

1 NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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3
4 THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

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7
8 ALBANY, NEW YORK

9
10 February 6, 2018

11 11:18 a.m.

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13
14 REGULAR SESSION

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17
18 SENATOR THOMAS D. CROCI, Acting President

19 FRANCIS W. PATIENCE, Secretary

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

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

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

6 Color Guard, parade the colors.

7 (The Color Guard entered the
8 chamber, proceeding to the center, and presented
9 the colors.)

10 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Everyone
11 present please join us in our Pledge of
12 Allegiance.

13 (Whereupon, the assemblage recited
14 the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and the
15 Color Guard exited the chamber).

16 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Today we
17 are joined by Lieutenant Colonel Darrick Gutting.
18 He is the division chaplain at Fort Drum, the
19 10th Mountain Division, and he will lead us in
20 our invocation.

21 Colonel Gutting.

22 LT. COLONEL GUTTING: Will you bow
23 with me this afternoon.

24 Lord, on this very good day, we
25 humbly come before You, asking that Your spirit

1 be quickened with all whom have gathered in this
2 chamber.

3 We are so very grateful for the
4 opportunity to be used by You in service to the
5 citizenry of the great State of New York, our
6 10th Mountain home, and to the people of this
7 exceptional nation. You have shown us what is
8 good and what is required of us, and we ask that
9 You help us daily to do justly, love mercy, and
10 to walk humbly with You and all of mankind.

11 In this new year, renew our spirit
12 and our strength so we might run and not grow
13 weary, that we would walk and not grow faint.
14 Sustain us and lead us as we fight the good fight
15 of faith both at home and abroad, ever upward,
16 always climbing.

17 All of this we ask in Your name.
18 Amen.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The
20 reading of the Journal.

21 THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Monday,
22 February 5th, the Senate met pursuant to
23 adjournment. The Journal of Sunday,
24 February 4th, was read and approved. On motion,
25 Senate adjourned.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Without
2 objection, the Journal stands approved as read.

3 Presentation of petitions.

4 Messages from the Assembly.

5 Messages from the Governor.

6 Reports of standing committees.

7 Reports of select committees.

8 Communications and reports from
9 state officers.

10 Motions and resolutions.

11 Senator DeFrancisco.

12 SENATOR DeFRANCISCO:

13 Mr. President, on page 19 I offer the following
14 amendments to Calendar Number 170, Senate Print
15 685, by Senator Ortt, and ask that said bill
16 retain its place on the Third Reading Calendar.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: So
18 ordered.

19 SENATOR DeFRANCISCO: Could we now
20 take up a previously adopted resolution -- excuse
21 me. I move to adopt the Resolution Calendar,
22 with the exception of Resolution 3708.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: All in
24 favor of adopting the Resolution Calendar, with
25 the exception of Resolution 3708, please signify

1 by saying aye.

2 (Response of "Aye.")

3 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Opposed,
4 nay.

5 (No response.)

6 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The
7 Resolution Calendar is adopted.

8 Senator DeFrancisco.

9 SENATOR DeFRANCISCO: Can we now
10 please take up a previously adopted resolution,
11 3375, by Senator Ritchie, read it in its
12 entirety, and call on Senator Ritchie.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The
14 Secretary will read.

15 THE SECRETARY: Legislative
16 Resolution Number 3375, by Senator Ritchie,
17 memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to
18 proclaim February 6, 2018, as 10th Mountain
19 Division and Fort Drum Day in the State of
20 New York.

21 "WHEREAS, Fort Drum is located in
22 Jefferson County, in Northern New York, and is
23 the largest military installation in the
24 Northeastern United States; and

25 "WHEREAS, Fort Drum, previously

1 known as Pine Camp, was renamed in honor of
2 Lieutenant General Hugh Drum, a decorated
3 national hero, former commander of First Army,
4 and an early leader of the state's own volunteer
5 militia, the New York Guard; and

6 "WHEREAS, For 32 years, Fort Drum
7 has been the home of the United States Army's
8 storied 10th Mountain Division, one of the most
9 deployed divisions in the United States Army; and

10 "WHEREAS, The 10th Mountain Division
11 served our nation with honor, distinction and
12 great sacrifice as a part of Operation Enduring
13 Freedom and other actions central to our nation's
14 response to the terrorist attacks of
15 September 11, 2001; and

16 "WHEREAS, Elements of the
17 10th Mountain Division, based on Fort Drum, were
18 the first to be deployed in the aftermath of
19 those attacks and the last units to return from
20 combat duty; and

21 "WHEREAS, In addition to Operation
22 Enduring Freedom, 10th Mountain Division
23 deployments have included Hurricane Andrew Relief
24 in Florida, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia,
25 Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, Task Force

1 Eagle in Kosovo, Operation Iraqi Freedom,
2 Operation Freedom Sentinel in Afghanistan, and
3 advise and assist operations throughout the
4 world; and

5 "WHEREAS, More than 300 brave men
6 and women of the 10th Mountain Division, based on
7 Fort Drum have given their lives to the cause of
8 defeating global terrorism; and

9 "WHEREAS, The distinguished service
10 of units assigned to Fort Drum has been
11 celebrated by presidents, members of Congress,
12 and members of the international community; and

13 "WHEREAS, In addition to its vital
14 role in our nation's defense, Fort Drum is also
15 the largest employer in Northern New York, and an
16 economic engine for the state and region, with a
17 direct impact of more than \$1.2 billion; and

18 "WHEREAS, The more than 30,000
19 soldiers, officers, retirees and family members
20 of Fort Drum are an integral part of the
21 community, and are welcomed as neighbors,
22 coworkers, classmates, friends and fellow
23 New Yorkers; and

24 "WHEREAS, It is the sense of this
25 Legislative Body to salute the soldiers and

1 officers of the 10th Mountain Division, to honor
2 their dedication to preserving our freedom and
3 our nation, and to recognize their individual and
4 collective contributions to our communities and
5 to New York State; and

6 "WHEREAS, For the past seven years,
7 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day has
8 served to educate members of this Legislative
9 Body about the sacrifices made every day by the
10 brave men and women of our armed forces, as well
11 as the importance of Fort Drum to our nation's
12 defense and New York's economy; and

13 "WHEREAS, Fort Drum has and will
14 continue to play an important and critical role
15 in ensuring our nation's military readiness to
16 defend our state and nation against hostility and
17 threats to our safety and national security; now,
18 therefore, be it

19 "RESOLVED, That this Legislative
20 Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize
21 Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim February 6,
22 2018, as 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day
23 in the State of New York; and be it further

24 "RESOLVED, That a copy of this
25 resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to

1 Major General Walter E. Piatt, Commanding
2 General, 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum."

3 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
4 Ritchie on the resolution.

5 SENATOR RITCHIE: Thank you,
6 Mr. President.

7 Colleagues, I am proud to welcome
8 you to the seventh celebration of the
9 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day in the
10 New York State Senate.

