are on our  
19      ninth budget extender, ninth debate on these  
20      budget extenders, over a month late with our  
21      budget now.  The only thing new we've learned so  
22      far is we're going to have table targets.  Maybe  
23      the joint budget conference committees will meet.

24              But we still have no concept of what  
25      the overall budget is going to be between the

1 Governor's 30-day amendments of I think  
2 \$262 billion up to the Assembly's proposal of  
3 \$272 billion. Massive spending of the state.

4 We're a month late. We have no  
5 details on how this is going to be put together  
6 in the end. We have nine budget bills that have  
7 not been done, only one of the 10 has been done,  
8 and that's to authorize our continued payments of  
9 our debts, which certainly needed to be done.

10 But to be here at nine extenders in  
11 over a month and still get no information on any  
12 of the major policy issues that are holding this  
13 budget up is not -- it's not good government, as  
14 I've said in every one of these budget  
15 discussions and debates that we've had. It's not  
16 good for New York, it's not good for New Yorkers.  
17 It's not good for us doing our jobs here on  
18 preparing for debate of these bills.

19 And it certainly provides  
20 New Yorkers no opportunity to weigh in on the  
21 actual discussions and the actual agreements that  
22 are coming together. And that's just not good  
23 government.

24 And again, I'm sure no doubt that  
25 when these budget Bills do come, they'll come

1 with messages of necessity from the Governor  
2 which will not even give the constitutionally  
3 required three-day waiting period for us to have  
4 time to review the bills, for our constituents to  
5 weigh in with us on where they feel we should be  
6 going on these bills.

7 It's a terrible way to be running  
8 government. It's a terrible way to be spending  
9 over a quarter of a trillion dollars annually in  
10 our state budget now.

11 It's very concerning. It's  
12 unsustainable spending with no explanation to  
13 New Yorkers whatsoever. And this process needs  
14 to change, Madam President.

15 Thank you.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
17 you, Senator.

18 Are there any other Senators wishing  
19 to be heard?

20 Seeing and hearing none, the debate  
21 is closed.

22 The Secretary will ring the bell.

23 Read the last section.

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

1                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Call the  
2   roll.

3                   (The Secretary called the roll.)

4                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Announce  
5   the results.

6                   THE SECRETARY:   In relation to  
7   Calendar 880, voting in the negative:  
8   Senator Weik.

9                   Ayes, 57.   Nays, 1.

10                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   The bill  
11   is passed.

12                  Senator Gianaris, that completes the  
13   reading of the controversial calendar.

14                  SENATOR GIANARIS:   Thank you,  
15   Madam President.

16                  Now let's take up previously adopted  
17   Resolution 1713, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton,  
18   read its title and introduce Major General  
19   Scott Naumann to address us, please.

20                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   The  
21   Secretary will read.

22                  THE SECRETARY:   Resolution 1713, by  
23   Senator Scarcella-Spanton, memorializing  
24   Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 4, 2026, as  
25   10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day in the

1 State of New York.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: It is  
3 now my honor to introduce Major General Scott  
4 Naumann, commanding general of the 10th Mountain  
5 Division at Fort Drum.

6 General?

7 MAJOR GENERAL NAUMANN: Well, good  
8 morning.

9 (Response of "Good morning.")

10 MAJOR GENERAL NAUMANN: Madam  
11 Majority Leader, members of the New York State  
12 Senate, thank you for honoring the  
13 10th Mountain Division and allowing us all the  
14 privilege of addressing you today from this  
15 esteemed podium in this really magnificent  
16 building.

17 And I should say, before I get into  
18 my remarks, as kind of an aside, what a privilege  
19 for us to kind of witness government in action  
20 this morning and for us to see firsthand what and  
21 why we choose to defend our great republic.

22 So I'm reminded by a senator friend  
23 of mine that much like some of the architectural  
24 elements in this building, government is never  
25 finished. So thanks for the opportunity to be

1 here and to address you today.

2 The 10th Mountain Division is,  
3 without question, one of the most consistently  
4 deployed and operationally relevant divisions in  
5 the United States Army today. Our home here in  
6 New York at Fort Drum provides us with a  
7 fantastic venue to conduct training that's  
8 relevant to the next fight, while our  
9 infrastructure and our services are among the  
10 best in the entire department.

11 Simply put, our readiness is locally  
12 driven, but our impact is global.

13 So today I'd like to first provide  
14 you with a highlight that highlights some of  
15 those readiness impacts, and then I'll outline a  
16 few areas for your consideration and continued  
17 support and advocacy.

18 To begin with, let me tell you: Our  
19 division at Fort Drum, very busy, as you can  
20 imagine. The soldiers of our 1st Brigade  
21 recently returned from the Central Command area  
22 of operations in the Middle East and are well  
23 into train-up for what we anticipate will be a  
24 subsequent deployment in the future.

25 Our 2nd Brigade is already, today as

1 I speak, in harm's way, supporting Central  
2 Command in the Middle East.

3 The environment has changed quite a  
4 bit from when they were originally notified of  
5 their deployment, but their resolve remains  
6 steady. They're ready to take on any mission,  
7 and they will continue even this week to begin  
8 deploying to the Middle East.

9 Our 3rd Brigade is leading our army  
10 as what we call a transformation-in-contact  
11 brigade. And this places our formations at the  
12 cutting edge of developing technology for  
13 technology emerging threats, threats like drones  
14 and cyberattacks.

15 Our Aviation Brigade, all of the  
16 helicopters that are in our force, just recently  
17 fielded the latest Apache attack helicopter, the  
18 latest and the newest in the Army, and they just  
19 had a task force that returned from the  
20 Southern border, where their efforts positively  
21 impacted the security of our entire nation.

22 Our logistics and our sustainment  
23 expertise has proven its expeditionary  
24 capability, providing world-class support to  
25 missions around the globe. In fact, at one point

1 in time the sun never really set on this  
2 expeditionary sustainment logistics unit. They  
3 had folks in the Middle East, they had folks in  
4 Europe, they had folks in Cuba, they had folks in  
5 the Pacific all at the same time. We're really  
6 proud about that.

7           And finally, the division  
8 headquarters, where my chair is, recently in the  
9 fall returned from Fort Huachuca, Arizona, where  
10 we showcased our ability to go solve problems  
11 around the country and the world on the  
12 Southern border. In this vital role, our  
13 headquarters established a joint task force that  
14 synchronized security, aviation, and logistics  
15 efforts across a 2,000-mile border and an  
16 incredibly, as you can imagine, complex  
17 operational area.

18           In fact, it was that deployment last  
19 year, the reason that I missed this annual event  
20 here in this great Senate. However, since I've  
21 returned, I've come in contact with many of you.  
22 And just about every time, in addition to a thank  
23 you for your service, which we very much do  
24 appreciate, I also get asked, What can we do to  
25 help?

1                   That question has significant  
2                   gravity, and it's not one that I take lightly.  
3                   But my answer to that question is quite simple:  
4                   Continue your advocacy and support of initiatives  
5                   that ensure Fort Drum's readiness today and  
6                   relevancy tomorrow.

7                   Initiatives such as Operation Janus,  
8                   which puts Fort Drum in the running to be one of  
9                   the first installations to harness nuclear power  
10                  through the employment of micro-reactors. If  
11                  approved, this Army-wide program will ensure the  
12                  energy resiliency of our installation and the  
13                  local area of the North Country to ensure that we  
14                  are prepared to respond to requests from civil  
15                  authorities or to short-notice deployment  
16                  globally.

17                  We expect the final decision, in  
18                  fact, in the next couple of months. And I must  
19                  say New York State's ongoing support has been  
20                  integral to our place in the selection process.  
21                  So thank you for your advocacy there.

22                  Another area of support is the  
23                  State Health Department's work to ensure a bright  
24                  future for the North Star Health Alliance that  
25                  serves our North Country community as well as

1 Fort Drum. Unlike our other Army bases around  
2 the country -- and you may not know this -- when  
3 the 10th Mountain came back to Fort Drum in 1985,  
4 by design, they didn't build a hospital. The  
5 idea was to be totally integrated with the local  
6 community.

7                   And so our readiness, the readiness  
8 of our soldiers, the readiness of our families,  
9 are dependent on the local health community needs  
10 that our area provides. So your ability to  
11 enable North Star to gain a little bit firmer  
12 fiscal ground strengthens the foundation of this  
13 unique medical model that we enjoy.

