NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

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3:27 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

SENATOR NEIL D. BRESLIN, Acting President

ANGELO J. APONTE, Secretary

P R O C E E D I N G S

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: The Senate will please come to order.

I ask all present to rise to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: The invocation will be delivered by the Reverend Roger L. Hambrick, Sr., pastor of the Green Pasture Baptist Church in the Bronx.

REVEREND HAMBRICK: Let us pray.

Father God, in Your mighty name we call upon You at this hour, giving You thanks and giving You praise, Lord, for this opportunity, Lord God, and for these men and women who have come together, to reason together, to help Your people, and to assist Your people for better living.

Lord God, we ask that You would touch even every heart and every mind of those who were assembled here. And let us remember that even on our money it says "In God We Trust," and that we should trust in You with

all of our hearts and lean not to our own understanding. For all of our ways, we should acknowledge You, and You will direct our path.

Direct Your people to do the things that are necessary to help to resolve the budget and things that will help the people of this land, of this state, New York State, to become better people, to live better, so that they will be able to afford things and do things with their lives that they wouldn't ordinarily be able to do.

God, bless their minds so that they will be able to reason together and come up with the conscious decisions to help us to resolve all the issues of this city and this state.

All these blessings we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Reverend Hambrick.

The reading of the Journal.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Tuesday, March 10, the Senate met pursuant to

adjournment. The Journal of --

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Can we have some silence, please.

THE SECRETARY: The Journal of Monday, March 9, was read and approved. On motion, Senate adjourned.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Without objection, the Journal stands approved as read.

Presentation of petitions.

Messages from the Assembly.

Messages from the Governor.

Reports of standing committees.

Reports of select committees.

Communications and reports from state officers.

Motions and resolutions.

Senator Klein.

SENATOR KLEIN: Mr. President, I believe there's a privileged resolution at the desk. I ask that the resolution be read in its entirety and move for its immediate adoption.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank

you, Senator Klein.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: By Senator Oppenheimer, Legislative Resolution Number 768, memorializing Governor David A. Paterson to proclaim March 2009 as Women's History Month in the State of New York.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Senator Oppenheimer.

SENATOR OPPENHEIMER: Thank you very much.

I'd like to just speak very briefly on this resolution, which is an important resolution for recognition of what women have done governmentally in this state.

Each year New York State does set aside time to recognize the unique and varied contributions that women have made to New York and to New York society. And New York has been the home of many extraordinary women who have led society to a better place, as many men will attest to.

New York has had people working and living in New York like Susan B. Anthony, like

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Matilda Joslyn Gage. They were all very active in our struggle for suffrage. And indeed, in the late 1800s, Carrie Clyde Holly, who was originally from New York City, and Clara Dressingham, who came from Brooklyn, were among two of the first three women elected to any state legislature in the nation, joining Frances Klock, from Massachusetts, in the Colorado legislature.

And in 1918, one year after New York guaranteed women the right to vote in all elections, the first two women, Ida Sammis and Mary Lilly, were elected to the New York State Legislature.

And there are many other women that have been very active in New York State government. For example, Rhoda Fox Graves became the first woman to be elected to both houses of the New York State government, elected to the Assembly in 1924, for several terms, and then elected to the Senate in 1934. And she was here for 14 years in this house.

And then we have Rhoda Jacobs, our

friend. She's the longest-serving woman in the New York State Legislature, from 1979. And Rhoda is still here presently and working hard.

And Earlene Hooper, who is the highest-ranking woman in the Assembly. And as Deputy Speaker, she holds the highest leadership post ever held by a woman in the Assembly. And Ruth Hassell-Thompson, of note, is the highest-ranking woman in the Senate, as Chair of our Majority Conference, which we are all very pleased with.

And since 1983, the New York women legislators have worked through the bipartisan Legislative Women's Caucus to improve the representation and participation of all women in all areas of government, to support issues that affect women and families in New York State, and to provide a network of support for the women in the State Legislature.

And today we have 52 women serving in the New York State Legislature, holding leadership positions in both houses and bringing the diverse experience of women into

law and into public policy.

And that is why we are asking our good Governor, David Paterson, to proclaim March 2009 as Women's History Month in the State of New York and to honor the women of New York State. And we hope this will be adopted.

And as I mentioned earlier, the Women's Legislative Caucus is bicameral and also bipartisan. And we are 52 women, and we are working to advance those family issues so important to women and men.

Thank you.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Oppenheimer.

The Secretary will continue to read the resolution.