11 The men and women of Fort Drum truly
12 represent the best of the best. They have
13 dedicated themselves to defend our freedom and
14 that of freedom-loving people around the globe.
15 Our soldiers and officers know how to lead, as
16 evidenced by some of those we have had the
17 privilege to host during previous Fort Drum Days,
18 including the current chief of staff of the
19 United States Army, one of the seventh highest
20 ranking officers in our nation's military,
21 General Mark Milley; the top previous commander
22 of a multinational coalition battling ISIS in
23 Afghanistan, General Stephen Townsend.

24 And that tradition of leadership and
25 distinction continues today with the soldiers and

1 officers you see before you and those that
2 hopefully you met downstairs in the displays in
3 the LOB. Let me take a moment to introduce them
4 to you: Commanding General Walter Piatt.
5 Brigadier General Patrick Donahoe. Command
6 Sergeant Major Sam Roark. Command Sergeant Major
7 Ryan Alfaro. Chaplain Lieutenant Colonel Darrick
8 Gutting. Captain Sam Kriegler. Master Sergeant
9 Keisha Archer.

10 And we are joined by these native
11 New Yorkers also: Sergeant First Class Brian
12 Lambert, of Penn Yan; Staff Sergeant William
13 Maxwell, of Pawling; Sergeant Kyle Milliman, of
14 Lansing; Sergeant Jonathan Ruiz, of Brooklyn;
15 Sergeant Joseph Frank, of Rome; and Specialist
16 Hunter Bishop, of Plattsburgh.

17 Please join me in welcoming also a
18 few special guests who are here in the chamber
19 today: Mrs. Cynthia Piatt; Mrs. Deanna Roark;
20 Colonel Eric Wagenaar; and General Ray Shields,
21 representing the New York National Guard.

22 Thank you for being here.

23 (Standing ovation.)

24 SENATOR RITCHIE: And in the
25 gallery I'd also to like to recognize another

1 member of the General and Mrs. Piatt's family,
2 their daughter, Jessica --

3 (Applause.)

4 SENATOR RITCHIE: -- along with
5 representatives from the community organizations
6 in my district that work to support Fort Drum's
7 mission and their success. Thank you all for
8 joining us today.

9 Many of you have heard me speak
10 about how proud I am to represent the men and
11 women of Fort Drum, the largest military
12 installation east of the Mississippi, and the
13 importance of the post to the North Country
14 economy -- indeed, to our entire state, as
15 New York's largest single-site employer.

16 I've told you how the soldiers and
17 the officers of Fort Drum and their families are
18 our friends, our neighbors, coaches, volunteer
19 firefighters, and community volunteers -- how
20 they are literally intertwined in every community
21 across our region. I cannot overstate how
22 important Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain
23 Division are to the North Country, to New York
24 State, and to the nation -- and, as you will hear
25 this from General Piatt's address, to the

1 nation's defense.

2 The 10th Mountain Division was among
3 the first to deploy overseas in the days and
4 weeks following the horrific terror attacks on
5 New York City and our nation. In fact, units
6 from the 10th Mountain Division have deployed two
7 dozen times since September 11th. And in just a
8 few weeks, many of these brave soldiers,
9 including General Piatt and his entire command
10 team, will be again deploying to Iraq in defense
11 of our freedom. I ask you that you keep them in
12 your thoughts and prayers.

13 So to the soldiers here, I want to
14 say thank you for your service, because that is
15 what it means to be part of our armed services.
16 There is no higher calling than service to
17 others, service to the community, service to
18 freedom and liberty. We are all proud of the
19 work you do, proud of the 10th Mountain Division,
20 and proud to call you fellow New Yorkers.

21 Let me close by saying to all my
22 colleagues and especially to our leader, Senator
23 Flanagan, thank you. Thank you for learning
24 about Fort Drum and supporting our brave troops.
25 I also want to thank Senator Flanagan for taking

1 the trip to the North Country and touring
2 Fort Drum.

3 And once again, I would like to
4 extend that invitation to every member in this
5 chamber to do the same thing. To see the troops
6 here in the Capitol and in the LOB is an
7 experience, but to witness firsthand how they
8 live, how they train, is something entirely
9 different, and it will only deepen your
10 appreciation and respect for who they are and
11 what they do.

12 So welcome to all of you, and thank
13 you for your service. And once again, we are all
14 so very proud of all of you.

15 Thank you, Mr. President.

16 (Applause.)

17 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Thank you,
18 Senator Ritchie.

19 Senator Flanagan on the resolution.

20 SENATOR FLANAGAN: Thank you,
21 Mr. President.

22 I want to welcome our guests. And
23 I'm in awe, I really am in awe when all of you
24 are here.

25 Senator Ritchie, who does a

1 spectacular job, she's right. I've heard about
2 Fort Drum, you know, we've had people here for a
3 number of years. There's nothing like seeing it.
4 And, you know, you think "fort," okay, I think
5 like a kid, it's like a nifty cool thing. It's a
6 city. It really is a city. There are thousands
7 of people there.

8 And I remember going -- and I have
9 not had the honor or the privilege of serving in
10 the military, but I remember going and getting
11 some education from young men and women who were
12 simulating battles. They put us in a room with
13 smoke, with loud noise, all kinds of things that
14 were just simulations. Then they took us in
15 another room and they showed us body parts.
16 Fake, but like, you know, legs ripped apart, arms
17 half-severed. And I'm thinking, this is -- I'm
18 looking at this on a mannequin. I can't fathom
19 what the heck that would be like in person.

20 And I remember when we were there,
21 it was hot. It was hot. And all of these folks
22 had on tons of gear. And I forget exactly what
23 it was, but I just remember thinking, my
24 goodness, it's just -- you know, this is again a
25 simulation. I can't imagine what it would be

1 like to be over in Iraq.

2 But I want to thank the General and
3 his entire team for their service. And General,
4 you can't quite see, but we have a lot of young
5 people in our gallery. And to the young boys and
6 girls who are here, you have freedoms and you
7 have the ability to be here, you have the
8 opportunity for free speech, a great education,
9 and to be part of your government because these
10 people protect us. And thank God that they do.
11 Thank you for your service. And I guess I'm just
12 deeply grateful. And General, I think I told
13 you -- you said this, you came into our
14 conference, I'm finally glad to meet the real
15 general, the beautiful woman to your left --

16 (Laughter.)

17 SENATOR FLANAGAN: -- because I
18 know she represents management, and you are
19 labor --

20 (Laughter.)

21 SENATOR FLANAGAN: -- which is the
22 way it should be.

23 But, you know, it really is an honor
24 and a privilege. And we have a number of our
25 colleagues who have served with distinction in

1 the military, and I'm sure they have a better
2 appreciation than I. But I just want to say
3 thank you, thank you, thank you with the utmost
4 sincerity.

