

1 NEW YORK STATE SENATE

2
3
4 THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

5
6
7
8 ALBANY, NEW YORK

9 January 10, 2012

10 10:12 a.m.

11
12
13
14 REGULAR SESSION

15
16
17
18 SENATOR JOSEPH A. GRIFFO, Acting President

19 FRANCIS W. PATIENCE, Secretary

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

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

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

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

10 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: In
11 the absence of clergy, I ask everyone to bow
12 their heads for a moment of silent
13 reflection.

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

16 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
17 reading of the Journal.

18 THE SECRETARY: In Senate,
19 Monday, January 9th, the Senate met pursuant
20 to adjournment. The Journal of Sunday,
21 January 8th, was read and approved. On
22 motion, Senate adjourned.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
24 Without objection, the Journal stands
25 approved as read.

1 Presentation of petitions.
2 Messages from the Assembly.
3 Messages from the Governor.
4 Reports of standing committees.
5 Reports of select committees.
6 Communications and reports from
7 state officers.
8 Motions and resolutions.
9 Senator Libous.
10 SENATOR LIBOUS: Mr. President,
11 on behalf of Senator Saland, on page 6 I
12 offer the following amendments to Calendar
13 Number 14, Senate Print 6116, and ask that
14 said bill retain its place on the Third
15 Reading Calendar, please.
16 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: So
17 ordered.
18 Senator Libous.
19 SENATOR LIBOUS: Thank you,
20 Mr. President.
21 At this time could we please
22 adopt the Resolution Calendar, with the
23 exception of Resolution Numbers 2801, 2883,
24 2884 and 2902.
25 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: At

1 this time I would ask that all in favor of
2 adopting the Resolution Calendar, with the
3 exceptions of Resolution 2801, 2883, 2884,
4 and 2902, signify by saying aye.

5 (Response of "Aye.")

6 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:

7 Opposed?

8 (No response.)

9 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
10 Resolution Calendar is adopted.

11 Senator Libous.

12 SENATOR LIBOUS: Mr. President,
13 I believe there is a resolution at the desk
14 by Senator Golden. I would ask that it be
15 read in its entirety and then we move for its
16 adoption, please.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
18 Secretary will read.

19 THE SECRETARY: Legislative
20 Resolution Number 2884, by Senator Golden,
21 mourning the death of Christopher J. Mega,
22 highly respected politician, distinguished
23 citizen and devoted member of his community.

24 "WHEREAS, It is the custom of
25 this Legislative Body to pay tribute to

1 public servants of the State of New York
2 whose lifework and civic endeavor served to
3 enhance the quality of life in their
4 communities and this great Empire State; and

5 "WHEREAS, Christopher J. Mega, a
6 former New York State Senator, Assemblyman
7 and State Judge who was well-known for his
8 prolific career, work ethic, and omnipresence
9 at community events, died on Sunday,
10 October 30, 2011, at his home in Saratoga
11 Springs, New York, at the age of 80; and

12 "WHEREAS, A graduate of Fort
13 Hamilton High School, Christopher J. Mega
14 continued his education and studied at
15 St. Francis College before attending Brooklyn
16 Law School; and

17 "WHEREAS, His first job was as
18 an attorney at a Fifth Avenue law firm, where
19 he was a partner. In 1973, he ran for an
20 open seat in the 50th New York State Assembly
21 District during a special election, a seat he
22 held until 1978. He then ran and won his
23 first New York State Senate seat,
24 representing Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, and
25 Sunset Park, from 1979 to 1982 and then from

1 1985 to 1993, when he became a judge; and

2 "WHEREAS, He served as chairman
3 of the State Senate's Crime and Correction
4 Committee during efforts to ban the sale of
5 serial killer trading cards being sold in
6 stores; and

7 "WHEREAS, He also became
8 chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee,
9 where in the early 1990s he worked to expand
10 state prisons to accommodate the huge influx
11 of inmates convicted on crack-related
12 charges. Furthermore, he was an advocate for
13 tougher sentences for convicted sex
14 offenders; and