THE SECRETARY: "WHEREAS, March is Women's History Month; and

"WHEREAS, March 8th is International Women's Day; and

"WHEREAS, Each year, New York State officially sets aside time to recognize the unique and varied contributions that women

have made to New York and its society; and

"WHEREAS, New York has been the home of many extraordinary women who have led society to a better future; and

"WHEREAS, New York women like Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, were instrumental in leading the struggle for suffrage; and

"WHEREAS, In 1895, Carrie Clyde Holly, originally from New York City, and Clara Dressingham, from Brooklyn, were among two of the first three women elected to any state legislature in the nation, joining Frances Klock, from Massachusetts, in the Colorado legislature; and

"WHEREAS, in 1918, one year after New York guaranteed women the right to vote in all elections, the first two women, Ida Sammis and Mary Lilly, were elected to the New York State Legislature; and

"WHEREAS, Rhoda Fox Graves became the first woman to be elected to both houses of the New York State government, elected to the Assembly in 1924, for several terms, and

elected to the Senate in 1934, for 14 years; and

"WHEREAS, Rhoda Jacobs is the longest-serving woman in the New York State Legislature, 1979 to the present, and Earlene Hooper is the highest-ranking woman in the Assembly. As Deputy Speaker, she holds the highest leadership post ever held by a woman in the Assembly. And Ruth Hassell-Thompson is the highest-ranking woman in the Senate, as Chair of the Majority Conference; and

"WHEREAS, Since 1983, New York women legislators have worked through the bipartisan Women's Legislative Caucus to improve the representation and participation of women in all areas of government, support issues that affect women and families in New York State, and provide a network of support for the women in the State Legislature; and

"WHEREAS, Today, 52 women serve in the New York State Legislature, holding leadership positions in both houses and bringing the diverse experiences of women into

law and public policy; now, therefore, be it

"RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor David A. Paterson to proclaim March 2009 as Women's History Month in the State of New York, and to honor the women of New York State; and be it further

"RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Honorable David A. Paterson, Governor of the State of New York, and to the Legislative Women's Caucus of New York State."

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Senator Hassell-Thompson.

SENATOR HASSELL-THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President.

Women's History Month is a time when we can review and renew, admire and respect what has been accomplished by so many women over such a long period of time. Sadly, it is only fairly recently that we as a nation have come to pay tribute to these talented individuals who have fought and overcome discrimination and adversity. The fact that

as of 2009 the Equal Rights Amendment has yet to be passed shows that we still have a long way to go.

If we fail to acknowledge our gender's tremendous accomplishments, we harm future generations of women by limiting their access to this history.

I want to thank my colleague Senator Suzi Oppenheimer for this resolution and for acknowledging and making sure that we remember those women who have begun a path on which each of us now steps and treads. And I also want us to be mindful that we have a role to play -- not because our title is "Senator," but because we have been elected to carry on a tradition that was started before we got here.

I am very grateful to be recognized in this resolution. I found it very disconcerting that in 2001, when I was first elected, I was the first African-American woman ever to be elected in the Senate, from the borders of the Bronx to the Canadian border. But I am pleased to know that since that time we have continued to elect women of

color to this house, as well as to the Assembly, and to positions in this state where they can hold up their heads and hold up their share of the responsibility for making this the best state that it can be.

So I thank you, Suzi, and I thank all of you who are signing onto this resolution for your acknowledgment that women are coming -- finally -- into their own.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Hassell-Thompson.

Senator Young.

SENATOR YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to speak on this resolution. And I want to thank the sponsor for putting this in.

We all love New York State, and we are here because we love our districts and we are proud to represent New York State in the Legislature. One of the features that we all are aware of as Senators is the fact that New York State is steeped in history, with great historical figures, including women, and many of them are outlined in this resolution.

It's amazing that 24 years before women were given the right to vote nationally in this country, New York State was electing women to the Legislature. And it's important to recognize those women achievers.

We were one of the first areas of this country was that settled, and we've always had that pioneering spirit in New York State. And women have been strong and courageous, they've shown grit and determination, they've had groundbreaking achievements. And these are women who were not willing to accept the status quo.

Not only do we have all the strong women who are mentioned in this resolution -- and I know there are too many to recognize, but people like Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and so on -- but we also have had women Lieutenant Governors, and I especially want to point that out today. We had Mary Anne Krupsak, who served with Governor Cuomo; under Governor Pataki, we had Betsy McCaughey Ross and Mary Donohue. And they too were great women achievers, and we

need to recognize their accomplishments.

I also am proud to say that I have had women achievers from my district, historical figures. For example, the first elected woman town justice in New York State was in the Town of Poland, in Chautauqua County.

And I think, as we look around our individual districts, we can come up with names of women who have accomplished so much.

These women in our history in New York State have been role models for our daughters and our granddaughters and for generations to come. And it is incumbent on us as legislators to make sure that we are carrying on that tradition and that we are serving as role models and that we are breaking ground constantly to make New York State the best place that it can possibly be.