5 And I believe, Senator Croci, the
6 floor is now -- or the podium is going to be
7 reserved for the General.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Yes,
9 Mr. Leader. We do have two other members who
10 would like to address the resolution.

11 Senator Larkin.

12 SENATOR LARKIN: Thank you,
13 Mr. President.

14 Good morning, General. You know,
15 23 and a half years I wore that uniform. And you
16 know, the 10th Mountain Division, the first time
17 I ever heard about them, I was out -- back from
18 Korea. I had two little trips to Korea I'll
19 never forget.

20 And we went up to a place called
21 Camp Drum then, and somebody said, "We're going
22 to do some glider training." And I said, "I have
23 bad legs and bad eyes, I can't do it." And they
24 said, "Lieutenant, yes, you will."

25 And later on I studied a little bit

1 more about the 10th, and then I learned all about
2 Senator Dole. Senator Bob Dole was wounded just
3 days before the fighting in Italy, as your
4 history tells you. And when we were doing
5 something later on in life, this chamber helped
6 us when we were talking about a Purple Heart
7 stamp and a Purple Heart monument. And Bob Dole
8 stood up there and said "The 10th Mountain should
9 be one of the top," and it was. And it is.

10 Young sergeants. You know, I looked
11 here and I said, God, think about it, Billy, you
12 were a first sergeant one time. I said yes, and
13 I used to listen to the older sergeants. Am I
14 correct, General? That's how we learned.

15 But you are a hero in yourself, but
16 you are a sustained project of the United States,
17 the defense of our country. There are young
18 people, you have some of yours who have been two
19 and three trips across the pond. One of my
20 neighbors is over there right now, and he said
21 "The 10th Mountain takes second place to none."

22 And you don't. Because, number one,
23 nobody gets to this assignment as the commanding
24 general of the 10th Mountain. It's evidenced
25 today by the chief of staff of the United States

1 Army. You came here right, General Milley. And
2 every one of you should be proud.

3 But you know, it's our job, it's our
4 job to tell the rest of our nation, not just our
5 state, that the freedoms that we enjoy, what
6 these young people can do, and how great our
7 country is because we have people like General
8 Piatt and his troops in the 10th Mountain
9 Division.

10 I'll never forget my life with it.
11 And when you command troops in combat, you make
12 sure your troops are ready. And General,
13 everybody tells me you're standing tall. May God
14 bless you and your members and their families.

15 Thank you very much (saluting).

16 (Applause.)

17 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
18 Little.

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

21 I'd like to begin by thanking
22 Senator Ritchie for initiating Fort Drum Day.
23 When she first came to the Senate, that was one
24 of the first things she did want to accomplish,
25 and how well she has accomplished that.

1 Certainly I did not, regretfully,
2 have any military experience, so my experience
3 has been through my recently retired Navy son of
4 26 years. But I would like to call some
5 attention -- not take attention away from the
6 general and the members of the military -- but to
7 the nonpaid, totally volunteer person in the
8 military, the spouses of our leaders in the
9 military.

10 Cynthia Piatt is here today. And as
11 the wife of the general, she has lots of
12 responsibilities -- taking care of and welcoming
13 families who arrive, changes of leadership under
14 the general, all of that, helping families adjust
15 to their new locations and their places in the
16 military.

17 And looking back and talking to her
18 last night, the number of times that she has had
19 to move -- I think, if I'm correct, it was 22
20 different locations throughout their marriage
21 they have moved. So not only is she an expert at
22 unpacking and setting up a household within hours
23 and days -- the general said in 72 hours she
24 could be totally set up at whatever location she
25 went to -- but dealing with her children as they

1 changed schools. And Jessica is in the audience
2 in the gallery today, as well as they have a son,
3 Joshua, who moved around even a lot through high
4 school, and changing schools and moving on as
5 they go along.

6 It's not easy, and I don't think we
7 always understand that. But her role is as
8 important as the general's. Not on the front
9 lines, but she's on the back line with the
10 families. And many times it's the family who is
11 undergoing some turmoil and emotional distress
12 that Cynthia and women like Cynthia have to deal
13 with.

14 So thank you for your service as
15 well as all those paid members of the military.

16 Thank you very much. And thank you
17 for being here.

18 (Applause.)

19 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
20 Sanders.

21 SENATOR SANDERS: Thank you, sir.

22 Although my brother and I, we did
23 the Marine Corps, my younger brother defected and
24 he went to the 101st.

25 (Laughter.)

1 SENATOR SANDERS: My nephew
2 continued that line of going, and my nephew has
3 done two tours Iraq, one tour Afghanistan, one
4 tour DMZ, on and on. And that's what he can tell
5 me, at least.

6 But we hear about the Mountain
7 Division, we hear about these guys who are able
8 to take the snow as easy as -- I did warm weather
9 training, I did desert training, and I enjoyed
10 it. So I cannot fathom, I cannot fathom anybody
11 who would enjoy a temperature lower than 50
12 degrees.

13 (Laughter.)

14 SENATOR SANDERS: I suspect that
15 your unit deals with people dealing with a little
16 lower than 50 degrees, General. I might not do
17 very well there, sir, but if you ever come to the
18 desert, I can do that.

19 I want to commend you all because
20 you have really put yourself in harm's way over
21 and over and over again and have acquitted
22 yourself quite well. That I'm sure that if we
23 went and did a study of people, there would
24 also -- there would be one or two other groups
25 that may say how well you do in Iraq and other

1 places.

2 I wish you well in your return to
3 it. I really hope that, as we were speaking
4 earlier, General, that it is just a
5 nation-building exercise, that we get there and
6 people decide to create a nation and go in a
7 certain direction and that there will be no
8 terrorism, no problems while you are there.

9 But I can say to those who want to
10 create problems that we are sending one of the
11 best units that we have out there, and they will
12 acquit themselves quite well, as they have in
13 days gone by.

14 Thank you, Mr. President. Godspeed
15 to you all on your journey.

16 (Applause.)

17 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
18 Griffo.

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

21 I thank Senator Ritchie for hosting
22 this event each and every year because it's an
23 honor to have you in our presence -- to all of
24 you, General, and all the troops assembled.

25 I just simply want to say that I

1 have the opportunity to express my great respect,
2 my admiration and my appreciation for your
3 bravery, for your sacrifice, and most
4 importantly, for your service. You are truly the
5 defenders of democracy. God bless you, and may
6 He continue to keep you in good grace.

7 (Applause.)

8 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senators
9 and ladies and gentlemen, it is my great honor to
10 introduce to you the commander of the
11 10th Mountain Division, New York's own,
12 Major General Walter Piatt.

13 General.

14 (Standing ovation.)

15 MAJOR GENERAL PIATT: Thank you
16 very much.

17 Good morning and thank you for this
18 incredible welcome to this beautiful Capitol in
19 the great Empire State. And thank you again for
20 honoring this division on the seventh Fort Drum
21 and 10th Mountain Division Day.