14                   Today I hope to meet with the  
15 New York State deputy commissioner for the  
16 Department of Motor Vehicles to discuss bringing  
17 back a service location to Fort Drum. In the  
18 early 2000s, we benefited from this partnership  
19 with local government to better serve the needs  
20 of our 36,000 servicemembers and their families.

21                   Our needs are not typical for normal  
22 New Yorkers, because we come from multiple states  
23 and we're often very transient. So having  
24 subject matter experts in a DMV that can help  
25 address those is much needed, and I look forward

1 to working with the state and the county moving  
2 forward to make this a reality.

3 We also plan to meet with the  
4 director of security intelligence and the acting  
5 cyber chief. We're working together on strategic  
6 planning and protection training to counter the  
7 rapidly emerging technology that is being  
8 utilized by adversaries around the world today.

9 The state's participation in our own  
10 annual installation protection exercise this  
11 August was very important as we focus on new  
12 threats. And I think it will make us all safer.  
13 So we look forward to the state's involvement  
14 there.

15 And next month will be one of three  
16 installations in the United States Army to open a  
17 campus-style dining venue, something that  
18 soldiers have been requesting for years. This is  
19 essentially a contract-run facility that offers a  
20 variety of restaurant-quality menus for soldiers  
21 to choose from, utilizing a daily meal allowance.

22 It allows more choice, it provides  
23 healthy meal options at more times to meet  
24 soldiers' needs. And it delivers a higher degree  
25 of satisfaction.

1                   Why should you be interested? Well,  
2   New York's support to the North Country  
3   agriculture is part of this incredible effort,  
4   because a large percentage of the food that will  
5   be served in this new dining venue will be  
6   seasonal and locally sourced.

7                   As we are preparing to shut down our  
8   main runway on Wheeler-Sack Army Air Field for  
9   much-needed infrastructure upgrades, we're  
10   looking to local and regional airports for their  
11   support in our outload. And as I mentioned,  
12   we're busy, constantly moving. The millions of  
13   dollars of investment that New York has made in  
14   both the Watertown International Airport and the  
15   Hancock International Airport in Syracuse, and  
16   others, will directly support deployments and  
17   homecomings during our air field upgrade.

18                  So we appreciate the ongoing  
19   dialogue and your interest in ensuring the nation  
20   maintains its power projection capability in the  
21   Northeast.

22                  And finally, the New York Power  
23   Authority's \$1 million investment in a  
24   proof-of-concept plant at the Empire State Mine  
25   in nearby Fowler, New York, has proven extremely

1       informative. Fort Drum is now among a small  
2       number of installations being considered for an  
3       enhanced-use lease with industry specifically for  
4       commercial graphite processing. The initiative  
5       is just getting off the ground but could prove to  
6       be highly impactful to secure national supply  
7       lines of critical minerals.

8                       And I don't need to remind this body  
9       of our location along I-81 and the proximity to  
10      the Technology Corridor and Micron plant,  
11      everything that's going on around Syracuse and  
12      the rest of the North Country. Tomorrow we will  
13      host an Industry Day to showcase this tremendous  
14      opportunity.

15                      Simply stated, what's good for  
16      Fort Drum is good for the North Country and great  
17      for New York. A benefit to the North Country is  
18      a benefit to Fort Drum. This symbiotic  
19      relationship is part of our foundational design,  
20      as I mentioned, and it's what makes Fort Drum  
21      special, as compared to the rest of the Army.

22                      You know, it's funny, you all call  
23      this annual event the Fort Drum and 10th Mountain  
24      Division Day, and we call it the Albany Day. But  
25      no matter the viewpoint, what makes serving in

1 the Empire State so special is how we work  
2 together.

3 We recently released our annual  
4 economic impact report that estimates that  
5 Fort Drum contributed \$2.2 billion to the local  
6 economy in the North Country. We are -- and we  
7 remain -- the largest single-site employer in the  
8 state, and we're proud of our positive impact in  
9 the surrounding communities that we call home.

10 There isn't a report, though, that  
11 estimates how New York's investments in areas  
12 like nuclear power generation services,  
13 agriculture, mining, airports -- how those  
14 contribute to Fort Drum. It's significant,  
15 though. And certainly in dollars invested, but  
16 perhaps more importantly in the impact to our  
17 readiness now and our institution's relevance in  
18 the future.

19 I've talked a lot about many  
20 big-picture initiatives today as we've toured  
21 this beautiful Capitol building. But I want to  
22 leave you with our thanks, our collective  
23 thanks -- for your interest, for your compassion,  
24 for your kindness to our soldiers, our families,  
25 and the civilians that call our community home.

1                   Seeing so many of you talk with our  
2                   young 10th Mountain troopers that are showcasing  
3                   some of our equipment and some of their  
4                   activities this morning, and asking them about  
5                   their families and what their plans are after  
6                   they leave the service, is a clear demonstration  
7                   of support from the leaders of New York to your  
8                   military base up in the North Country.

9                   We are humble -- we are humbled. We  
10                  are grateful for your support because you, our  
11                  neighbors, our friends and our fellow patriots,  
12                  are why we commit to a lifetime of service.

13                 Thank you again for the opportunity  
14                 to speak, for your ongoing commitment to our  
15                 mission, to our people, and for reinforcing the  
16                 belief that there is no better place to serve  
17                 than right here in the great State of New York.

18                 Climb to Glory! And thank you.

19                 (Extended standing ovation.)

20                 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Senator  
21                 Gianaris.

22                 SENATOR GIANARIS:    Now please  
23                 recognize Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins on this  
24                 resolution.

25                 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Majority

1 Leader Stewart-Cousins on the resolution.

2 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Thank you  
3 so much, Madam President.

4 And I really do want to thank you,  
5 Major General Naumann -- he made sure that I got  
6 the pronunciation right. And he said, "It's  
7 like: Now, man!"

8 (Laughter.)

9 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And  
10 certainly your life has dictated that rapid  
11 response.

12 And certainly I do appreciate the  
13 fact that you were able to sit through some of  
14 our proceedings and appreciate the fact that we  
15 know that as we do these deliberations, we also  
16 need to keep government working and going. And  
17 so that's what you witnessed today. So I thank  
18 you for your patience.

19 Also, I met the Mayor (finger  
20 quotes), Colonel Jason Adler, who's in charge of  
21 all the administration. Thank you so much as  
22 well for being here.

23 And I also want to recognize, you  
24 know, what you do not only for us but for the  
25 cadets and the entire community here.

1                   Also with you, I understand, is  
2   Command Sergeant Major Dan Burns, the garrison  
3   command sergeant major, and Captain Grant  
4   Grainger, the aide-de-camp. And Julie, I see you  
5   back there. Thank you. Julie Halpin, who's the  
6   public and congressional affairs.

7                   And I want to thank  
8   Lieutenant Colonel Jason Hesseling for the  
9   invocation earlier, his beautiful invocation.  
10   Thank you so much for starting us off that way.

11                  And of course to all the cadets with  
12   us today representing the U.S. Army's  
13   10th Mountain Division here in the Senate chamber  
14   as we celebrate -- yes, it's Fort Drum Day for  
15   us, and we wouldn't miss it for the world. So  
16   thank you so much for being here.

17                  I also want to express my gratitude  
18   to Senator Jessica Scarcella-Spanton, who is the  
19   chair of the Committee on Veterans, Homeland  
20   Security and Military Affairs, for steadfastly  
21   leading our effort to support our veterans in  
22   New York and their military families.

23                  And I also want to thank the sponsor  
24   of today's resolution, Senator Mark Walczyk, who  
25   represents Fort Drum. And of course as we thank

1 all of you from Fort Drum, thank you also,  
2 Senator, for your service.

3 And all the members in this chamber  
4 who have answered the call to serve, including  
5 the Minority Leader, Senator Ortt, who you'll be  
6 hearing from, as well as their families: I want  
7 to, you know, thank each and every one of you for  
8 the sacrifice that you make for our country.

9 And I just wanted to give a special  
10 shout-out because one of my staffers,  
11 Emily Bruggeman, her husband Jason Schewe was  
12 deployed from Fort Drum. He's deployed overseas.  
13 So again, you know, it hits home for us.