So again, thank you very much, Mr. President, for the opportunity to speak on this resolution.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Young.

Senator Little.

SENATOR LITTLE: Thank you, Mr. President.

I too appreciate the fact that we are recognizing Women's History Month and notable women who have served in New York State and who have served our country.

There is a saying, "You've come a long way, baby," and I think that we as women truly understand that saying. From when the first women were allowed to vote in the State of Colorado, until now -- and I have to note that as they voted in Colorado, there was one difference. Women were given pink ballots instead of white ballots. So I'm sure if there was a tie, the pink ballot counted just as much as the white ballot, don't you think?

But in 1919, we had the first two women who served in the Legislature, and both in the Assembly. Although they only served for one year, they certainly made their impact. Ida Sammis sponsored the first bill that passed by a woman, was the first woman-sponsored bill that passed the New York

State Legislature, and that was a bill that said in a position such as a retail clerk or an elevator operator, you must have a seat.

And we all know that when we had our elevators which were operated by people, before they all became automatic, there was a stool, a folding stool in those elevators. And the reason for that, and why she sponsored that bill, is most of these people were women, who as a retail clerk in a store stood all day, or as an elevator attendant stood all day. So that was a bill that lasted for a long time.

I have two daughters who I'm very proud of, and I'm very proud that they have had more opportunities than I had when I graduated from college. I graduated in the days when you could be a teacher, a nurse, or a secretary. So here I am. I was a teacher, though, momentarily, for a few years.

One of my daughter is a lawyer, and the other is a speech therapist. And I have seven granddaughters that I know are going to see many more opportunities presented to them.

There are still changes and changes taking place. I can still recall my eldest daughter in 1980, we were sitting at a parish council meeting, and the pastor was remarking that the young men were not showing up to be the altar servers. And as I saw her hand go up, I knew exactly what she was going to be talking about, even though she hadn't spoken to me about it.

And she asked our pastor, "Father, if you can't get the boys to serve as altar servers, why can't we have girls serve as altar servers?" Fortunately, today, you can.

And many, many changes have taken place in our lifetime. And so for that we have to thank the women who have gone before us, the women who are currently serving with us, and the women who will continue to make those changes in history, in our country, and in our state.

So thank you.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Little.

Senator Stavisky.

SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you, Mr. President.

I find it very interesting that we're remembering the past generations. Yesterday, when we nominated four Regents in the Assembly chamber, I spoke about how 225 years ago Alexander Hamilton, who had been a Regent, had started the Regents and how we have such a rich history. And it's certainly applicable today, with the passage of this resolution recalling the women who have contributed so much.

But let me say that -- and I say it as the first woman from Queens County elected to the State Senate. And I'm delighted that I am no longer the first woman, but we have two women now from Queens County. We have 52 women in the State Legislature, but think of it, only 10 in the State Senate. Only 10.

The resolution talks about how women have had an impact on what traditionally have been called women's issues. And I look forward to the day when all issues are women's issues, because women are affected by the

banking laws, by the criminal justice system, and by all of the laws, not just the so-called traditional women's issues.

And I think that the day will come and true equality will have been achieved when resolutions such as this are no longer introduced.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Stavisky.

Senator Stewart-Cousins.

SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Thank you, Mr. President.

I too rise to thank Senator Oppenheimer for putting this resolution on and allowing each of us the opportunity to remind each of us, and those who view us and hear us, of how far indeed we've come and yet how far we do need to go.

I remember when I walked into these chambers -- and I'm sure each of us in our own way are still humbled by the fact that we are here. But the thing that really captured my attention were the artist's renderings of what

the Senate looked like and how we were able as women, usually white women, to only view what happened on the floor from the gallery.

The pictures tell the story of gloved, bonneted women who could not dare walk on the floors of this chamber. And yet here we are, not only walking on the floors but leading the policy of the State of New York. Each woman here can rightfully say that they are a history-maker.

And as we go through our debates, we remember that not only are we history-makers, but we are here to continue to make positive and powerful history so that our daughters indeed will be able to take us the next step and the next step.

I recall the discussion we had yesterday about daycare and how easily the discussion about daycare flowed from our lips. But the reality was that but for Eleanor Roosevelt, the discussion wouldn't be had. Daycare is not inevitable, it wasn't something that always happened. It's something that happens now in our lives because we need to

work and we need to be able to take these leadership positions.

But the things that flow so easily from our lips we take for granted. And the reality is we've worked very hard, each and every one of us, our male partners as well, to make sure that we are at this moment and continue to progress.