22 Majority Leader John Flanagan,
23 Independent Democratic Conference Leader Jeff
24 Klein, Democratic Conference Leader Andrea
25 Stewart-Cousins, and our very own Senator Patty

1 Ritchie and her staff and all your staffs, and
2 for all of you for your service in and out of
3 uniform and for what you do in this chamber every
4 day.

5 It's to protect these institutions,
6 and why we fight. And Senator, you're right,
7 it's for that next generation as well. The
8 Sergeant Major will be here afterwards to take
9 their recruiting statements, so we'll be ready.

10 (Laughter.)

11 MAJOR GENERAL PIATT: This is what
12 we do. And I just want to say we can't say thank
13 you enough to our very own and special patriot to
14 the 10th Mountain Division, Senator Ritchie. Her
15 dedication to our post, its soldiers and our
16 families, it humbles us all, inspires us every
17 day, and motivates us to continue to serve.

18 I tell everyone wherever I go that
19 the North Country is the best military community
20 in our Army. I tell it that way because on
21 several occasions, when my son was playing high
22 school sports for the Carthage Comets, he
23 received something in the mail from Senator
24 Ritchie, a photo from a local newspaper showing a
25 sport highlight and saying "I saw something

1 special about you and I wanted to send this to
2 you."

3 That doesn't happen everywhere. And
4 it didn't happen because of my rank. It happened
5 because my son was Josh Piatt and he was a member
6 of a school district that just happened to have
7 military kids in it. He holds that on his wall
8 today still. Thank you, Senator.

9 I appreciate you all welcoming us a
10 little bit early this year because, as mentioned,
11 division headquarters begins our deployment to
12 Iraq. We started heading out this week; we will
13 complete our deployment by early March, and then
14 by mid-March I will assume the duties of the
15 Coalition Force Joint Land Component commander in
16 Iraq.

17 We know that this deployment comes
18 at a very critical time. We deployed there in
19 January for two weeks. And you're right, it was
20 a little bit warm there, Senator. And folks who
21 were flying the helicopters, it was about 40
22 degrees, and they were cold. They were from
23 Oklahoma. And they said, "We need to turn on the
24 heat for the general and the sergeant major in
25 the back."

1 So our major reminded them, "Hey,
2 we're in the 10th Mountain Division, this is kind
3 of hot, so please don't turn the heat on. We'll
4 take the air-conditioning."

5 But we do deserts as well. We go
6 where we're told. And we fight where we go, and
7 we win where we fight. That is the 10th Mountain
8 Division.

9 But this deployment comes at a
10 critical time. It comes at a critical time now
11 that Iraqi people now have hope. There's a real
12 sense of joy in Baghdad because of this last
13 victory they achieved against the Islamic State.
14 And it was a victory. The Islamic State invaded
15 Iraq and pushed forward as the Iraqi Army had to
16 flee through the violence that was coming. They
17 were at the gates of Baghdad -- Iraq itself was
18 almost overthrown. It was the Iraqi security
19 forces and the Iraqi people that stood up for
20 this.

21 They were enabled by a mighty
22 coalition, and they will continue to get our
23 support. But it was the Iraqi soldiers that went
24 door to door, block by block in Mosul to defeat
25 the most ruthless enemy this world has seen. And

1 though it was a victory for the people of Iraq,
2 this enemy is a global threat. And this was a
3 victory for the world.

4 Folks often ask, What are they doing
5 about their own security? The real question is,
6 What have they done for world security? They
7 defeated ISIS in Iraq and in Syria. They
8 defeated the caliphate. Now we must complete the
9 destruction of this terror group. And that's
10 what the 10th Mountain Division will now deploy
11 to go and do.

12 Our 3rd Brigade, our Patriot Brigade
13 from Fort Polk, Louisiana, has been over there
14 since last September. They moved in-country in
15 September, and they immediately went where the
16 enemy was, providing critical fire support,
17 intelligence support, and helped defeat the
18 remnants of ISIS in Mosul and pursued it
19 throughout Hawija, and now the Anbar Valley all
20 the way to the border of Syria.

21 The enemy is defeated as a
22 conventional threat, but he's not destroyed. The
23 time is now. And he remains ever-vigilant. On
24 October 1st, we lost a soldier in Iraq,
25 Specialist Alex Missildine. He was attacked by

1 an improvised explosion device just outside the
2 Salaheddine Operations Center.

3 I had the honor of presiding over
4 his funeral in Tyler, Texas. We presided down a
5 10-mile convoy through a town where everybody
6 stopped their cars and put their hands on their
7 heart for this fallen hero. All Alex wanted to
8 do was serve his country. All he wanted to do
9 was serve his unit in combat. He fought to earn
10 his spot on that deployment. It cost him his
11 life and his parents their only son. But as his
12 father said to me: "This is the cost of our
13 freedom, and I hope Alex's sacrifice will inspire
14 the unit and this division to continue to serve."
15 And it certainly does.

16 When I was here in this chamber last
17 May, I told you about what the units in the
18 10th Mountain Division were doing. Our Combat
19 Aviation Brigade deployed to Eastern Europe,
20 assuring our allies, deterring our adversaries,
21 building up military power in a NATO alliance
22 that we have seen great reduction and increased
23 threats from adversaries. They returned just in
24 time for Thanksgiving, but now they are flying
25 again in helicopters over the North Country as

1 they get ready for whatever mission is next.

2 We deployed one of their Apache
3 battalions to the Republic of Korea for a
4 nine-month deployment at a time that it's
5 absolutely critical that we have military
6 presence forward to deter adversaries on the
7 Korean Peninsula.

8 And it was right about that time in
9 the fall that hurricanes brought devastation to
10 the doorstep for thousands of American citizens.
11 And what was called from our 10th Mountain
12 Division was a very specialized unit, the 510th
13 Human Resource Company. They deployed, no
14 notice, to Texas.

15 And as soon as they came back from
16 supporting Hurricane Harvey, they were once again
17 called to go to Puerto Rico to support the
18 aftermath of Hurricane Maria. They didn't know
19 where they were going to stay, they had a
20 rucksack. But all of them said, Now we get to go
21 help our own citizens.

22 A young lieutenant led the
23 deployment to Puerto Rico. Her husband, also in
24 the 10th Mountain Division, was out on exercises
25 doing a live fire. She was unable to call him.

1 But she got on that plane, she did her job. And
2 because of that specialized unit, many, many
3 folks that were there to help with the
4 reconstruction and help with the devastation were
5 able to follow through, follow through getting
6 in-country and go to where they needed to go.
7 They did it for the honor to help our fellow
8 Americans.

9 In September we also sent First
10 Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, to Afghanistan
11 and to Cameroon, Africa, on a deployment that
12 came with almost no notice. Our nation called,
13 just giving us weeks to get this regiment ready,
14 and they were. They are deployed to Afghanistan
15 today, they are helping specialized units and
16 special operations forces all around the country,
17 taking the fight to the enemy and enabling Afghan
18 security forces to become ready.