15 "WHEREAS, Senator Christopher J.
16 Mega helped bring pre-kindergarten programs
17 to his district and sponsored the bill that
18 required restaurants to display posters
19 showing Heimlich maneuver instructions in
20 their eateries; and

21 "WHEREAS, In 1993, Christopher
22 J. Mega attained his ultimate career goal; he
23 was appointed to the New York Court of
24 Claims. And in 1995 he was elevated to Chief
25 Judge of the State Court of Claims, a panel

1 that hears lawsuits filed against the State
2 of New York. He served in this capacity
3 until stepping down in 1998. He was then
4 appointed to the New York Supreme Court,
5 serving until his retirement in 2006; and

6 "WHEREAS, With a strong belief
7 in his community, Christopher J. Mega donated
8 his time and energies to numerous civic and
9 charitable organizations, such as the Dyker
10 Heights Civic Association and the Bay Ridge
11 Lions Club; and

12 "WHEREAS, Christopher J. Mega is
13 survived by his loving wife, Madelyn; twin
14 sons, Christopher and Jeffrey; and two
15 daughters, Valerie and Jacqueline, as well as
16 his grandchildren; and

17 "WHEREAS, The legacy of
18 Christopher J. Mega will long serve as a
19 model of integrity and devotion to public
20 service, and it is now the intent of this
21 Legislative Body to inscribe upon its records
22 this somber and grateful tribute to his
23 memory, hopeful that future generations may
24 understand and appreciate the benevolence of
25 the man, the merit of his causes, and the

1 caliber of his service to all the citizens of
2 the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

3 "RESOLVED, That this Legislative
4 Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the
5 death of Christopher J. Mega, highly
6 respected politician, distinguished citizen,
7 and devoted member of his community, and to
8 express its deepest condolences to his
9 family; and be it further

10 "RESOLVED, That a copy of this
11 resolution, suitably engrossed, be
12 transmitted to the family of Christopher J.
13 Mega."

14 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
15 Senator Golden.

16 SENATOR GOLDEN: Thank you,
17 Mr. President.

18 I rise today to introduce this
19 resolution and to remember the life of one
20 who served the New York State Senate, to
21 posthumously honor the late Christopher J.
22 Mega, a man who I was so privileged to have
23 known and worked with for so many years.

24 Chris Mega, a former New York
25 State Senator, Assemblyman, State Judge, died

1 this past fall. With his death, the state
2 lost a giant, a true public servant, a man
3 who, like no other, served the people of
4 Brooklyn, New York City, and the Empire State
5 with dignity and goodwill.

6 Chris is survived by his wife,
7 Madelyn, of 59 years. Their twin sons, Chris
8 and Jeffrey, and their daughter Jacqueline
9 could not be here today, but we're joined by
10 their daughter Valerie and their
11 granddaughter Victoria. And that was so much
12 to Chris Mega, was that granddaughter and the
13 grandchildren.

14 And to the Mega family, I say
15 welcome back to the New York State Senate.

16 Today I proudly offer this
17 tribute to remember the good works and the
18 extraordinary record in public service of the
19 one and only Chris Mega.

20 Chris Mega was a man who did so
21 much for the community that he lived in and
22 represented, and for two of the three
23 branches of state government, the judiciary
24 and the legislative.

25 The people who were represented

1 by Chris Mega were very lucky. They had one
2 of the best legislators I have ever known, a
3 man who truly gave it his all. If you called
4 upon Chris to help you, he tried everything
5 possible to make sure you got the assistance
6 that was necessary. And when Chris Mega sat
7 on the bench, he was an honest jurist and
8 truly believed in the Constitution and
9 dedicated himself to the practice of the good
10 of the law.

11 Personally, I will never forget
12 Chris Mega. He taught me an awful lot. He
13 said to me: "People want to see you, to be
14 part of you, and to know that you're going
15 respond to their needs." I have never
16 forgotten those words, and I continue to live
17 by those words today.