So again, it is a pleasure, an honor, and a privilege to be here, not only because we have a role to play but because in recalling the steps that were made to get here, we can never, ever forget. And I say to all of the women in this Legislature and every legislature: March on, and let's continue to do very great things.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Stewart-Cousins.

Senator Savino.

SENATOR SAVINO: Thank you, Mr. President.

First let me thank Senator Oppenheimer for bringing this resolution. And then also let me express my gratitude to all

of the women members of this chamber, all of whom came here before I did, either in the Senate or in the Assembly or in some legislative office in their county.

Your work, your efforts, your willingness to put yourself forward and put your families at risk, sometimes, to do the good work of the public, made it possible for a girl like me from Astoria, who certainly never would have imagined serving in this chamber, to be able to run for office.

I also am a first, the first woman ever elected from Staten Island into the New York State Senate. I'm now the first woman ever to chair the Civil Service and Pensions Committee. But I don't take that that seriously, because I'm reminded of the words of another woman who was a first -- she was also a mentor to many of us in New York City -- former Councilwoman Mary Pinkett.

She was the former president of my union, and she went on to become the first woman and the first African-American woman elected to the New York City Council. And

everywhere she went, people would introduce her that way.

And when I first got elected as the vice president of that union, I had lunch with her one day. And she said, "Are you proud of yourself?" And I said, "Absolutely, Mary, I'm very proud of myself." And she said, "You should be." She said, "But let me give you some advice, young lady. It is not enough to be the first if you are going to be the only. You have an obligation to reach around behind you and be an example to other young women and other young people to do good work."

And I hope that I have lived up to that advice that Mary has given to me the way all of the women in this chamber have done.

And if Mary were with us today, she would say: Take a moment, pause, honor women, honor their role in government, their role in communities -- but don't forget that you have a lot of work to do. And she would tell us that even though we've come a long way, baby, 40 percent of the world's employment is made up of women, but they still earn 12 to

60 percent less than men, even in occupations like nursing and teaching. In the United States, women still earn 77.6 cents per dollar to men's hourly earnings. They make up 60 percent of the world's poor. They are concentrated in low-wage, unprotected, temporary or casual work. They often lack maternity protection. And they are often the victims of sexual violence and assault in the workplace.

So Mary would say: Congratulations for the work you've done, but don't for one minute think that our work is finished.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Savino.

Senator Nozzolio.

SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you, Mr. President. On the resolution.

Mr. President and my colleagues, it is a great honor for me to rise in support of this resolution and thank the speakers who have provided for this body and for the record of this house many of the concerns that they have regarding women's suffrage and women's

rights.

It must be unfathomable for the younger women viewing these proceedings that for over 150 years American women did not have the right to vote. That is an unconscionable blemish on our history.

But stated in the positive, it was two New York heroines, genuine American heroes, who worked together, virtually in collaboration, worked to change the laws of our nation so that women would be treated equally and that women would have the right to vote. Those two women were mentioned in this resolution, New Yorkers Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.

I rise with great pride in coming from the place where those two women worked the hardest and presented the messages that echoed with cannon fire across this nation.

That Elizabeth Cady Stanton did most of her work in Seneca Falls, New York. She was born in Senator Farley's territory, in the eastern part of this state, but worked tirelessly -- while raising a family -- had

the best partner you could possibly have in Susan B. Anthony, who traveled across New York and across this nation to encourage changing of our laws.

From 1848, where the first women's rights convention was conducted in Seneca Falls, New York, to 1919, when the constitutional amendment providing women the right to vote was finally enacted, was a tremendous struggle and a part of our history that we as New Yorkers, as Americans, need to be very proud of, the fact that those efforts were successful.

One of the parts of the resolution that I would like to emphasize, I believe an omission, that the first woman Lieutenant Governor in this state, Mary Anne Krupsak, was certainly a trailblazer, and one that should be certainly recognized along with other notable New Yorkers who succeeded to be the first women elected to important positions.

Mary Anne Krupsak, a former member of this house, one who became the first woman to serve as Lieutenant Governor, one who was

very influential in founding the "I Love New York" campaign, a campaign that was extremely, extremely important to the promotion of tourism in New York State.

Mary Anne is alive and well and living in the Finger Lakes region. And she is one who, giving so much to her state, is now giving so much to that region of the state which she has adopted as her home. And that I'm very proud to know her, to be the beneficiary of her great community support, because she's just been a stalwart to help the community.

When my parents -- I should say my father, and his mother and father, moved from Sparanise, Italy, to Seneca Falls, New York, they happened to move next door to the very house where Elizabeth Cady Stanton lived.

And I'll share this thought as I conclude, to say that Elizabeth Cady Stanton's quest was a quest for women's rights, but it also was a quest for human rights.