19 And also our 548 Combat Sustainment
20 Brigade returned home from a successful
21 deployment in the Middle East just before
22 Christmas, and it came down to the wire. We
23 didn't know if we were going to get them back.
24 They supported from Kuwait, but they were really
25 everywhere. All the way to Syria we had soldiers

1 from the 10th Mountain Division supporting our
2 forces in the fight, and they did a marvelous
3 job.

4 Today we have over 4,000 soldiers
5 deployed to 17 different countries around the
6 world -- Korea, many countries in Africa, Iraq,
7 Afghanistan and many more. We say all the time
8 the 10th Mountain patch, the sun never sets on
9 our patch. We are stationed in Fort Drum,
10 New York, but we go everywhere and we're always
11 there.

12 And if all that coming and going
13 didn't keep us busy enough, we leaned forward on
14 a campaign to once again open our great post,
15 which I so proudly call a nature preserve that we
16 just happen to be allowed to train soldiers on.
17 We opened our post to our surrounding
18 communities. Our post is beautiful and shares an
19 awesome history with the rest of Northern
20 New York. But in the past 16 years of war, and
21 all the security requirements that came with
22 that, we began to build up walls, real and
23 metaphorical. That question about that, we
24 needed to know -- we needed to maintain security,
25 there's no question. But we did not need to be

1 divided from the community that supports us so
2 well.

3 In June we opened up the post to
4 more than 10,000 soldiers, families and community
5 members to host country music star Trace Adkins
6 for a free concert. We'll do that again this
7 year. Don't know who the artist is going to be,
8 but it will be big.

9 And just a month later, after the
10 tragic in-line-of-duty death of local hero
11 Trooper Joel Davis, we joined forces with the
12 New York State troopers to hold his funeral on
13 Fort Drum. After his death, we, like so many
14 other organizations, offered what assistance we
15 could provide. In less than a week, a team of
16 troopers and Fort Drum employees organized a
17 memorial tribute that welcomed close to 4,000
18 mourners onto our post.

19 It was an incredible honor to be
20 part of remembering so great a man. I will never
21 forget Trooper Joel Davis. He was hero that ran
22 to meet danger without hesitation. Together we
23 mourned his loss, but we will forever honor his
24 life. His service will never be forgotten.

25 Then in September and December, we

1 opened our post to tours of the LeRay Mansion,
2 the ancestral home of the man thought to be the
3 founding father of upstate New York.

4 In November we brought more than 400
5 community members, many of them with personal
6 connections, to the sites of villages that were
7 dissolved during the expansion of Fort Drum in
8 the 1940s. After that event I received a letter
9 from one of the participants telling me, and I
10 quote her now: "The Army's obvious concern for
11 the environment has allayed concerns I had
12 harbored for many years previous. As a result of
13 the friendly atmosphere I encountered on Monday,
14 I no longer perceive the installation as foreign
15 territory that must be approached with caution."

16 In recognizing the past, we are
17 doing great work in solidifying the future of
18 Fort Drum. This perhaps is not the most obvious
19 route to stay relevant for the next 30 years, but
20 I argue it's one of the most effective. And we
21 also started new traditions, hosting the first
22 ever all-Army hockey team for their inaugural
23 game against the Canadian hockey team. And
24 against all odds, we won.

25 (Laughter, applause.)

1 MAJOR GENERAL PIATT: And perhaps
2 an even bigger win came that night when we packed
3 the house. There wasn't an empty seat in the
4 Watertown Municipal Arena. Soldiers, their
5 family members, and the community showed up in
6 force to cheer their team on. And with that warm
7 reception on a very cold night, Watertown earned
8 its spot forever as the home ice for Army hockey.

9 We also spent a lot of time working
10 with communities, talking about how our training
11 needs are expanding as our enemies gain the
12 ability to defeat us from further and further
13 away. The way we are fighting wars now is
14 changing, and our training has to change with it.
15 We are now facing enemies that can attack us from
16 further away. In many areas our enemies have us
17 outnumbered, outgunned and outranged. This is
18 unacceptable.

19 We must be able to win our wars to
20 protect our nation, which means we have to be
21 able to defeat every adversary that poses a
22 threat to our United States. And if we can win
23 that war, we can certainly deter that war.

24 But we need to train against the
25 future fights, because our enemies are expanding

1 these threats through air defense systems that
2 are elaborate, that can deny the U.S. Air Force
3 entry into certain spaces. They make it very
4 difficult. It becomes now, again, a land fight.
5 The call for the U.S. Army and Army infantry is
6 even more important now than it ever has been.

7 But to be able to defeat that enemy,
8 we've got to train against that, against greater
9 standoff, utilizing manned and unmanned systems.
10 We need to be able to train with Air Force and
11 New York Air National Guard so they can drop
12 their precision munitions on Fort Drum for many
13 years to come, on platforms that exist today and
14 many that aren't even invented yet.

15 If we are properly to train our
16 soldiers for what awaits them on that future
17 battlefield, we must continue to train for that
18 future. We must be prepared with methods not yet
19 understood, with technology not yet invented and
20 doctrine not yet written.

21 This sort of training brings the
22 idea to bear of our encroachment around our post
23 into clear focus. The main topic of discussion
24 this past year has been industrial wind turbines.
25 Many on either side of the issue always ask me,

1 What is Fort Drum's position? And I remind them
2 strongly, Fort Drum is an advocate for positive
3 growth in the North Country. We must do this
4 together.

5 We know that energy needs to be
6 secure in our nation, and protecting that energy
7 is part of our own national military strategy.
8 We know that green energy is part of that
9 solution. But we also know that if we plan
10 together, we can do this smartly. We just want
11 to be part of that process. And I thank all of
12 you here for allowing us to be part of that
13 process.

14 We have been heard by our local
15 communities and by New York State. Local
16 municipalities and developers alike now are
17 reaching out to us to be part of their planning,
18 and New York State has made our input part of the
19 Article X process.

20 These are hard conversations to
21 have, as much is at stake. But you have my
22 promise that I will always be transparent and
23 work towards positive growth in the North Country
24 that we all love so much. And I thank you all
25 for your heartfelt considerations in these

1 delicate matters.

2 But it's true, it's true to form.

3 This is the kind of support that we expect and we
4 have seen from Albany time and time again. In so
5 many things that are important to our soldiers,
6 our families, and our Army, New York steps up to
7 the plate all the time.

8 You supported the interstate compact
9 on educational opportunity for military children
10 that addresses transitional issues encountered by
11 military families like enrollment, placement,
12 eligibility. And there's an example in the
13 gallery today. My daughter Jessica went to four
14 different high schools as we moved here before
15 the start of her senior year. A guidance
16 counselor from a local high school, Carthage High
17 School, got her transcripts, made sure that she
18 had the right classes to graduate and apply to
19 college on time. And I'm proud to say she
20 received a college scholarship to Duquesne
21 University and graduated in three and a half
22 years.