18 Nobody ever had a bad word to
19 say about Chris Mega. But I tell you, when
20 he walked down that avenue, on Fifth Avenue
21 or Third Avenue or Thirteenth Avenue in the
22 Bay Ridge and Dyker Heights area, they knew
23 Chris Mega was on that street. He had a
24 smile from ear to ear. And when the people
25 would walk up, they'd say, "Senator, Senator

1 Chris Mega, how are you today?" And he'd
2 throw his hand out there and he'd shake their
3 hands.

4 He stayed in great shape, too.
5 I don't know who sat next to him, but the guy
6 used to do like 50 pushups every morning and
7 at night. And he'd love to give you a little
8 shot in the arm or a shot in the chest just
9 to let you know that he was there.

10 He was truly a great leader. He
11 brought a lot to our community. He did a lot
12 for our community besides pre-K and all the
13 other good things that were discussed here in
14 the resolution.

15 That was the real tough years in
16 the City and the State of New York. In 1991,
17 1992, 1993, we were having homicides at over
18 2,000 a year. And it was Chris Mega that
19 said and came up with the policy we've got to
20 come in with some money, we've got to get the
21 police, we have to get more overtime, we have
22 to get that police department working and
23 give them those resources to bring that crime
24 down.

25 And he, along with the good

1 mayor and the good police commissioner, were
2 able to put a policy together that was able
3 to bring down at that point -- just as Rudy
4 Giuliani started as the mayor of the City of
5 New York, the new SOP, standard operating
6 procedure, for bringing down crime not only
7 in the city and the state but around the
8 nation and the world.

9 Upon his death he was described
10 in the local media and reports by former
11 colleagues in government by phrases such as
12 "very decent guy," "forthright, honest and
13 industrious," "the perfect elected
14 politician," "a gentleman's gentleman." The
15 definition of integrity was Chris Mega.

16 For all that Chris Mega did for
17 the people of Brooklyn and for the people of
18 the State of New York, I urge the passage of
19 this resolution. He was truly a giant, truly
20 a great man, and truly accomplished an awful
21 lot in his life, not just for his family and
22 for his community but for the city and the
23 state as well.

24 Today we remember a statesman
25 who answered the call to public service, and

1 for that we are all better off.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:

3 Senator Farley.

4 SENATOR FARLEY: Thank you,
5 Mr. President.

6 I rise to speak about a Senator and
7 a friend of mine that our careers crossed the
8 same time.

9 And he was a dear friend of mine
10 and actually a roommate and a very dear
11 friend of the late Senator Charlie Cook.
12 They lived together, both coming from
13 different backgrounds, but -- and I used to
14 go out to dinner with them a lot,
15 particularly when we had all these late-night
16 sessions and so forth, and we went to the
17 finest diners and truck stops in the area.
18 Chris was not a man of pretensions.

19 And his wife Madelyn told me I
20 should tell this story. He wasn't much of a
21 connoisseur of jewelry, but there was a
22 jewelry store that was going out of business
23 down here in downtown Albany. And it was
24 just before Christmas, and Charlie Cook and I
25 were waiting for him at Jack's.

1 And he went into I think it was
2 Adels-Lobe and said, "Do you take credit
3 cards?" And they said yes. He says, "I'd
4 like to see some pearls and some diamond
5 earrings." Well, they pull out the pearls,
6 he says "How much are those?" They said
7 "Eight-fifty." He says, "Could I see
8 something a little better?" And they pulled
9 out another one. "How much are those?"
10 "Nineteen-ninety-five."

11 He says, "I'd like to see some
12 diamond earrings." And they showed him these
13 diamonds. "How much are those diamond
14 earrings?" They said "\$800." He says,
15 "Well, I'll skip the diamond earrings." And
16 he says, "I'll just take the pearls." And he
17 pulled out a \$20 bill.

18 (Laughter.)

19 SENATOR FARLEY: Needless to
20 say, he said, "I had to schlep out of the
21 place."

22 But Chris also had a great sense
23 of humor. And his bride of almost six
24 decades, I'll tell you, what a remarkable
25 woman. And, you know, for anybody that's in

1 public service -- and he served it all -- you
2 have to give credit to the family. And they
3 were so proud of him, and he was so proud of
4 his family.