And I'll never forget when my grandmother pointed out this historical marker

that stood in front of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's house, just right next door to her home. And I asked Grandma Tina what was that all about, and she said it was, in her broken English, that "Because of the woman who lived here, I have the right to vote." A right that she absorbed as an American citizen, a right that she did not have as a citizen of the country of Italy where she was born.

This, Mr. President and my colleagues, is a day of celebration, and I'm just very glad to be part of this body to be part of the celebration too. Thank you.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Nozzolio.

Senator Adams.

SENATOR ADAMS: Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank Senator Nozzolio as we both take an opportunity to acknowledge some of the achievements and some of the recognitions of "herstory." Clearly this is Herstory Month, where we have an opportunity to see some of the great things that women have done. And I

think that oftentimes when we take this opportunity, we look at some of the stars that are notable to all of us without realizing, as I often say, that there's a large number of costars that go unmentioned and unacknowledged.

Long before Obama said "Yes, we can," there was a mother that nurtured and groomed him and inspired him to say he could. Long before Malcolm Smith took over here as the Majority Leader, there was a mother and a sister that told him that he could one day become a leader in the Senate. Long before Larkin was a colonel in the service and what he has done during the Civil Rights Era, there was a mother that inspired him.

And all of us, when we think about who we are and what we are, as Senator Nozzolio mentioned what his grandmother said to him, there are little words of encouragement, little sayings, little things that were whispered to us by just everyday women doing extraordinary things.

And so it is fine to look at some

of the great stars of the era, but we have to look at the everyday soccer moms, we have to look at the everyday troop leaders in the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, the everyday teachers that walk in the classroom -- not paid enough, but enough to find another dime, another nickel to pay for a child to be able to read and write -- the everyday doctor, nurse. So it's everyday people.

The great history is ensuring that we team together to state that no woman should have to press her face up against the glass and watch only men sit down at the table of inclusion. As partners, we can press ourselves up against the door of exclusion and ensure that it remains open with our energy and our compassion to make sure that America is great for all groups.

So although we pause in this month of Herstory, I think that our pauses should recognize not only those women that we know about because we read about or heard about or we saw. We need to take a moment to pause and just look at these women that sit here every

day to make sure that we go on with our daily Journal, the women that take our photographs and make sure that we can see what we do in the Senate chamber, the women that type on that stenograph machine to make sure that our words are recorded, the women that sit on the back here, these young ladies that are interns that are future Senators and future leaders in the Senate, the women that are attorneys that sit in the corner and make sure that we shine.

Anybody can acknowledge Helen Keller. Anybody can acknowledge the first and the second. Anybody can talk about those that everybody knows. But how many of us can realize that we remove all of these women out of our existence, our lives and our jobs would be extremely difficult?

So if we truly want to recognize Herstory Month, we will pause and look at all of these women and change the dynamics on all their levels. Because each level we have to view life, everything from going to the ladies' room and not having enough facilities as in men's facilities, everything from

permitting men to go in to take photographs and record people in sports arenas, everything from construction jobs -- we must look at every dynamic of our country and our state and redefine are we women-friendly. And I say no, we are not.

And so merely taking the month of March to recognize herstory is just a reminder of how far we have to go. I'm encouraged. And I believe that those who stood and spoke are encouraged. And together we can press our shoulders up against the door of exclusion and ensure that women are included in every dynamic of our society.

Thank you.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Adams.

Senator Flanagan.

SENATOR FLANAGAN: Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to take a slightly different tack. I walked in and listened to the comments from Senator Oppenheimer when I first got in here. And my father had the

opportunity to serve in the New York State Assembly from 1972 to 1986, and he enjoyed a terrific career over there. And he was someone who promoted women at every turn, at every corner, at every instance. He was way out in front.

And some of my colleagues -- I think Senator Larkin, Senator Nozzolio, some of the members who were in the Assembly at the time -- would remember in 1986 he went to then Speaker Stanley Fink, got funding for a women's conference, and put together, as a minority Assembly Republican, a full conference on women who had served in government. And it was a profile of all the women who had served in the New York State Legislature, from Ida Sammis and Mary Lilly forward.

And it was fabulous, because even though I was not directly involved at the time, I remember how important this was to him and, even more important, how incredibly valuable it was to all those women who got that recognition at the time.

And obviously we've come a long way since 1986. But I would also add that when you listen to these stories, Ida Sammis -- I come from the town of Huntington, share that territory with Senator Marcellino. I live in the town of Huntington. So, yeah, I'm like a little kid, it's pretty cool that one of the first women came right from the town that I'm fortunate enough to represent.

And my father was also a historian about New York State government and wrote some New York State history, one of which is -- and I would be happy to provide it to anyone who wants to read it -- an essay about Ida Sammis called "The Woman of the House."