14 And, you know, our hearts and  
15 prayers go with all of you here or wherever you  
16 go on behalf of us.

17 And I'm the daughter of a  
18 World War II veteran who earned a Purple Heart  
19 and a Bronze Star, and the sister of a Vietnam  
20 War veteran. And so, you know, I certainly am  
21 very serious about the well-being of our military  
22 and what you do for us.

23 And every year this event allows us  
24 to commemorate not only the significance of  
25 Fort Drum to New York State but the exceptional

1 sacrifice made by the servicemembers and families  
2 who call it home.

3 Fort Drum, where soldiers have  
4 trained for decades to defend us and our allies  
5 in times of war and crisis, has stood in our  
6 state for over a century.

7 It's also been the home of the  
8 10th Mountain Division, one of our nation's most  
9 distinguished divisions in the United States  
10 Army, for over 40 years -- the site in Jefferson  
11 County, where it now sits, from 1908; the  
12 location of Camp Pine, a vital military training  
13 site where many units who fought in World War II  
14 and the Korean War trained.

15 Expanding over 107,000 acres near  
16 Lake Ontario, Fort Drum has continued to play an  
17 important role in our nation's national security.  
18 There, each year, over 80,000 soldiers are  
19 mobilized, trained, and kept ready to meet  
20 national security requirements.

21 Fort Drum is not only a center of  
22 our country's military operations but also a  
23 driving force behind Northern New York's economy.  
24 And certainly you've spoken of that, and we hear  
25 you. But I'll get to that later.

1                   As the area's largest employer, it  
2 provides critical economic stability and supports  
3 the daily lives of thousands of active-duty  
4 servicemembers and their families.

5                   To New Yorkers, Fort Drum is an  
6 enduring symbol of courage, and the soldiers  
7 stationed there carry and continue a tradition of  
8 patriotism and service.

9                   These are the men and women who run  
10 towards danger. Those stationed at Fort Drum  
11 represent the very best of our nation: Ordinary  
12 Americans who answer the extraordinary call to  
13 serve, choosing a life of sacrifice and  
14 commitment.

15                  It is that commitment that allows  
16 the rest of us to live in a democracy and to live  
17 a life of freedom and security.

18                  We've all seen the headlines, and  
19 it's clear that challenging days are ahead in our  
20 country. And the cadets here today will be among  
21 those called to rise to that moment of strength  
22 and resolve. So as Majority Leader of the  
23 New York State Senate, I want to convey how  
24 immensely proud New York is to have you belong in  
25 our great state.

1                   And we'll continue to stand with you  
2                   and to advocate for you and to demonstrate our  
3                   gratitude -- not only in words, in deeds.

4                   I must say that your presentation of  
5                   the things that you need us to do was important.  
6                   Usually people come and they -- we all exchange  
7                   platitudes. But you had a list. You know,  
8                   between Operation Janus and making sure your  
9                   healthcare is sustained, the dining, supporting  
10                  the agriculture, DMV, the integration into the  
11                  community, the airport -- we can help you in all  
12                  those ways.

13                  And so I want you to know that I do  
14                  appreciate your not only being here and calling  
15                  this Albany Day to our Fort Drum Day, but giving  
16                  us the list of things that we need to do to make  
17                  sure that we continue to be good neighbors for  
18                  you just as you have been for us and for our  
19                  great state and our country for all these years.

20                  So thank you so much for your  
21                  presence here. And thank you, Madam President,  
22                  for the time.

23                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Thank  
24                  you, Majority Leader.

25                  Minority Leader Ortt on the

1 resolution.

2 SENATOR ORTT: Well, thank you very  
3 much, Madam President.

4 I want to start off by thanking my  
5 colleague Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, not  
6 only for her kind words but for continuing this  
7 tradition, which goes back certainly long before  
8 I was here in the Senate and I know before many  
9 of us were here in the Senate.

10 I want to thank Senator  
11 Scarcella-Spanton, who it was noted is the chair  
12 of the Veterans, Military Affairs, and  
13 Homeland Security Committee -- but not only that,  
14 is a military spouse.

15 And I think for those who are here,  
16 maybe you're a military spouse, but you all may  
17 have a military spouse. And I think we would all  
18 agree that that, at times, is even more difficult  
19 than serving in uniform. And so I certainly want  
20 to thank her for her continued service.

21 I want to thank Senator Mark  
22 Walczyk, who continues to serve, actually  
23 missed -- was it last year? Two years ago --  
24 because he was deployed. And he continues to  
25 wear that uniform proudly. And just as proudly,

1 he continues to represent Fort Drum and serve as  
2 the Senator for Fort Drum.

3 And I know this day -- going back to  
4 when he worked for Senator Patty Ritchie, this  
5 day means a lot to him both as a soldier and as a  
6 Senator.

7 And of course you're going to hear  
8 from our ranker on the Veterans' Affairs  
9 Committee, Senator Jake Ashby -- also, I must  
10 add, an Army veteran.

11 Now, there's a couple other folks in  
12 the chamber that were in other branches. There's  
13 a couple of Marines lurking out there, as there  
14 always is. There's a Navy veteran out there.  
15 But proud of all their service. Proud of all  
16 their service. And proud of all your service.

17 Major General Naumann, thank you for  
18 being here. Thank you for your kind words.  
19 Thank you for your leadership of the  
20 10th Mountain and of the Fort Drum installation.

21 You mentioned -- I think it is  
22 fitting -- that your soldiers saw a little bit, a  
23 little bit -- a little bit of a preview of kind  
24 of what goes on here some days. And I think it's  
25 important, I think it's fitting that you're here

1 to see what you're defending sort of work itself  
2 out.

3                   You know, we always talk about the  
4 big reasons why you do what you do. Right?  
5 Freedom. And that's very true. But I think  
6 sometimes we say that and it's like, well, what  
7 does that really look like? Right? And it's the  
8 freedom to debate. It's the freedom to lay aside  
9 a bill. And dammit, it's the freedom to have a  
10 late budget if we want to too, I guess. Right?

11                   So -- but it's that freedom. And  
12 it's not always pretty. And it's not always as  
13 orderly as the military or as the Army --  
14 everything's not "Dress Right Dress" here. But  
15 that's what you're defending, that's what you're  
16 protecting: Our ability to have these debates  
17 and to lay bills aside and go back and forth and  
18 pass things and go back and change them. That's  
19 what -- that's what it is. And it's happening in  
20 state capitals across the country, and it's  
21 happening in Washington, D.C.

22                   And I would also, to the soldiers  
23 who are from New York, over -- I believe over in  
24 this corner there, thank you for being here.  
25 Thank you for your continued service to our

1 country. We're happy to have you near home. I'm  
2 sure your families are happy to have you near  
3 home. And we're happy to have you in this  
4 chamber.

5 It's an interesting thing, we've  
6 heard about Fort Drum and the importance it plays  
7 in the community. And I know firsthand, having  
8 both been there and in other military  
9 installations, the relationship between the  
10 installation and the surrounding community is  
11 very, very important. Not only for that  
12 community, but it's important for the  
13 installation.

14 These are things for my colleagues.  
15 People in the Pentagon, people making major  
16 decisions about future investments in military  
17 installations, will look at what is the  
18 relationship between that community and that  
19 installation. That plays a huge role in the  
20 future of those installations.

21 And so when there is a healthy  
22 relationship, when there is a very symbiotic  
23 relationship, that only helps further ensure that  
24 Fort Drum will continue to play an important role  
25 in the North Country and here in New York State.

1                   Now, you all should know, we have  
2   many people -- we have a lot of folks come to the  
3   chamber. We also have West Point Day, which is  
4   another day we're all proud of here in the  
5   chamber, where we recognize the oldest military  
6   academy in the country. And we recognize its  
7   important role and New York's important role at  
8   molding some of the future leaders of the United  
9   States Army. Big deal.

10                  You're not being molded -- you are  
11   soldiers. You are soldiers. You are leaders.  
12   You are the people that those cadets aspire to  
13   be. But you are also part of a storied unit.  
14   Because when you think about Fort Drum, just like  
15   my colleagues in the city would know, just like  
16   MSG wouldn't be MSG if it weren't for the Knicks  
17   and the Rangers, and Highmark Stadium wouldn't be  
18   what it is without the Bills, Fort Drum wouldn't  
19   be what it is without the 10th Mountain Division.