5 They live now -- Madelyn and he
6 in his last few years lived up in Wilton, in
7 my district, where Roy McDonald came from
8 originally. And we're just delighted to be
9 able to pay tribute to not only a great
10 Assemblyman and a great Senator and a great
11 judge, but, more important, a great human
12 being. That was Chris Mega.

13 Thank you, Mr. President.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
15 Senator LaValle.

16 SENATOR LaVALLE: Thank you,
17 Mr. President.

18 Senator Golden said Chris Mega
19 was a giant, and indeed he was. He left an
20 imprint here in the Senate. He was an
21 institutional guy. The Senate meant a lot to
22 him, and how the Senate performed was very
23 critically important. As a matter of fact,
24 he headed the Senate Club for a number of
25 years.

1 His demeanor, quiet but
2 effective. He was honest, he was -- I think
3 Senator Golden just laid out all the
4 adjectives. And he was all of those things.

5 He started rooming with Charlie
6 Cook, and they became a famous odd couple,
7 upstate-downstate. And, well, maybe that
8 doesn't mean a lot to people. It does,
9 because it shows that people from various
10 parts of the state can get along, can be
11 effective, can do good government and still
12 be friends.

13 So I remember when the
14 opportunity came for Chris to go to the
15 bench, he was very conflicted, because being
16 in the Senate, being a Senator meant a lot to
17 him. He carried on on the bench in the same
18 effective way that he did here in this
19 chamber.

20 So, Senator Golden, your remarks
21 for history portray Senator Chris Mega very
22 accurately, and I'm sure the family in
23 perpetuity will be able to see those remarks
24 defining a real giant in our state.

25 Thank you, Mr. President.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:

2 Senator Libous.

3 SENATOR LIBOUS: Thank you,
4 Mr. President.

5 I rise with my colleagues to
6 honor a great public servant in Chris Mega.
7 When I got elected in 1988, I was 33 years
8 old. I came to this chamber and Chris right
9 away called me "kid," "Libous kid."

10 And he had a quiet but very
11 forceful way about him. When he wanted to
12 get something done, you knew he was in the
13 room. Otherwise, he would listen. He'd sit
14 on this floor in the chamber, he'd listen.
15 He'd be very respectful to each colleague
16 that was here.

17 And I learned something from
18 that. I learned from Chris Mega that when
19 your colleagues were speaking or debating
20 that you keep your mouth shut and your ears
21 open. And although you may disagree with
22 them, you have to be respectful to them. And
23 that's -- probably "respectful" is the word
24 that I can think of the most.

25 I can tell you that my left arm

1 in conference could get sore because I'd get
2 that punch that -- I think Mrs. Mega just
3 smiled and could understand. Because he
4 always would do that, he'd come up to me and
5 say, "Hey, Libous kid, how are you?" And
6 he'd give me that rap on the shoulder and I'd
7 kind of just smile and walk away like it
8 didn't hurt, but it hurt. He was a tough
9 guy.

10 He was a giant among us, and he
11 will be missed. And he left an impression on
12 my life that I will always be grateful for.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
14 Senator Larkin.

15 SENATOR LARKIN: Thank you very
16 much, Mr. President.

17 You know, if you met Chris,
18 you'd never forget him. If you met him today
19 and didn't see him for 10 years, you'd know
20 him.

21 Of course I was always under the
22 impression that he and Charlie Cook were
23 brothers, because wherever you saw one, you
24 saw the other.

25 And one day we were talking here

1 about armed services. And he said, "How long
2 have you served?" I said, "23 and a half
3 years, and retired as a colonel." He said,
4 "Gee, pretty soon you'll be as important as
5 my son. He's a Marine pilot." And I was
6 just like, wow, 23 years and he's going to
7 kick me like that.

8 Chris had so much respect for
9 this chamber and for the armed forces. One
10 day he said to me, "How often do you go by
11 West Point?" I said, "It's in my district.
12 Quite a lot, because I'm retired." He said,
13 "You know, we're going home someday, I want
14 to stop and I want to go to this cemetery."
15 And I said, "You know, you're going to use a
16 couple of hours. He said, "For what they
17 gave?"