And my friend Senator Lanza will appreciate this, because we were talking about it. To show you how far we've come even in little ways, at the time that Ida Sammis was first elected to the Assembly, every desk had a spittoon right next to the seat. So being the lady that she was -- you know, most of the men, of course, were doing things like smoking and spitting and all those terrible things we

don't do in here anymore, but she somehow made her mark initially by turning her spittoon into a -- what is the word I'm looking for? That's where she put flowers in it. A vase, thank you. And distinguished herself immediately by a subtle thing just like that.

So there is a rich history, and Women's History Month is obviously something to be celebrated. Thank you.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Flanagan.

Senator Farley.

SENATOR FARLEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

I rise to pay tribute to one of the most remarkable women that I ever knew, my mother, who was a suffragette. I don't think there's anybody in this room whose mother was a suffragette. I have a picture of her marching in Watertown, with a sash -- she was 17 or 18 years of age -- so that women could have a right to vote.

And you know, it was interesting, she was the oldest and only daughter, with

eight little brothers. Always wanted a daughter, and ended up with six sons, me being one at the tail end. But somebody that was always interested in women's rights, somebody that was always interested in public affairs, perhaps got me interested in it, followed this. A remarkable woman, a concert pianist, a nationally ranked amateur tennis player, and somebody that really made a difference in a lot of people's lives.

You know, back in her day, as it was mentioned earlier, women's opportunities were terribly limited. And as a matter of fact, she came from a rather prominent family whose sons were all sent off to be highly educated, and she was not. And I think she somewhat resented that and consequently was very, very education-oriented.

There are a lot of remarkable women who will not make posters. And I imagine that everybody that is seated here has a mother that really deserves to be up there on that poster as a Woman of Distinction. I certainly know that my mother was a woman of

distinction, and I so nominated her.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Farley.

Senator Krueger.

SENATOR LIZ KRUEGER: Thank you.

Well, we've talked about women in the Legislature and women's history. We're 51 percent of the population. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony made sure we got our right to vote. And if they were here today, they would say we're not done yet. They would say, in terms of the 21st century, just talking about that we got the right to vote is an unacceptable discussion. Because in fact what they were talking about, for their time, was equality, equality across the board. Equal rights in business, in government, in the home, in the workplace, in society. And we haven't gotten there yet.

Now, I think it's important to talk about women today because I think it's important to talk about equal rights every day. Recently someone had passed to me some kind of resolution about calling for Women's

Equality Day. Well, you know what, I want it 365 days a year. I want it for every woman. And I know that every man in this room wants it for every woman too. Because women's equality is men's equality. Because, as so many of my colleagues said, they all have mothers, sisters, wives, daughters. And so they know that no issue is a woman's issue; every issue is a men's issue and a women's issue.

So, you know, Emma Goldman was a great woman in history, and she fought for equal rights in the workplace and equal pay, and we're still not there. So I know, after today's discussions, that when we bring equal-pay bills to the floor of the New York State Senate, all 62 members are going to sign it and support it.

And I know that we care about women's health. And so when Margaret Sanger fought for women's reproductive rights, we're still not there. And based on what I heard today, every member of the Senate supports women's health rights and women's reproductive

rights, so that Margaret Sanger would be proud of us all today.

And only recently, thanks to the U.S. Congress, we addressed a fundamental issue of inequality and equal pay for women when the Lily Ledbetter case was decided wrongly by the Supreme Court and then fixed by Congress, recognizing that women in our society will not get paid less than men, that that is not acceptable, and if you catch somebody paying them less, you can go after them for it. Because your daughters deserve equal pay, your daughters deserve equal recognition in our society.

So whether it's equal money for women in sports, equal assurance of civil liberties and civil rights, equal opportunities in academia, in business, in medicine, in law, in government, we all believe in that. Because again, it's the 21st century, and just remembering the history of women's right to vote is not enough.

This is a human rights issue, it's a civil rights issue. In our country, we

believe in equal rights for everyone. Someone pointed out 10 women Senators, 62 members of the State Senate. The great history of New York State is being eroded.

You know, we used to be the first state in the country for proportional representation of women in elected office. We have actually been losing ground. There are fewer women in elected office today than there were 20 years ago, an important lesson for us to remember.

We can't sit on the laurels of our history. We're not there yet. As several said, we've come a long way, baby. Not far enough. Fifty-one percent of the population is women, and we need to make sure that women have equal treatment in every way, every day.

So I thank Suzi Oppenheimer for her resolution. I thank all my colleagues, men and women, for standing up on the floor of the Senate today and saying yes, we're going to make sure there are equal rights for women.