20                  And the 10th Mountain Division  
21   wouldn't be anything if it were not for the  
22   people who wear the patch on their shoulder, if  
23   it were not for the leaders who train and make  
24   sure that future generations of Americans who  
25   wear that patch know that history, know ancestry,

1 know that lineage.

2 And I can tell you, as someone in  
3 the Army, for those who weren't, when you see  
4 that patch -- there are certain patches in the  
5 Army that everyone, whether you're a part of that  
6 unit or not, you know it tells you a little  
7 something about the person wearing it.

8 When you see a Ranger tab, it tells  
9 you a little bit about that person wearing it.  
10 When you see an Airborne tab, it tells you  
11 something about it, that person. When you see a  
12 combat infantry badge, that tells you something.

13 When you see the 10th Mountain  
14 patch, it tells you something about the person  
15 who bears that patch. And we have a lot of pride  
16 here, a lot of us you'll see, we've got the 10th  
17 Mountain lapel pin. We're proud to be the state  
18 that hosts the most-deployed unit since 9/11.

19 But we're also -- we need to  
20 recognize what that means for the people in the  
21 10th Mountain. That's a lot of time away from  
22 family. That's a lot of hardship. That's a lot  
23 of challenges when they return. There's a cost,  
24 right? It's not just about being proud: Boy,  
25 those guys always go and fight our enemies, how

1 great is that? Well, yeah, it's great, but maybe  
2 not always for the people in the uniform.

3 So we've got to make sure that we're  
4 there to support you, so that we're not just  
5 proud of you on Veterans Day or Fort Drum Day,  
6 but that we're -- we back that up with supporting  
7 you the other 364 days of the year.

8 Because Fort Drum Day, to me, I know  
9 to Senator Walczyk and a lot of us, it's not just  
10 one day, it's really -- it's a 365. Certainly  
11 for Senator Walczyk, who represents it.

12 And I think for a lot of us, we  
13 recognize what that sacrifice really looks like.  
14 And just like we were talking about, it's not  
15 always pretty here -- it's not always pretty on  
16 the home front. Right? As soldiers, we're  
17 trained that we always look like everything's  
18 together, but sometimes it's not.

19 And you need to know that there's  
20 people who have your back when you come back from  
21 those multiple deployments or that your family,  
22 someone has their back. And that's where that  
23 community comes back into play in supporting all  
24 of you and supporting your spouses and your  
25 children. Because if you don't have that

1 support, you can't do what we ask you to do.

2 And it is a dangerous world out  
3 there. I don't know that it's ever not been, to  
4 be fair. But it's not getting less dangerous.  
5 And the only thing that keeps it less dangerous  
6 for people here are you wearing that uniform.

7 And that's why we're here today.  
8 That's why today is Fort Drum Day for us. Every  
9 day this time of year is an Albany Day, General.  
10 So, you know, it needs to be Fort Drum Day for  
11 the people in this chamber. Because if it's just  
12 an Albany Day, you know, that could go a lot of  
13 different ways. But Fort Drum Day is a good day.

14 Fort Drum Day I know is a day that  
15 there's a lot of pride in this chamber, for all  
16 the reasons I mentioned. And we are honored to  
17 have you in this chamber. We're honored by your  
18 words. We're honored mostly by your actions, and  
19 by the actions of the soldiers who are here and  
20 the actions of the soldiers who aren't here  
21 because maybe they're somewhere else, somewhere  
22 much more dangerous, somewhere where it's not  
23 just about a debate about a bill, it's far more  
24 serious.

25 And it's an honor for me to have

1 served. It's an honor for me to be able to  
2 tell -- for people who have never been to  
3 Fort Drum, I do believe that places breed a  
4 certain kind of person. Fort Drum is the reason  
5 the 10th Mountain is the division it is, because  
6 they train at Fort Drum. Fort Drum is a tough  
7 place. It's a -- can be a harsh place. But it  
8 breeds one of the best fighting divisions in the  
9 world, on behalf of the values of America. And  
10 that is definitely something we should all be  
11 proud of, and I know we are.

12 And so, Madam President, I am proud  
13 to speak and support the resolution, and I thank  
14 you for your indulgence.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
16 you, Senator.

17 Senator Scarcella-Spanton on the  
18 resolution.

19 SENATOR SCARCELLA-SPANTON: Thank  
20 you, Madam President.

21 And thank you, Leader  
22 Stewart-Cousins, for always making this a  
23 priority every year.

24 Thank you, Senator Ortt, for all  
25 your kind words.

1                   And of course my partner on this  
2     day, Senator Walczyk, who represents Fort Drum,  
3     thank you for all you do for that area as well.

4                   I want to welcome everyone visiting  
5     the New York State Senate chambers today from  
6     Fort Drum, especially the Major General, all the  
7     leadership, and all the soldiers here with us  
8     today.

9                   We're here to honor the remarkable  
10    efforts of every man and woman stationed at  
11    Fort Drum and serving in the 10th Mountain  
12    Division. Today we pay tribute to their vital  
13    contributions to our national defense, and their  
14    continued bravery.

15                  Fort Drum acts as one of the largest  
16    employers in the region for both military and  
17    civilian workforce, and supports local small  
18    businesses, housing, retail, healthcare and  
19    construction.

20                  A few years ago I actually had the  
21    privilege to visit Fort Drum. I went with my  
22    husband, who as it's been mentioned, he actually  
23    served in the military himself. So he got a real  
24    kick out of me getting in the helicopter and  
25    waving down below to say hi to him.

1                   So it was one of my favorite  
2 memories, and one of the biggest honors of my  
3 life, to be able to come see the work that  
4 Fort Drum does firsthand.

5                   Those strong partnerships between  
6 the installation and local government, schools,  
7 and nonprofits, is what sets Fort Drum apart from  
8 most military installations in our country.

9                   As we approach the 25th anniversary  
10 of 9/11, it is important to note that not too  
11 long after the September 11th attacks, which  
12 shook not just New York but our entire nation,  
13 the soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division  
14 displayed extraordinary courage, and our state  
15 will always be grateful for the role that they  
16 played.

17                   Fort Drum is not only a symbol of  
18 military excellence, but also a cornerstone of  
19 Northern New York's economy, serving as the  
20 region's largest employer and supporting the  
21 livelihoods of thousands of active-duty  
22 servicemembers. There are over 35,000 soldiers  
23 and family members at Fort Drum. They're our  
24 neighbors, coworkers, classmates and friends.

25                   And on a personal note,

1 Major General, I really liked what you said:  
2 When you say thank you for your service, we  
3 respond "What can we do?" And you laid out a  
4 list.

5 And I will say I was going to reach  
6 out to my staff to make sure they got it all  
7 down, but our leader had it memorized way before.  
8 So she works harder and faster than every single  
9 person in this room.

10 But I think it's really important to  
11 hear what we can do for you. Because I can say,  
12 on a personal note, my husband did two tours to  
13 Afghanistan, and I look at especially the young  
14 soldiers over here -- I'm not sure if you've  
15 deployed yet. But my goal in this role -- I  
16 chair the Committee for Veterans -- is to make  
17 sure that when you do get out of service, this is  
18 a good place to land on your feet.

19 Make sure you have the resources  
20 that you need to not just survive, but to thrive.  
21 Make sure that your family members, your children  
22 have the resources you need. Because as Senator  
23 Ortt mentioned, this is something that impacts  
24 the whole family.

25 And my favorite thing about

1 Fort Drum Day every year is that I get to speak  
2 to the people like you, hear what you need the  
3 most. And last year I had a great conversation  
4 with so many younger people, and they were  
5 telling me about their daily lives.

6 And it's really important to note  
7 that Fort Drum is the most deployed unit in the  
8 entire country. And it's not just one parent who  
9 deploys sometimes, it's multiple parents,  
10 multiple deployments. And we know firsthand -- I  
11 know my colleague Senator Ashby, Senator Walczyk,  
12 we have a lot of veterans here in the chamber;  
13 thank you all for your service -- it impacts the  
14 entire family.