18 We stopped, we went in the
19 little, little chapel at the cemetery and we
20 walked around someplace. And we were
21 finished, and he was crying. He said, "Do
22 you know, Bill, the names there, many people
23 don't know anything about them. But the
24 soldiers, both officers and enlisted, that
25 walk through here, remember some of these men

1 as the great leaders."

2 If you think about Chris -- I
3 remember when he was going to the bench. I
4 don't really think he wanted to go to the
5 bench, because this was his home. Anybody
6 who didn't respect Chris Mega had their hat
7 on the wrong way. Chris was a gentleman, he
8 was a leader, respected. And I think his
9 love and respect for the armed forces was
10 second to none.

11 You had a great husband.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: I
13 want to acknowledge today the presence of the
14 Mega family. Senator Mega's wife Madelyn is
15 with us, his daughter Valerie Racchuia, his
16 son-in-law Joe Racchuia and granddaughter
17 Victoria Racchuia.

18 I now will call the question on
19 the resolution. All in favor of the
20 resolution signify by saying aye.

21 (Response of "Aye.")

22 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:

23 Opposed?

24 (No response.)

25 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The

1 resolution is adopted.

2 I would ask all to please rise
3 and pay a moment of silent tribute to the
4 late Senator Christopher Mega.

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

7 (Sustained applause.)

8 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
9 Senator Libous.

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

12 Mr. President, before we go on
13 to the next resolution, I believe there was a
14 resolution that passed on the calendar that
15 Senator Stavisky would like to make a comment
16 on. Could you please call on her, please?

17 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Yes.
18 Senator Stavisky to speak on Resolution 2844.

19 SENATOR STAVISKY: Yes, thank
20 you, Mr. President. And thank you, Senator
21 Libous, for your courtesies.

22 Let me just say that I am proud
23 to represent more than 100,000
24 Asian-Americans who live in the 16th Senate
25 District. And together as a community, we're

1 going to be celebrating the Year of the
2 Dragon this year. And the Year of the
3 Dragon, it's the year 4017, I believe.

4 The Year of the Dragon
5 symbolizes a great many things to the
6 Asian-American community, and particularly --
7 it's 4710. And that's a long tradition
8 representing an amazing culture. And yet
9 even today we come together and celebrate
10 with all sorts of ceremonies. And
11 particularly in Flushing we have a large,
12 large Lunar New Year Parade, as I believe
13 they do in Lower Manhattan as well.

14 But last year we celebrated the
15 Year of the Rabbit. Which is interesting
16 because the rabbit symbolized calm and
17 tranquility, caution -- and the Year of the
18 Dragon is just the opposite. It's
19 excitement, it's exhilaration, it's
20 unpredictability. The Year of the Dragon
21 represents excitement and enthusiasm.

22 And interestingly, people born
23 in the Year of the Dragon -- and if you go to
24 the websites, they describe the professions
25 of people born in the Year of the Dragon.

1 And it's very interesting, because the
2 website says they make excellent salespeople,
3 publicists, political campaigners, lawyers,
4 real estate brokers and politicians.

5 So I think we have a special
6 connection here with the Asian-American
7 community as we celebrate together in
8 New York State the Year of the Dragon.

9 Thank you, Mr. President.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: Thank
11 you, Senator Stavisky. The Year of the
12 Dragon sounds like a day in the Senate.

13 (Laughter.)

14 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
15 Senator Golden.

16 SENATOR GOLDEN: Thank you,
17 Mr. President.

18 I too rise because of the number
19 of new immigrants that have entered into our
20 great country and into the ports of New York
21 City. And we see so many new Asian-Americans
22 in our communities across this great
23 country. And today you see, especially in
24 the City of New York, close to 1 million
25 Asians, many of them being

1 Chinese-Americans.

2 It was my honor to be able to
3 introduce it into the City Council when I was
4 a City Councilman back in 1988 and 1989 to
5 commemorate the Asian Lunar New Year, and
6 then again here in the State Senate having
7 the privilege of doing that here again,
8 introducing it into the state so that we
9 could represent and have this holiday and
10 have it commemorated for the Asian-American
11 community.