And as I teach in a youth civics program that I give each year, if you think

that you met your assignment of civic participation in the United States of America because you registered to vote and you went out to vote, you misunderstand the assignment. The assignment is much, much larger than using your right to vote or voting. It is making sure that every day you hold your government accountable to stand up for equal rights and treatment, and in your own life you ask the question every day: What am I doing to make our country better, our world better, fairer, more equal? And that includes making sure that women's rights are everyone's rights.

So again, I'm very glad we're having this day, this recognition of women's history. And I challenge you all to take this more than as simply a historical discussion. This is a discussion about our current time and our future, and we haven't finished the assignment.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Krueger.

Are there any other Senators

wishing to be heard?

Senator Montgomery.

SENATOR MONTGOMERY: Yes, thank you, Mr. President.

I want to rise and thank my colleague Senator Oppenheimer for introducing this resolution, and also for my colleagues for speaking so positively on this, what is, as Senator Hassell-Thompson has said, an opportunity to reflect and remember and to contemplate where we're going, especially as women, but as people too.

I want to pay particular tribute to certainly First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who is a New Yorker, was a New Yorker. And she was a woman who had such conviction and courage, she went and joined for a meeting and got up on a plane with one of the Tuskegee Airmen at a point when that was very politically incorrect to do.

And I also want to pay tribute to a woman who was a hero of mine, Fannie Lou Hamer, who was actually beaten to death in a jail in Mississippi because she was fighting

for the right to vote. She was fighting for the civil rights of African-Americans in this country, and she died, she was beaten to death for that purpose.

And I want to pay tribute to Bella Abzug, who was a woman who wore these huge hats. She was the Hat Woman. And I loved Bella because in any crowd I could see her by her hats. And she would be flying through the crowd, and it didn't matter who got in her way -- she would knock anybody out of the path, because her mission was to empower women in this country.

So these are tremendously important symbols of women and what we represent and have represented. And I use these in particular because I want the young women who look at us right now and say, Oh, how far we've come, but I also want these young women to know that it's how much we fought for where we are and how much we have given up, the sacrifices that we've made.

And we still make them. We are still not quite there. And getting there is

to struggle and to give up some things of comfort that women should be able to expect but cannot always do so. That's what those women gave up, including their lives.

I remember Shirley Chisholm and the struggle that she had. And it's very interesting that women did not support Shirley Chisholm, necessarily, as many of us did not support Martin Luther King, necessarily, until he was dead. Nor did we support Malcolm X, and so forth and so on.

So when you look around and you don't always have all of your troops behind you, when you are going against the wind as women, keep going. Because you're not walking for yourself alone. You're walking for the generations that come behind you. And remember, never forget -- certainly I try never to -- never forget those women who have given so much to get us to this point that we should sit down and just be comfortable. We have to keep moving forward.

And I thank my colleagues for standing up to recognize this month and to

recognize us as we are here. And I want to certainly pass that on to the next generation of women who are going to take our places and go so much further, carry the torch so much further than we have.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Montgomery.

Senator Larkin.

SENATOR LARKIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

And it is an honor to rise and pay tribute to the women, not just of this legislative body, but to the women of the world.

You know, I have been listening very carefully here. I haven't heard anybody talk about the accomplishments a lot of women have made to our armed forces. Some of you probably don't know, just two weeks the first four-star general was appointed, a female, who commands the materiel command which provides all of the service to the Army.

Heads of agencies that do health,

that do science, space. How about the women that have been in space? Nobody mentioned them. They were pioneers. They were some people who saw something that had to be done, and they did it. They weren't looking at something.

Some of you heard John Flanagan talk about his dad. When he put that conference together, people looked at him as if he had three eyes. But John Flanagan, Sr., knew that this was something that had to be done.

So think about it for a minute. There's a Coast Guard vessel over in the China Sea right now commanded by a female. Jacob Javits, former United States Senator of New York, Lord have mercy on his soul, was the man that pushed on to allow women into the service academies. Never had been done until Javits did it. Class of '80.

And I'm sure that our distinguished presiding officer today's brother can tell him the stories of some dedicated people that he saw in combat, our MASH hospitals, which are

right next to the battle line, all of those doctors, nursing services, females. Something that we never had before.

But just think of how fortunate we are. I don't know how many of you have daughters, but I do. I have a daughter who's a professor at a college. When I was growing up, there would have been no woman as president of a college, no woman a department head. Probably the best job, as Betty Little had said earlier, they could have been one of the secretaries. But just think about what we're saying.

I would like to bring up another woman's name. How about Rosa Parks? Did anybody say anything about her today? In my mind, having been the Army's project officer for the march from Selma to Montgomery, I recognized the impact that she had. In my opinion, if there wasn't a Rosa Parks, there probably would have been no big explosion of thoughts with regard to Dr. King. Because Rosa Parks got on that bus, and the man said to her, "Go to the rear," and she said: "No,

I've worked 12 hours today, I'm finished. And I'm sitting right here."