15 So when I met with the soldiers last  
16 year, they were telling me sometimes -- and it is  
17 such an amazing thing that you share the  
18 hospital. It's really important for the  
19 North Country. But one of the things I heard is  
20 sometimes it is difficult, particularly for the  
21 spouses or the children, maybe getting  
22 appointments. And I was able to reach out to  
23 Cohen Veterans Network, which sets up kind of  
24 hubs for mental health resources in communities.

25 And they don't have one in New York,

1 but they are going to be opening one. So that's  
2 an impact of those conversations last year. And  
3 it's still kind of in the new phases, but it's  
4 really important that you are up here because we  
5 hear you. We appreciate you. And we deeply,  
6 deeply respect your service.

7 And with that, thank you so much. I  
8 proudly vote aye.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
10 you, Senator.

11 Senator Ashby on the resolution.

12 SENATOR ASHBY: Thank you,  
13 Madam President.

14 I want to thank our Majority Leader,  
15 Leader Ortt, our leader, and our chairwoman for  
16 her amazing work.

17 And thank you to the Major General  
18 and your command team for joining us today and  
19 for your continued leadership and service.

20 And when we think about the  
21 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum, we think  
22 about the Battle of Anzio, we think about  
23 Somalia, we think about the Siege of Sadr City,  
24 which lasted over four years, the Battle of  
25 Kamdesh. Some of these have generated major

1 motion pictures, which I think is how some people  
2 associate themselves with it. But they're so  
3 much more than that. The resolve that it took to  
4 lead during those times has inspired future  
5 generations of soldiers who join us here today,  
6 and it's what is going to carry that legacy  
7 forward over time and over generations.

8                   And it does have an impact here on  
9 us. Staff Sergeant Alex Jimenez -- that name is  
10 no stranger to this chamber. Member of the  
11 10th Mountain Division. New York State will  
12 be -- is the first in the nation to generate  
13 legislation like that.

14                   It's wonderful that you get to sit  
15 here and see what we do here. I think it would  
16 be even more inspiring for us to see what you do.  
17 There's no reality TV show that I think can  
18 adequately portray that. There's no book,  
19 there's no movie for that.

20                   But to look upon these soldiers here  
21 today, measuring their commitment to what we have  
22 each and every day in this chamber, and in the  
23 state and in this country, that opportunity -- I  
24 think it's important for us to think about that,  
25 to put ourselves in their shoes as young people

1 serving this nation -- whether they're married or  
2 single, whether they have children that they will  
3 be leaving at one point in service to this  
4 nation -- a career, what that looks like, how  
5 that will inspire us to make better laws.

6 But it's not always easy. It's not  
7 always what you see on TV. Sometimes you are  
8 cold, hungry, tired. Not like we are here. Not  
9 like we are perhaps next week or whenever, when  
10 the budget is coming around, but in a very  
11 different way. And yet that resolve continues of  
12 the tradition and leadership that you inspire and  
13 has been inspired through previous generations.

14 So it's just a wonderful privilege  
15 for me to join with the 10th Mountain Division  
16 here today. I want to say thank you to the  
17 soldiers who are here. You inspire us with your  
18 commitment and your desire to serve.

19 Thank you.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
21 you, Senator.

22 Senator Walczyk on the resolution.

23 SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you,  
24 Madam President.

25 Happy Fort Drum Day and

1 10th Mountain Division Day, everyone. Thank you  
2 for all the pride that you've displayed here  
3 today.

4 And I want to thank the  
5 Majority Leader, the Veterans chair, and the  
6 Secretary of the Senate for continuing this  
7 legacy that we've built here in honoring  
8 New York's division, the 10th Mountain Division.

9 Now, there's some New York soldiers,  
10 they call it a home of record. So this is where  
11 they came up, where they grew up. You've got  
12 Staff Sergeant Anthony Steban, from Bethpage.  
13 You've got Specialist Noel Ortiz from the Bronx,  
14 you've got Specialist Andrew Young from  
15 Honeoye Falls. You've got Private First Class  
16 Alex Mendez Martinez from Ridgewood.

17 And I asked these soldiers -- and  
18 this is -- this is key, because sometimes you may  
19 not know this. Fort Drum gets negative 35 in the  
20 winter. Based on your deployment cycle, you  
21 might not see the finest part of North Country  
22 weather in the summers. So it gets kind of a bad  
23 rap sometimes.

24 That same tough training environment  
25 that Leader Ortt described, it's not the nicest

1 place when you're a soldier coming out of basic  
2 training and you can write down on your request  
3 to the Army, which they may or may not abide, you  
4 can write down Italy and Hawaii and lots of other  
5 places that if you grew up in New York State, you  
6 might say, That's my first request.

7 This is what I want to tell you  
8 that's so special about these individuals. Every  
9 single one of them requested to be stationed at  
10 Fort Drum, New York. Cool.

11 Thank you for serving. Thank you  
12 for also being New Yorkers and wanting to stay  
13 home close to family and be a part of our  
14 community in Northern New York, no matter where  
15 you came from.

16 And then Lieutenant Colonel  
17 Ferguson, he snuck in too. He's from  
18 New Rochelle, New York, just down the river from  
19 us here.

20 Major General Scott Naumann, thank  
21 you so much for your leadership always. It's  
22 been an exciting time to command. The  
23 10th Mountain Division is always an exciting  
24 division to command. But you've had especially  
25 trying times and interesting missions, and you've

1     done a phenomenal job in your time as command.  
2     Thank you for being such a great partner of the  
3     North Country.

4                     And without CSM Brett keeping his  
5     steady hand on the tiller -- we appreciate him  
6     and the backbone that he gives to the division.

7                     And as the Majority Leader pointed  
8     out, there's also -- we call it -- in the Army we  
9     call it a garrison, but she referred to  
10    Colonel Adler as "the mayor." It's the right way  
11    to think about Fort Drum. It really a city unto  
12    itself that is a partner with the community  
13    around it. And he and CSM Burns have done a  
14    phenomenal job leading that village that is  
15    Fort Drum, New York. Thank you so much for your  
16    service.

17                    The 10th Mountain Division has --  
18    and it's right in their song, if you ever hear  
19    the 10th Mountain Division song -- they have a  
20    glorious history. And I know some of you are  
21    humming it in your heads right now.

22                    They went from an elite alpine  
23    training unit, kind of an Army experiment,  
24    saying, hey, we're going to get into the  
25    mountains of Europe, we're going to need some

1 elite combat troops that can do alpine training.  
2 And in 1945 that training directly resulted in us  
3 taking Riva Ridge, their capture of Riva Ridge.  
4 I won't go through the whole thing, but read a  
5 book on it. A phenomenal exercise of the  
6 military mind and the can-do, and truly embodying  
7 of climbing to glory.

8                   They went on to break through  
9 Po Valley and really break the back of the  
10 Italian army in all of that hard fighting in  
11 Southern Europe.

12                   And then we fast-forward. And 1985,  
13 the year that I was born, was also the year that  
14 the 10th Mountain Division was reborn here as  
15 Fort Drum in New York State. They say that it  
16 was built by a Plummer, a Cerjan, and a  
17 Carpenter. That's because Carpenter was the  
18 first commanding general, Cerjan was the engineer  
19 that designed the cantonment area and some of the  
20 training areas for Fort Drum as we know it today,  
21 170 square miles of our training area at Fort  
22 Drum -- and also Plummer.

23                   And I want to tell this for the  
24 staff that are in the room. So Colonel Plummer  
25 got a job in the Pentagon as a staff officer, and

1 he wrote a white paper about what a light  
2 infantry unit should look like. And in 1985 he  
3 saw it realized in the 10th Mountain Division.

4 So don't think, when your boss asks  
5 you to do some research and put together a good  
6 paper, that it's all for naught. Because if  
7 Colonel Plummer hadn't done that great work, we  
8 wouldn't have the 10th Mountain Division the way  
9 that we do today, and certainly Fort Drum  
10 wouldn't be the place that it is.

11 Their glorious continued on, as  
12 Senator Ashby was pointing out, in the wars of  
13 Iraq and Afghanistan, the humanitarian missions  
14 in Somalia and Haiti, Operation Desert Storm, the  
15 list goes on. Because we say the sun never sets  
16 on the 10th Mountain Division patch. And that's  
17 true.