12 The Year of the Dragon is great,
13 a great year, a lot of fun. We will be out
14 there marching in many parades and going to
15 many events. It is one of the better times
16 of our year.

17 And I say congratulations to the
18 Asian community as we celebrate the Lunar
19 New Year 4710.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
21 Senator Squadron.

22 SENATOR SQUADRON: Thank you.

23 And I want to thank Senator
24 Golden for introducing the resolution and add
25 my voice to the chorus welcoming the Year of

1 the Dragon. It promises to be a year full of
2 prosperity and good fortune and a year in
3 which both the Chinese-American community and
4 the entire New York State community will
5 hopefully take some important steps forward.

6 As Senator Golden said, I look
7 forward to seeing all of my colleagues in the
8 Chinatown area and also in Flushing and
9 Sunset Park many, many, many times over the
10 next weeks as we celebrate with all of the
11 different civic organizations that come
12 together.

13 One of the great things about
14 the Chinese-American community in New York is
15 just what a community it is and the extent to
16 which members of the Legislature, the Senate
17 and the Assembly, the City Council, really
18 are now fully engaged with the community,
19 which empowers the community itself.

20 So it's looking forward to the
21 Year of the Dragon. I thank Senator Golden
22 again for his leadership, Senator Stavisky,
23 and I look forward to the celebrations.

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

1 The previously adopted
2 resolution for honoring Senator Chris Mega
3 will include all members of the Senate as
4 cosponsors.

5 Senator Libous.

6 SENATOR LIBOUS: Mr. President,
7 I believe there's a resolution by Senator
8 Ranzenhofer at the desk. Could its title be
9 read and we move for its immediate adoption.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
11 Secretary will read.

12 THE SECRETARY: Legislative
13 Resolution Number 2801, by Senator
14 Ranzenhofer, mourning the death of
15 Dr. Herbert A. Hauptman, Nobel Prize winner,
16 distinguished citizen and devoted member of
17 his community.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
19 question is on the resolution. All in favor
20 signify by saying aye.

21 (Response of "Aye.")

22 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:

23 Opposed?

24 (No response.)

25 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The

1 resolution is adopted.

2 Senator Libous.

3 SENATOR LIBOUS: Thank you,
4 Mr. President.

5 I believe there's a resolution
6 at the desk by Senator Serrano. Could we
7 have its title read and move for its
8 immediate adoption.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
10 Secretary will read.

11 THE SECRETARY: Legislative
12 Resolution Number 2902, by Senator Serrano,
13 commemorating the 35th Annual Parade of Three
14 Kings Day.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
16 question is on the resolution. All in favor
17 signify by saying aye.

18 (Response of "Aye.")

19 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
20 Opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
23 resolution is adopted.

24 And the resolution is available
25 for cosponsorship. If you choose not to be

1 on it, please notify the desk.

2 Senator Libous.

3 SENATOR LIBOUS: Mr. President,
4 I believe there's a resolution by Senator
5 Skelos at the desk. Could I ask that it be
6 read in its entirety and then call on Senator
7 Farley before we move for its adoption.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
9 Secretary will read.

10 THE SECRETARY: Senate
11 Resolution Number 2883, by Senator Skelos,
12 providing for a Senate Select Committee on
13 Libraries.

14 "WHEREAS, New York State
15 currently has over 7,000 libraries, which
16 serve as the treasure trove of our state's
17 knowledge, maintaining nearly 250 million
18 volumes and circulating over 160 million
19 items per year; and

20 "WHEREAS, New York State's
21 libraries serve all of the people of
22 New York, from childhood to senior
23 citizenship, and provide universal access to
24 books, periodicals, public records,
25 electronic documents, presentations, movies

1 and other educational materials, in addition
2 to answering over 27 million customer
3 reference questions each year; and

4 "WHEREAS, New York State's
5 libraries provide access to over 13,500
6 computers across the state, permitting
7 customers to gain access to the Internet and
8 perform job searches and personal inquiries
9 to advance themselves and their communities;
10 and

11 "WHEREAS, It is recognized that
12 an open forum is needed to properly ascertain
13 the future needs of our state's libraries and
14 library systems in order to enhance learning,
15 improve quality of life, and provide equal
16 opportunity for all New Yorkers; and