What did she do for the women of the world? She set a tone of what she thought was right. And we should be talking about people like her.

And we should be talking about some of those young women. A month and a half ago I was at Walter Reed Army Hospital, and I visited with the wounded warriors. I met a woman who lost both her legs. She was a chopper pilot. And trying to relate with what she was going through and my own previous experience in combat, the gentleman that was with me asked her, "And what do you think about service?" She said, "I'm an Army aviator, I'm an Army captain, and I want to go back to Iraq."

And I said to her, "Why?" She said, "I lost something over there." I was embarrassed to look down, because she had two limbs hanging there. She said, "I want to get the guy that shot my plane down."

That was an American woman who had

pride in what she did. And we sometimes forget, we always look for the big heroes instead of some of them.

We all know what happened to the flight of one of the shots to the moon. When the vehicle went down, we lost a woman. But we forget those. We all talk about someone who became a mighty big hero. And, you know, we don't have to look far. Every one of us can look in here to our family -- our wives, our mothers, our aunts, our nieces, our daughters.

But I think sometimes we'd better start to think about some of the women who've actually done something to make this country great. I'm very proud to stand up for all of those women that I know and all of those women that served in the armed forces. They've served in roles in combat, the MASH hospitals. If it wasn't for those dedicated people, a lot of people who were wounded and have survived, were it not for them, they would never have made it.

I think we need to take a moment

today, when this oratorical contest is finished, and start to think about what contributions women have made in our society and our history.

And I thank all of the women here who stood up here and said "I will run for public office," because they made a decision to do something to improve the quality of life by serving. And I thank you all.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Colonel -- or, excuse me, Senator Larkin.

Senator Perkins.

SENATOR PERKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to be brief.

First, I just want to just thank Suzi Oppenheimer for this resolution. And in fact, I want to thank all of the women on both sides of the aisle, on behalf of my daughters and granddaughters, for the role that you play, whether you realize it or not, in their lives beyond our family by virtue of what you do as Senators, whether you're a Democrat or even Republican.

And I also just want to remember Shirley Chisholm amongst those women or leaders, more importantly, that we can thank for Barack Obama. Because as we all remember, it was her trailblazing candidacy as a Congresswoman running for President in 1972 that began to set in motion that there would be someone black eventually to represent this nation.

And he built his candidacy on the trail that she blazed. And obviously we're all grateful for his election, and we want to make sure that Shirley Chisholm and all those women -- including my grandmother, who was the matriarch of my family that I can give direct credit for my presence today.

So I want to thank Suzi for this opportunity for us to reflect and to recommit to the roles that women have played in our lives and the future that women will continue to contribute to our individual lives, to our city, to our state, to our families, to our country.

Thank you.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Perkins.

The question is on the resolution. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: The resolution is adopted.

At the request of the sponsor, the resolution is open for multisponsorship. Anyone not wishing to be on the resolution please notify the desk.

Senator Klein.

SENATOR KLEIN: Mr. President, may we now move to a reading of the calendar.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 80, by Senator Klein, Senate Print 1904, an act to amend the Executive Law, in relation to maximum age.

SENATOR KLEIN: Please lay that

bill aside for the day.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: The bill is laid aside for the day.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 81, by Member of the Assembly Pretlow, Assembly Print Number 4750A, an act to repeal Sections 22, 23 and 24 of Chapter 115 of the Laws of 2008.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Read the last section.

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

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 85, by Senator Seward, Senate Print 178, an act to amend the Judiciary Law, in relation to the seal of Cortland County.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Read the

last section.

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

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: The bill is passed.

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

SENATOR KLEIN: Mr. President, can we please recognize Senator Hassell-Thompson for an announcement.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Senator Hassell-Thompson.

SENATOR HASSELL-THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President.

I wish to announce that immediately following session today there will be a Majority conference in Room 332, immediately following the close of session.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Thank you, Senator Hassell-Thompson.

Senator Libous.

SENATOR LIBOUS: Thank you, Mr. President.

I would also like to announce that in Room 315 there will be an immediate Republican conference.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: Senator Klein.

SENATOR KLEIN: Mr. President, is there any further business at the desk?

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: No, Senator Klein, there is not. The desk is clear.

SENATOR KLEIN: There being none, I move that we adjourn until Thursday, March 12th, at 11:00 a.m.

ACTING SENATOR BRESLIN: There being no further business before the Senate, on motion, the Senate stands adjourned until Thursday, March 12th, at 11:00 a.m.

(Whereupon, at 4:26 p.m., the Senate adjourned.)