18 You've got the 2nd Brigade commandos  
19 out in Iraq and in Syria right now; the Southern  
20 border mission; and everywhere in between -- the  
21 10th Mountain Division is always moving and  
22 they're moving for you as New Yorkers and us as  
23 U.S. citizens.

24 They're light infantry, they're blue  
25 collar innovators, they are great patriots who

1 keep us safe here and around the globe. And I  
2 encourage you -- they've got some great displays  
3 down in the LOB. I was really excited to see the  
4 M250 -- that's the new SAW, if you're  
5 old school -- and the M7, which is heavier than  
6 the M4. Go downstairs, pick that thing up.  
7 They've got some awesome equipment showing, as  
8 General Naumann pointed out, supported and ready  
9 today, relevant tomorrow.

10 They're constantly innovating,  
11 getting ready for the next fight and innovating  
12 for the next fight for all of us.

13 So what's next? Thirty-six hundred  
14 soldiers a year actually transition out of the  
15 military at Fort Drum. That's an opportunity for  
16 all of us here. Home of record soldiers coming  
17 back as New Yorkers, or others have that come  
18 from other areas of the country and call  
19 Northern New York their home right now -- 3600 of  
20 them annually, we have an opportunity.

21 After World War II, we watched as  
22 the 10th Mountain Division came home. They  
23 became the Ski Patrol and built a bunch of  
24 mountains -- ski resorts, but they did a lot more  
25 than that. If you look at the legacy of the

1 10th Mountain Division, when they came home they  
2 did amazing things for this nation.

3 They can do amazing things for  
4 New York State as part of our future. And  
5 Next Move NY is working on that right now.  
6 Wounded Warrior Project and other amazing groups  
7 are doing similar things to make sure that we're  
8 taking care of those soldiers that come home, and  
9 also provide them opportunities to be great  
10 citizens in New York State.

11 You know, they have the motto which  
12 is "Climb to Glory." This is the Excelsior  
13 State.

14 So no matter what, keep climbing.  
15 We'll see you all at the top. And may we all  
16 climb together to make the 10th Mountain Division  
17 ready today and relevant tomorrow, all the way to  
18 the tippy-top.

19 I vote aye.

20 Thank you, Madam President.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
22 you, Senator.

23 Senator Rhoads on the resolution.

24 SENATOR RHOADS: Thank you,  
25 Madam President.

1                   And we've had so many wonderful  
2 speakers today who have spoken about how special  
3 today is, and it's certainly true.

4                   I do want to thank the sponsor of  
5 the resolution, Senator Scarcella-Spanton, and  
6 obviously our Majority and Minority Leaders for  
7 their amazing words, Senator Walczyk, of course,  
8 and Senator Ashby.

9                   Today truly is a special day. It's  
10 a unique and special honor. There are a great  
11 many things -- if you have the opportunity to  
12 watch debates in this chamber, there's a great  
13 many things that we don't agree on. But today is  
14 one thing that we all agree on.

15                  And that is the great sense of pride  
16 that we have -- of you, of Fort Drum, of the  
17 10th Mountain Division and what you mean to  
18 New York and, more importantly, what you mean to  
19 this country.

20                  Some of the most special times that  
21 we have are actually chances that we have to get  
22 back home, because it's an opportunity for us to  
23 check in and refocus on the reason that we serve.

24                  But Fort Drum Day is an opportunity  
25 for us to check in and refocus our priorities on

1 the reason that we serve in this chamber. We are  
2 here to serve you, just as we are here to serve  
3 the people that we represent back home.

4 Your service is awe-inspiring. I  
5 have a colleague back home who is a Marine Corps  
6 veteran who often says that you raise your right  
7 hand to take the oath, and you write a blank  
8 check to the United States of America for a price  
9 up to and including your very life, to defend our  
10 freedoms, to defend what we have here in this  
11 chamber.

12 And I know, Major General, you  
13 mentioned how beautiful the chamber is. The only  
14 reason that we get to be here, the only reason  
15 that we're enjoying our 250th anniversary of our  
16 founding as a nation is because we've had men and  
17 women who have been willing to make that  
18 sacrifice, to defend that freedom, to make it  
19 possible for us to be here.

20 And so today is an incredibly  
21 special day for us here in this chamber, but it's  
22 an opportunity for us to celebrate your service,  
23 your continued sacrifice, the amazing history of  
24 Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division, but  
25 what you mean for this country.

1                   And we have a number of soldiers  
2     that are here today. And thank you,  
3     Senator Walczyk, for mentioning them. I am proud  
4     to have one from my district, hailing from  
5     Bethpage, and that is Staff Sergeant  
6     Anthony Steban.

7                   And, Staff Sergeant, if you wouldn't  
8     mind standing just so everybody can see you.

9                   But I had a chance to chat very  
10    briefly at the start, and what an exceptional --  
11    what an exceptional person. He actually was a  
12    Golden Eagle from Bethpage High School, joined  
13    the United States Army in 2013 as a fire support  
14    specialist and completed his initial training at  
15    Fort Sill in Oklahoma.

16                  Staff Sergeant Steban has been on  
17    two combat deployments, one in Afghanistan in  
18    2016 and one in Iraq, as well as two overseas  
19    tours in South Korea, in 2014 and 2020. Staff  
20    Sergeant Steban has been to multiple Army  
21    courses, including TMO training and joint fire  
22    observer, JFO training.

23                  His dedication to the Army and  
24    service to his country has been recognized with  
25    many awards and medals, including the Combat

1 Action Badge, the Army Commendation Medal, which  
2 he's received on four occasions, and the Army  
3 Achievement Medal, which he has received on  
4 seven occasions.

5 He is actively pursuing a Bachelor  
6 of Science degree in management information of  
7 systems from the University of Maryland Global  
8 Campus in Adelphi, Maryland. He has 90 credits  
9 completed so far, will be completing his degree  
10 in 2027, at which point he plans on unfortunately  
11 leaving the military, but fortunately for him,  
12 going back to his home in Syracuse, where he  
13 hopes to start his career in project management  
14 with his wife and stepson by his side.

15 So, Staff Sergeant, I want to thank  
16 you for being here today. I want to thank you  
17 for your service and sacrifice.

18 Madam President, I proudly vote aye  
19 in favor of the resolution.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
21 you, Senator.

22 Senator Helming on the resolution.

23 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you,  
24 Madam President.

25 As we heard from previous speakers,

1 Fort Drum is such an important part of our state.

2 As Major General Naumann mentioned,  
3 it's the largest single-site employer in the  
4 entire state, providing hundreds and hundreds of  
5 jobs, contributing over \$2 billion to our state's  
6 economy.

7 The last time I visited Fort Drum --  
8 and for anyone who hasn't been there, I really  
9 highly recommend that you tour the base. The  
10 last time I was there, it was just before the  
11 deployment of the 1st Brigade Combat Team. It  
12 was actually -- it was my son-in-law's first  
13 deployment with that team with the 10th Mountain  
14 Division.

15 And I bring that up -- and I talked  
16 to the Major General about this, about there's  
17 something just so uniquely special. I've been to  
18 a number of bases, but something uniquely special  
19 about Fort Drum, the base and the community. You  
20 can just feel the love that both the soldiers and  
21 the civilians have for the United States of  
22 America. You can feel that deep respect for our  
23 military, and the pride in being a part of  
24 Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division.

25 From World War II to today's

1 missions, the soldiers of the 10th Mountain  
2 Division have earned a reputation for training in  
3 tough conditions and delivering when it  
4 absolutely matters the most.

5 And today I am so very proud to  
6 recognize one of those soldiers, a constituent of  
7 mine, Sergeant Andrew Young. His story reflects  
8 the very best of the 54th Senate District.

9 Sergeant Young grew up in  
10 Honeoye Falls. He is a graduate of Honeoye  
11 Falls-Lima High School. His path reflects the  
12 kind of values we deeply respect: A strong work  
13 ethic, a commitment to learning, and a desire to  
14 serve something greater than himself.

15 He joined the United States Army in  
16 October of 2021 as a fire control specialist.  
17 After completing his training at Fort Sill, he  
18 was stationed at Fort Wainwright, where he served  
19 with the 28 Field Artillery Regiment.