17 "RESOLVED, That a Select
18 Committee on Libraries is hereby established,
19 to conduct meetings, conferences,
20 examinations and public hearings to gather
21 information and make legislative proposals
22 and recommendations, and to provide outreach
23 to and interaction with private organizations
24 that assist libraries, and to make
25 recommendations on library-related

1 legislative proposals and resolutions before
2 the State Legislature; and be it further

3 "RESOLVED, That the Select
4 Committee shall consist of nineteen Senators,
5 to be appointed by the Temporary President of
6 the Senate. Of the Senators appointed, no
7 more than ten Senators shall be enrolled in
8 the same political party. The chairperson of
9 such committee shall be designated by the
10 Temporary President of the Senate; and be it
11 further

12 "RESOLVED, That such committee
13 shall have the same authority as committees
14 constituted under Article 4 of the
15 Legislative Law and Senate Rule VII."

16 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
17 Senator Farley.

18 SENATOR FARLEY: Thank you,
19 Mr. President.

20 You know, one of the thrills of
21 my Senate career has been working on behalf
22 of libraries since the very first day that I
23 came in here in 1977. And I'm very pleased
24 that the Senate Select Committee on Libraries
25 is being established, and I'd like to thank

1 Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos for his
2 leadership and for his understanding of the
3 importance of libraries and making libraries
4 a priority here in the Senate. Because if
5 there's any house that has stood for
6 libraries, it's been the New York State
7 Senate.

8 The Select Committee on
9 Libraries will be a new 19-member bipartisan
10 body -- incidentally, one of the largest
11 committees in the Senate. It will supplement
12 and assist the Education Committee on its
13 efforts.

14 The purpose of this select
15 committee is to gather information and to
16 make legislative proposals and
17 recommendations. Through this committee, we
18 will work to address the needs of our
19 libraries.

20 I've been a lifelong advocate of
21 libraries. They're the cathedrals of
22 learning, in my judgment, and very much part
23 of the education process of our state and
24 nation. They are a valuable asset and they
25 provide important services to their

1 communities.

2 I'd also like to acknowledge
3 Michael Borges, executive director of the
4 New York State Library Association. And Mike
5 has been a tireless advocate for libraries.
6 And I know that this committee will look
7 forward to working with him.

8 I'm very, very excited about
9 this new challenge. And we'll work together,
10 all of us, to improve the libraries of our
11 state because they are a major priority in
12 our education system.

13 Thank you very much,
14 Mr. President.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
16 question is on the resolution. All in favor
17 signify by saying aye.

18 (Response of "Aye.")

19 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO:
20 Opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: The
23 resolution is adopted.

24 Senator Libous.

25 SENATOR LIBOUS: Thank you,

1 Mr. President.

2 Mr. President, there will be a
3 meeting of the Education Committee immediately
4 following session in Room 332. That's the
5 Education Committee.

6 There will be a meeting of the
7 Health Committee as scheduled at noon in
8 Room 124. That's the Health Committee as
9 scheduled at noon in Room 124.

10 The Higher Education Committee
11 will meet immediately, immediately following
12 session in Room 807 in the LOB.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: There
14 will be an immediate meeting of the Education
15 Committee in Room 332 of the Capitol. The
16 Health Committee will meet as scheduled at
17 12 noon in Room 124 of the Capitol. And the
18 Higher Education Committee will meet
19 immediately following session in Room 807 of
20 the Legislative Office Building.

21 SENATOR LIBOUS: Mr. President,
22 is there any further business at the desk?

23 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: There
24 is no further business before the desk,
25 Senator Libous.

1 SENATOR LIBOUS: There being no
2 further business, I move that we adjourn
3 until Wednesday, January 18th, at 3:00 p.m.,
4 intervening days being legislative days.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT GRIFFO: On
6 motion, the Senate stands adjourned until
7 Wednesday, January 18th, at 3:00 p.m.,
8 intervening days being legislative days.

9 Senate adjourned.

10 (Whereupon, at 10:45 a.m., the
11 Senate adjourned.)

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25