23 (Applause.)

24 MAJOR GENERAL PIATT: That would
25 not happen without your help. She would have had

1 to take extra classes, her college acceptance
2 would have been delayed or maybe not have
3 happened at all, and maybe missed time. New York
4 does it. Right now she's back here in Watertown
5 working for the Chamber of Commerce, sitting
6 right next to her boss, Kylie Peck.

7 So military kids do recognize that
8 these bases are indeed their homes.

9 You support our unique healthcare
10 model, through your support to the Fort Drum
11 Health Planning Organization. The U.S. Army
12 Surgeon General came to visit us twice, and she
13 came in January, which makes her a friend of the
14 10th Mountain Division. She came to learn about
15 our model and how unique it is, and she visited
16 the facilities that we have off-post.

17 We don't have a hospital on our base
18 that's unique to our military, but we rely on the
19 support of five local hospitals, and mainly the
20 support from Samaritan Hospital, which I always
21 fondly call Samaritan Army Hospital, in
22 Watertown, New York. It is a unique model, but
23 it is a win/win for New York State and for our
24 soldiers. It's not just about access to
25 healthcare, it's about military-readiness. And

1 for that I say thank you, New York.

2 The State University of New York
3 supports soldiers and family members' access to
4 student aid initiatives like the Excelsior
5 Scholarship and access to state tuition rates.

6 SUNY and the New York State Energy
7 Research and Development Authority offer programs
8 to retrain our soldiers who are leaving the
9 service so that they can enter the workforce
10 instead of the unemployment line. On behalf of
11 all of us who strive to keep learning, I say
12 thank you, New York.

13 The New York State Police partner
14 with our department of Emergency services for
15 mutual aid, on-post training, and event support.
16 For all of us who sleep well at night knowing
17 we're safe, I say thank you, New York.

18 You voted to support our military
19 spouses with expedited licensing services, with
20 reduced fees for many career fields. For all of
21 us who ask so very much from our spouses and are
22 able to do so little to lessen the impact on
23 their careers: Thank you, New York.

24 The New York State Department of
25 Environmental Conservation Region 6 is a

1 steadfast partner in ensuring that our training
2 requirements and sustaining our environment
3 aren't at odds. For the many of us who are in
4 awe of the nature preserve that is Fort Drum, we
5 say thank you, New York.

6 And for your continued investment in
7 keeping Fort Drum as relevant for 30 years as it
8 is today, through projects like the I-781
9 connector and the Route 26 overpass linking our
10 main post to our critical air field, thank you,
11 New York, for cementing our future.

12 And thank you for the young men and
13 women who have grown up in towns and cities
14 throughout New York, left their hometowns to
15 train and become soldiers in the United States
16 Army. Some of those soldiers, as introduced, are
17 here today.

18 Soldiers like Sergeant Joseph Frank,
19 from Rome, who was told that the Army would be
20 too hard for him, that he couldn't to it. When
21 he earned the rank of noncommissioned officer,
22 sergeant, it made him think about what else he
23 could accomplish and how far his career in the
24 profession of arms might take him.

25 Others, like Specialist Hunter

1 Bishop, from Plattsburgh, answered the call to
2 serve after being affected by the attacks of
3 9/11, and he wanted to make a difference.

4 Soldiers like Sergeant Jonathan Ruiz
5 could see the smoke from the Towers at his school
6 in Brooklyn before the teachers closed the window
7 blinds. He didn't understand what was happening
8 then, but he said that years later, that's what
9 motivated him to enlist.

10 For all those soldiers, I say thank
11 you, New York.

12 The coalition I will soon join in
13 Iraq faces, as I said, a difficult mission, for
14 wars do not end in peace, and the terrorists are
15 still there. Although defeated militarily, they
16 still pose a threat. We must continue with
17 surgical precision to hunt down those who mean to
18 threaten Iraq, Syria, and indeed our own United
19 States. But we must also help stabilize the
20 populations as they come back from the ruins of
21 war to rebuild their country so that they can be
22 an independent, free Iraq and a partner to the
23 United States in the Middle East.

24 On 12 May, one of our very first
25 tasks will be to help provide the security for

1 Iraq's elections again. So in all this time of
2 crisis, they have not given up on those
3 democratic ideals, and now the political fight
4 that remains post-conflict is one we will
5 continue to assist and enable until they are
6 secure in their country.

7 But just as we did here years ago
8 when the Army outgrew Madison Barracks in
9 Sackets Harbor, New York worked with us to find
10 new areas to train in Pine Plains. When we
11 outgrew that area, more than 500 families left
12 their homes to keep us mission-capable, on the
13 condition that we would respect and keep their
14 cemeteries and preserve the environment. We keep
15 those promises daily.

16 Does this compromise always come
17 easy? Of course not. But as I've learned on the
18 battlefield, and as our shared history tells us,
19 unfortunately, disabling the opposition solves
20 only a fraction of the problem, whereas the
21 energy and effort you put into relationships has
22 the capacity to build a lasting peace.

23 Thank you for living that lesson
24 through legislation here in Albany, and by the
25 support you show our military members back in

1 your home districts. New York is an incredible
2 place to serve.

3 Please keep our deployed soldiers in
4 your thoughts and prayers in the coming year. We
5 will assist in completing the destruction of ISIS
6 in Iraq so that they can no longer threaten the
7 world.

8 And I want to make sure I
9 reemphasize the open invitation that Senator
10 Ritchie gave to you all. Be sure to come visit
11 us in New York. Just dress warm and comfortable,
12 because even in July you're going to get cold,
13 and you're darn sure going to get dirty when you
14 come out and train with the infantry. But we
15 love to show off our installation, and we love
16 for folks to see how wonderful it is cared for
17 for the people of upstate New York.

18 Thank you again for this
19 opportunity. We are honored to be here today and
20 a part of this great state every day. But know
21 this: No matter what terrors we fight, no matter
22 where we are sent and no matter what challenges
23 we face, your 10th Mountain Division will
24 accomplish the mission. No matter how difficult
25 the job, no matter how dangerous the climb, we

1 will not stop, we will keep moving until we all
2 meet at the top.

3 Ever upward! Climb to glory! Thank
4 you all very much.

5 (Standing ovation.)

6 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
7 DeFrancisco.

8 SENATOR DeFRANCISCO: Yes,
9 Mr. President, can you open that resolution for
10 cosponsorship, so that anyone who does not want
11 to be on that resolution should notify the desk.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Very good.
13 The resolution is open for cosponsorship. If you
14 do not wish to be a cosponsor, if you do not wish
15 to be a cosponsor, please notify the desk.

16 Senator DeFrancisco.

17 SENATOR DeFRANCISCO: Can we now
18 take up Resolution 3708, by Senator
19 Stewart-Cousins, read it in its entirety, and
20 call on Senator Cousins.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The
22 Secretary will read.