20 In April of 2025, Sergeant Young  
21 transferred to Headquarters and Headquarters  
22 Battery Division Artillery, 10th Mountain  
23 Division. He now serves with the division's  
24 Innovation Lab as a project lead for the Reaver  
25 drone system.

1                   At the same time, he continues to  
2                   invest in his future, pursuing a degree in  
3                   software engineering with a minor in unmanned  
4                   aerial systems through Embry-Riddle Aeronautical  
5                   University.

6                   For his meritorious service,  
7                   Sergeant Young has earned the Army Commendation  
8                   Medal, three Army Achievement Medals, and the  
9                   Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

10                  Madam President, Sergeant Young  
11                  represents the kind of service that makes  
12                  Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division what it  
13                  is.

14                  Sergeant Young, to you, to all of  
15                  the soldiers at Fort Drum, to the leadership  
16                  team, on behalf of the people of the 54th Senate  
17                  District, I offer you our heartfelt thanks and  
18                  deepest respect as you continue your climb to  
19                  glory.

20                  God bless you all.

21                  Thank you, Madam President.

22                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Thank  
23                  you, Senator.

24                  Senator Bailey on the resolution.

25                  SENATOR BAILEY:    Thank you,

1 Madam President.

2 Days like this remind us of why  
3 we're here, who we serve, and why we serve them.

4 Madam Leader, thank you always for  
5 this resolution; Senator Scarcella-Spanton; my  
6 colleague Senator Walczyk, who represents  
7 Fort Drum.

8 But, Major General, you brought  
9 something to my attention that -- I think I  
10 mentioned it, but I want to make sure I mention  
11 it for the record. Those of you who serve, you  
12 sign your name to serve people that you don't  
13 know. You take an oath. I don't think many  
14 people realize the gravity of what you soldiers  
15 are doing. You sign up to serve, protect, honor  
16 and possibly die for people that you don't know  
17 and will never meet. If that's not heroic, I  
18 don't know what is.

19 So I just wanted to thank you for  
20 that. The gravity is not lost on anybody in this  
21 chamber of what that is and what it takes to  
22 serve.

23 And I have the honor of, instead --  
24 in place, in stead of Senator Sepúlveda, I get to  
25 recognize an incredible individual, Sergeant Noel

1 Ortiz, if you could please stand.

2 Sergeant Ortiz is from God's  
3 country, the Bronx, New York -- all of it is  
4 God's country, the mainland -- and he went to  
5 Archimedes Academy in the Bronx.

6 And if you know who Archimedes was,  
7 he was the one who accurately was able to  
8 calculate pi, and he also was the one who was  
9 able to determine what buoyancy was. And  
10 buoyancy is staying above water. And you help us  
11 as a country stay above water, Sergeant Ortiz.

12 He has an Associate's of Science.  
13 He's working on his Bachelor's of Administration  
14 from Purdue University -- go, Boilermakers.

15 He joined the Army in 2015 as a  
16 cannon crew member, and he completed his initial  
17 training in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, deploying to  
18 Afghanistan in 2020 and Iraq in 2023. Some  
19 really tough times in our nation and in our  
20 world.

21 He spent time as an instructor for  
22 the Field Artillery Basic Officer Leaders Course  
23 from March 2016 to January 2019. He was assigned  
24 to the 10th Mountain Division in January 2019.  
25 And he has been noted for his outstanding service

1 with many awards -- too many to name here  
2 today -- that include the Army Commendation Medal  
3 with "C" device; the Army Achievement Medal, and  
4 the Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

5 Now, it says that you plan to obtain  
6 your Bachelor of Science in business  
7 administration -- I just want to make a friendly  
8 amendment. I don't think you're going to plan to  
9 do that, I think you're going to achieve it and  
10 do so with flying colors -- in order to further  
11 distinguish yourself as a leader in the U.S.  
12 Army -- another friendly amendment, you have  
13 already distinguished yourself as an amazing  
14 leader here in the U.S. Army.

15 You plan to serve for 20 years in  
16 the U.S. Army. And Sergeant Ortiz, I say, from  
17 the Bronx to the world, whatever you plan, you  
18 will achieve.

19 Thank you for your service. Thank  
20 you for representing the best of the boroughs,  
21 thank you for representing the greatest of us as  
22 a humanity. Congratulations, and thank you for  
23 continuing to represent us.

24 I proudly vote aye on the resolution  
25 and congratulate you and your family, Sergeant.

1                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Thank  
2   you, Senator.

3                   Senator Salazar on the resolution.

4                   SENATOR SALAZAR:    Thank you,  
5   Madam President.

6                   Today we honor these New Yorkers who  
7   dedicate their lives in service of our country.  
8   I am proud to recognize and to welcome to our  
9   State Capitol today a servicemember who grew up  
10   in my Senate District, Private First  
11   Class Alexander Mendez. Private Mendez, if you  
12   will please stand. Thank you.

13                  Born and raised in Queens,  
14   Private Mendez has known from a young age that he  
15   wanted to give back to his community. As a  
16   teenager he attended the High School for Health  
17   Professions and Human Services in the city.

18                  Soon after graduating high school,  
19   and without delay, he chose to begin his military  
20   training. In 2024 he left home and headed to  
21   Oklahoma to join the U.S. Army as a joint fire  
22   support specialist.

23                  Then, in 2025, he was assigned to  
24   the Third Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment  
25   in Fort Drum. This past fall, he made his way to

1 the First Infantry Division Artillery.

2 He also enjoys playing guitar in his  
3 spare time.

4 Private First Class Mendez, I extend  
5 my deep gratitude to you for your service. You  
6 chose an honorable path, knowing that it could  
7 lead to a a life of great physical and spiritual  
8 challenges.

9 The "Great-Teenth" Senate District  
10 and New York State thank you for your hard work,  
11 for your commitment to your fellow New Yorkers,  
12 and for your service to our country.

13 Thank you, Madam President.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
15 you, Senator.

16 To our guests, Major General  
17 Naumann, the leadership team, the incredible  
18 soldiers, and everyone visiting here from  
19 Fort Drum, we thank you for your service. We  
20 thank you for your commitment to serving us, to  
21 protecting us.

22 I welcome you on behalf of the  
23 Senate. We extend to you the privileges and  
24 courtesies of this house.

25 Please rise and be recognized.

1 (Extended standing ovation.)

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
3 you.

4 The resolution was adopted on  
5 March 10th.

6 Senator Gianaris.

7 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,  
8 Senator Scarcella-Spanton would like to open this  
9 resolution for cosponsorship.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The  
11 resolution is open for cosponsorship. Should you  
12 choose not to be a cosponsor, please notify the  
13 desk.

14 Senator Gianaris.

15 SENATOR GIANARIS: At this time  
16 recognize Senator Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick for an  
17 introduction.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Senator  
19 Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick for an introduction.

20 Senator, if you'd hold on.

21 Excuse me. Can we have some --  
22 there's a lot of movement behind the Senator.

23 (Pause.)

24 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
25 you, Senator.

1 SENATOR CANZONERI-FITZPATRICK:

2 Thank you, Madam President.

3 Today I have the special honor of  
4 introducing an extraordinary constituent from the  
5 9th Senate District, Thomas Ortiz, who is  
6 visiting from Inwood.

7 Thomas is a first-grade student at  
8 Lawrence Primary School, but today I want to  
9 recognize him for what he's done outside the  
10 school.

11 Thomas Ortiz, just seven years old  
12 now, with the help of his mother, Angela Ortiz,  
13 who is also here with us today, recently  
14 published a book, "Thomas Makes a Promise." The  
15 story is based on a promise he made to his mother  
16 to make a new friend everywhere he goes.

17 Thomas used his experiences to  
18 encourage other kids to step out of their shell  
19 and help others make friends.

20 The story follows Thomas from the  
21 park to the grocery store, karate class, the  
22 aquarium, the airport, including his own friends  
23 and his older brother Ace as characters.

24 By writing this book, Thomas is  
25 working to encourage his fellow classmates to be

1 kind to one another, to be brave around new  
2 people and in new situations, and to embrace the  
3 joy of friendship.

4 Thomas's story, while meant for  
5 people a few years younger than all of us in this  
6 chamber, has lessons worth remembering for  
7 everyone. He teaches us that connection can  
8 happen anywhere.

9 Thomas, I want to thank you for  
10 joining us today as well as to congratulate you  
11 for the accomplishment in publishing a book. You  
12 have achieved something truly special to spread a  
13 heartwarming message, creating something you  
14 should be very proud of.

15 Madam President, I ask that you  
16 welcome Thomas and his mother Angela and his  
17 father Thomas Sr., and extend to them all the  
18 privileges and courtesies of the house.

19 Thank you.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank  
21 you.

22 Thomas Ortiz, congratulations on  
23 your book. I hope you're making lots of new  
24 friends and just continue remembering that  
25 kindness is extremely important.

1                   To you and your parents, I welcome  
2                   you on behalf of the Senate. We extend to you  
3                   the privileges and courtesies of this house.

4                   Please rise and be recognized.

5                   Congratulations.

6                   (Standing ovation.)

7                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Senator  
8                   Gianaris.

9                   SENATOR GIANARIS:    Madam President,  
10                  let's take up the calendar, please.

11                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    The  
12                  Secretary will read.

13                  THE SECRETARY:    Calendar Number  
14                  101, Assembly Bill Number 1388A, by  
15                  Assemblymember Rosenthal, an act to amend the  
16                  Environmental Conservation Law.

17                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Read the  
18                  last section.

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

22                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Call the  
23                  roll.

24                  (The Secretary called the roll.)

25                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:    Announce

1 the results.

2 THE SECRETARY: In relation to  
3 Calendar 101, voting in the negative are  
4 Senators Ashby, Chan, Gallivan, Griffo, Lanza,  
5 Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk,  
6 Weber and Weik.

7 Ayes, 45. Nays, 13.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
9 is passed.

10 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
11 112, Senate Print 557, by Senator Krueger, an act  
12 to amend the Executive Law.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the  
14 last section.

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

17 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the  
18 roll.

19 (The Secretary called the roll.)

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce  
21 the results.

22 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
24 is passed.

25 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number

1 113, Senate Print 616, by Senator Stavisky, an  
2 act to amend the Executive Law.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the  
4 last section.

5 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This  
6 act shall take effect on the first of January.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the  
8 roll.

9 (The Secretary called the roll.)

10 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce  
11 the results.

12 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
14 is passed.

15 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
16 137, Senate Print 1327A, by Senator Parker,  
17 an act to amend the Public Service Law.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the  
19 last section.

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

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the  
24 roll.

25 (The Secretary called the roll.)

1                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Announce  
2   the results.

3                   THE SECRETARY:   In relation to  
4   Calendar 137, voting in the negative:  
5   Senator Walczyk.

6                   Ayes, 57.   Nays, 1.

7                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   The bill  
8   is passed.

9                   THE SECRETARY:   Calendar Number  
10   172, Senate Print 3111, by Senator Helming, an  
11   act to amend the Education Law.

12                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Read the  
13   last section.

14                  THE SECRETARY:   Section 2.   This  
15   act shall take effect on the first of July.

16                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Call the  
17   roll.

18                  (The Secretary called the roll.)

19                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Senator  
20   Oberacker to explain his vote.

21                  SENATOR OBERACKER:   Thank you,  
22   Madam President.

23                  And I would like to thank Senator  
24   Helming for bringing this really very important  
25   bill forward.

1                   I think we can all agree, if we've  
2                   spent some time in our local communities, just  
3                   how important volunteer firefighting is, and the  
4                   services that of course are extended to the  
5                   communities.

6                   You know, interestingly,  
7                   Madam President, I didn't realize just how long  
8                   I've been fortunate enough to serve in fire  
9                   service, and it really didn't come to mind until  
10                  I heard Senator Walczyk say that he was born in  
11                  1985.

12                  I started in fire service actually  
13                  in August -- this year I'll be celebrating  
14                  40 years. So, Senator Walczyk, you were a very  
15                  visual point of seeing how long I've been in  
16                  fire service.

17                  And along with that,  
18                  Madam President, I would like to also just extend  
19                  my thanks to Senator Rhoads and Senator Rolison,  
20                  who have served their local communities in it as  
21                  well.

22                  And real quickly, just a quick  
23                  story. My first time being called out into  
24                  service, it was a grass fire. And I can remember  
25                  going back to the back of our truck, and I

1 grabbed what's called an Indian tank.

2 And for those of us that are in  
3 service, we know what those are all about. And  
4 those are metal tanks that will have eight -- or,  
5 excuse me, five gallons of water in there. But a  
6 gallon of water weighs 8.33 pounds, so that's a  
7 40-pound tank.

8 And I remember laughing at all the  
9 older members who grabbed a broom to put the  
10 fires out.

11 Madam President, I have served long  
12 enough now that I grab a broom.

13 So with that, Senator Helming, thank  
14 you for bringing that forward.

15 And Madam President, I proudly,  
16 proudly vote aye. Thank you.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Senator  
18 Oberacker to be recorded in the affirmative.

19 Announce the results.

20 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
22 is passed.

23 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
24 321, Senate Print 2458, by Senator Comrie, an act  
25 to amend the Public Authorities Law.

1                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Read the  
2   last section.

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

5                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Call the  
6   roll.

7                   (The Secretary called the roll.)

8                   ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Announce  
9   the results.

10                  THE SECRETARY:   Ayes, 58.

11                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   The bill  
12   is passed.

13                  THE SECRETARY:   Calendar Number  
14   455, Senate Print 161A, by Senator Ramos, an act  
15   to amend the Education Law.

16                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Read the  
17   last section.

18                  THE SECRETARY:   Section 5.  This  
19   act shall take effect April 1, 2027.

20                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Call the  
21   roll.

22                  (The Secretary called the roll.)

23                  ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD:   Announce  
24   the results.

25                  THE SECRETARY:   In relation to

1 Calendar 455, voting in the negative:

2 Senator Walczyk.

3 Ayes, 57. Nays, 1.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
5 is passed.

6 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
7 577, Senate Print 2291, by Senator Harckham, an  
8 act to amend the Real Property Tax Law.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the  
10 last section.

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

13 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the  
14 roll.

15 (The Secretary called the roll.)

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce  
17 the results.

18 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
20 is passed.

21 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
22 614, Assembly Bill Number 1422, by  
23 Assemblymember Cruz, an act to amend the  
24 Criminal Procedure Law.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the

1 last section.

2 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This  
3 act shall take effect on the 90th day after it  
4 shall have become a law.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the  
6 roll.

7 (The Secretary called the roll.)

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce  
9 the results.

10 THE SECRETARY: In relation to  
11 Calendar 614, voting in the negative are  
12 Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick,  
13 Chan, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Martins,  
14 Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt,  
15 Palumbo, Rhoads, Rolison, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk,  
16 Weber and Weik.

17 Ayes, 36. Nays, 22.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
19 is passed.

20 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
21 791, Senate Print 2050, by Senator Webb, an act  
22 to amend the Election Law.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the  
24 last section.

25 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This

1 act shall take effect immediately.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the  
3 roll.

4 (The Secretary called the roll.)

5 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce  
6 the results.

7 THE SECRETARY: In relation to  
8 Calendar 791, voting in the negative are  
9 Senators Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick,  
10 Martins, Rhoads and Walczyk.

11 Ayes, 53. Nays, 5.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
13 is passed.

14 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number  
15 798, Senate Print 2398, by Senator Persaud, an  
16 act to amend the Civil Rights Law.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the  
18 last section.

19 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This  
20 act shall take effect on the 90th day after it  
21 shall have become a law.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the  
23 roll.

24 (The Secretary called the roll.)

25 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce

1 the results.

2 THE SECRETARY: In relation to  
3 Calendar 798, voting in the negative are  
4 Senators Ashby, Helming, Lanza, Mattera, Murray,  
5 O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Rhoads, Stec, Walczyk,  
6 Weber and Weik.

7 Ayes, 45. Nays, 13.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill  
9 is passed.

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

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: Is there any  
13 further business at the desk?

14 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: There is  
15 no further business at the desk.

16 SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to  
17 adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday, May 5th, at  
18 3:00 p.m.

19 Happy Star Wars Day, everybody!  
20 (Laughter.)

21 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: On  
22 motion, the Senate stands adjourned until  
23 Tuesday, May 5th, at 3:00 p.m.

24 (Whereupon, at 12:57 p.m., the  
25 Senate adjourned.)