23 THE SECRETARY: Legislative
24 Resolution Number 3708, by Senator
25 Stewart-Cousins, memorializing Governor Andrew M.

1 Cuomo to proclaim February 2018 as Black History
2 Month in the State of New York.

3 "WHEREAS, Black History Month,
4 previously known as Negro History Week, was
5 founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, and was first
6 celebrated on February 1, 1926; since 1976, it
7 has become a nationally recognized month-long
8 celebration, held each year during the month of
9 February to acknowledge and pay tribute to
10 African-Americans neglected by both society and
11 the history books; and

12 "WHEREAS, The month of February
13 observes the rich and diverse heritage of our
14 great state and nation; and

15 "WHEREAS, Black History Month seeks
16 to emphasize black history is American history;
17 and

18 "WHEREAS, Black History Month is a
19 time to reflect on the struggles and victories of
20 African-Americans throughout our country's
21 history and to recognize their numerous valuable
22 contributions to the protection of our democratic
23 society in war and in peace; and

24 "WHEREAS, Some African-American
25 pioneers whose many accomplishments, all of which

1 took place during the month of February, went
2 unnoticed, as well as numerous symbolic events
3 in February that deserve to be memorialized
4 include: John Sweat Rock, a noted Boston lawyer
5 who became the first African-American admitted to
6 argue before the U.S. Supreme Court on
7 February 1, 1865, and the first African-American
8 to be received on the floor of the U.S. House of
9 Representatives; Jonathan Jasper Wright, the
10 first African-American to hold a major judicial
11 position, who was elected to the South Carolina
12 Supreme Court on February 1, 1870; President
13 Abraham Lincoln submits the proposed
14 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution,
15 abolishing slavery, to the states for
16 ratification on February 1, 1865; civil rights
17 protester Jimmie Lee Jackson dies from wounds
18 inflicted during a protest on February 26, 1965,
19 leading to the historic Selma, Alabama, civil
20 rights demonstrations, including Bloody Sunday,
21 in which 600 demonstrators, including Martin
22 Luther King, Jr., were attacked by police;
23 Autherine J. Lucy became the first African-
24 American student to attend the University of
25 Alabama on February 3, 1956; she was expelled

1 three days later 'for her own safety' in response
2 to threats from a mob; in 1992, Autherine Lucy
3 Foster graduated from the university with a
4 master's degree in Education, the same day her
5 daughter, Grazia Foster, graduated with a
6 bachelor's degree in corporate finance; the
7 Negro Baseball League was founded on February 3,
8 1920; Jack Johnson, the first African-American
9 World Heavyweight Boxing Champion, won his first
10 title on February 3, 1903; and Reginald F.
11 Lewis, born on December 7, 1942, in Baltimore,
12 Maryland, received his law degree from Harvard
13 Law School in 1968, and was a partner in Murphy,
14 Thorpes & Lewis, the first black law firm on
15 Wall Street, and in 1989, he became president and
16 CEO of TLC Beatrice International Food Company,
17 the largest black-owned business in the
18 United States; and

19 "WHEREAS, In recognition of the vast
20 contributions of African-Americans, a joyful
21 month-long celebration is held across New York
22 State and across the United States, with many
23 commemorative events to honor and display the
24 cultural heritage of African-Americans; and

25 "WHEREAS, This Legislative Body

1 commends the African-American community for
2 preserving, for future generations, its
3 centuries-old traditions that benefit us all and
4 add to the color and beauty of the tapestry which
5 is our American society; now, therefore, be it

6 "RESOLVED, That this Legislative
7 Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize
8 Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim
9 February 2018 as Black History Month in the State
10 of New York; and be it further

11 "RESOLVED, That copies of this
12 resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to
13 the Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the
14 State of New York, and to the events
15 commemorating Black History Month throughout
16 New York State."

17 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
18 Stewart-Cousins.

19 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Yes,
20 thank you, Mr. President.

21 I rise to commemorate Black History
22 Month. And certainly in the context of listening
23 to the general and thinking of all that those in
24 the military go through to protect our freedoms,
25 with military might and with force and with the

1 sanction of the government, even then how
2 important it is that we support our men and women
3 in uniform and realize that freedom under no
4 circumstance is free.

5 And as I think about Black History
6 Month, I think of the same things. I think of
7 the heroes and sheroes who, without sanction,
8 frankly, of the government here, still fought for
9 freedom. I think about Harriet Tubman, who lived
10 right here in Auburn, New York. And from the
11 time she moved here, she spent 54 years just
12 going back, dragging people out of the confines
13 of slavery and making sure that there was a
14 pathway to freedom and that people would never go
15 back.

16 I think about Constance Baker
17 Motley, who was right here in this chamber, a
18 Senator, she was in the chamber from 1964 to
19 1965. And Senator Motley was also one of the
20 authors of the groundbreaking Brown vs. Board of
21 Education. It was she, along with Thurgood
22 Marshall, who made the case that separate is not
23 equal in education or anywhere. And it changed
24 the way we educated the children of this great
25 nation.

1 I think about Marsha Johnson, an
2 LGBT activist who was born in a time where there
3 was not a conversation about being transgender.
4 She was born in the '40s. But she was key and
5 instrumental in terms of Stonewall and the
6 Stonewall uprising and changing, again, the
7 course of a people who just wanted to be free.

8 And I stand here today in memory of
9 the Reverend Dr. Wyatt T. Walker, who was for a
10 while a resident of Yonkers, who died on
11 January 23rd. And he was the chief of staff for
12 the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King. He was
13 credited in many ways with being the chief
14 strategist in terms of how he fought for freedom,
15 for black community and everyone during those
16 very tumultuous Civil Rights Era marches.

17 And I want to say to Senator Larkin
18 I know how important that time in history was and
19 really thank him for his participation during the
20 time where Dr. King was fighting so hard for
21 freedom.

22 But Wyatt T. Walker was also
23 credited for putting together Dr. King's Letter
24 from a Birmingham Jail, because Dr. King, when he
25 was in prison, wrote that on little scraps of

1 paper, he wrote it in the margins of newspaper --
2 but it was Reverend Dr. Wyatt T. Walker who had
3 to assemble this magnificent letter that is
4 really something that we all associate as one of
5 the greatest written texts from Dr. Martin Luther
6 King.

7 So Wyatt T. Walker, who also became
8 the senior pastor of Canaan Baptist Church, used
9 his bully pulpit in every way to fight for
10 freedom and social justice. And he was very much
11 in the background, because obviously we saw
12 Reverend Dr. King as that leader.

13 So whether you are a Harriet Tubman
14 who was on the front line of freedom, or whether
15 you were like Martha Johnson or Wyatt T. Walker,
16 or whether you were like Constance Baker Motley,
17 the understanding that freedom is not free and
18 sometimes you've got to fight, even when people
19 aren't supporting you, because the values and the
20 importance of living your life as a free and
21 liberated person in a just society makes all the
22 difference. It's worth living for and certainly
23 worth dying for.

24 So as we celebrate black history in
25 this chamber, a chamber where great people have

1 emerged and where we have the possibility of
2 doing great things, I hope that we will always
3 remember those things that we say all the time:
4 Freedom isn't free, and each of us can do
5 something to advance freedom for the next
6 generation and the next generation, because
7 that's what we must do.

8 Thank you so much.

9 (Applause.)

10 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
11 Larkin.

12 SENATOR LARKIN: Thank you,
13 Mr. President.

14 Thank you very much, Senator
15 Cousins.

16 You know, what bothers me -- and I
17 mention it every year -- it's nice to talk here
18 and say this is what, this is what, that's what.
19 My question is, what have you done to improve it?

20 My association with people of color
21 goes back a long way, when I was a youngster. In
22 my days in the military, my first command was a
23 company of five Caucasians, all lieutenants. I
24 was the youngest; 208 members who had color. And
25 you know, the thing that got me the most was I

1 think the five lieutenants took care of the issue
2 of making friends, working together, and
3 realizing that there is no "I" in team and
4 cooperation and teamwork always produce positive
5 results.

6 We had a young man from Atlanta, I
7 won't mention the corporation, but he came to us
8 as a prima donna in the 2nd Armored Division in
9 1954. And he come in to see me one day and said,
10 "I have a problem." I said, "What is your
11 problem?" He said, "There are three black guys
12 in my squad room." I said, "Get your ass out of
13 here and come back in and talk to me."

14 And when he come back in, he said,
15 "We have three people of color in my squad. In
16 my area in Atlanta, they come in the back door."
17 I said, "Well, we'll take care of that tonight."

18 I called the first sergeant and I
19 said, "I want six more members with color in that
20 squad room."

21 Shortening the speech up, he left
22 and he went home. Before he left, he was a
23 draftee. And he came in and he said, "You know,
24 I'm going to remember this training. I learned a
25 lot." Four months later I got a letter from his

1 father. He said: "I sent you a boy who was a
2 bigot. He returned a man of honesty and
3 integrity, and I thank you."

4 I don't like all this garbage going
5 back and forth. I can speak pretty close to
6 anybody, and you know my family. What are we
7 doing to ourself? We're showing the rest of the
8 world we can't get along. We don't want to do
9 this with them, we won't want to do this with
10 them. Why don't we sit down and talk and do
11 something right?

12 Black History Month should be
13 something that we stand up and say: This is what
14 we've done. I invite any one of you to come to
15 the armory in Newburgh. When you look and see
16 500, 600 inner city kids that walk in in the
17 morning. And if they've got a cold, they go like
18 this (gesturing). And if they don't have a cold,
19 they shake hands. They study together, they play
20 together.

21 And if we're going to make this
22 place history, let's make history that we can be
23 responsible for. Make history that we're proud
24 of.

25 I'm ashamed when I read something.

1 Why do we have to say it, in the newspaper, "Two
2 black guys were suspected of committing the
3 murder"? Well, do we say two white guys did it?
4 No. Why don't we use our brain instead of our
5 buttocks and say a suspect was apprehended, a
6 suspect is on the loose. He's a suspect, right?
7 He's not just a person of color.

8 In this house, years ago, we used to
9 go to dinner together as legislators, male and
10 female. And you didn't talk about what went on
11 in the shop, but on the weekend: Hey, how was
12 the bar mitzvah? I heard you got engaged. I
13 heard you got a new little baby there.

14 Why are we ashamed to put on a line
15 and say black history is the same as us? I'm
16 Irish. I remember what they said about us.
17 Every street in Troy, New York, where I grew up,
18 had a gin mill. They said, What did you expect
19 the Irish to do? They don't know nothing else
20 but drinking. That's a shame today to think
21 about that.

22 Ladies and gentlemen, I have a
23 program, it's called "Black History," and we have
24 it in all of my high schools. And I want to hear
25 a story. I don't want your mother or father to

1 write your -- and I've told this to the teachers,
2 and I've told it to the counselors -- I want to
3 know that you've done research about some of
4 them.

5 For me, one person that I will never
6 forget is Dr. Abernathy. Everybody says Martin
7 Luther King. But they don't know, when we were
8 at Selma waiting to march and everybody -- we
9 need pictures, we need pictures, we need
10 pictures. And I said to Dr. Abernathy, We're
11 marching. And he went to Dr. King and he said,
12 "They're looking out for theirselves, Martin.
13 Let's march." And we did.

14 I never saw a word in there talk
15 about what a distinguished individual he was.
16 And he's the one who told Dr. Martin Luther King,
17 Don't go to Tennessee. And others said you've
18 got to show that you support union sanitation
19 workers. And he got killed, he got shot to
20 death.

21 What are we doing to ourselves? I
22 pledge myself that I'll do everything. I have
23 biracial children, two adopted -- grandchildren,
24 by the way. And they're mine. At mass on
25 Sunday, somebody come up to me and said "God, I

1 can't believe Grace is this big." She looks and
2 she said, "I'm not this big, I'm THIS big"
3 (gesturing).

4 We're proud of those children, so
5 everybody else should be proud of your own. And
6 these other children are our children. They're
7 our future leaders of this nation. Get off your
8 duffs and start to tell people this is the
9 greatest country in the world. And we're one
10 nation and we're one community. We are an
11 American community. We are not a divisive
12 community.

13 I invite you to come to the armory
14 in Newburgh, and you will find that we don't have
15 a diversity. The chess team that went down and
16 beat New York City, there was 12 of them. And
17 there was no picking and, See, there's six of
18 this and six of this. Someone said, "How come
19 you've got six of this and six? And our chess
20 champion instructor said, "I don't have six and
21 six, I have 12."

22 Ladies and gentlemen, it's our job,
23 it's our responsibility to make sure that people
24 understand black history is a subject matter of
25 what happened in the past tense. It's our job to

1 show the future that we love and respect you as
2 we do anyone else.

3 Thank you all.

4 (Applause.)

5 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
6 Benjamin. No?

7 SENATOR BENJAMIN: Who did you say?

8 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
9 Benjamin, we had --

10 SENATOR BENJAMIN: That's what I
11 thought. Because Senator Sanders jumped up.

12 (Laughter.)

13 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: No, we
14 have Senator Sanders as well.

15 Go ahead, Senator Benjamin.

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

18 I rise today to celebrate Black
19 History Month along with my leader Andrea
20 Stewart-Cousins and others. And I want to thank
21 Senator Larkin for his comments; they're very
22 timely.

23 Let me just say that when we came in
24 here earlier, we pledged allegiance to the flag.
25 And we said "I pledge allegiance to the flag of

1 the United States of America, and to the republic
2 for which it stands, one nation under God, with
3 liberty and justice for all."

4 Unfortunately, for too much of
5 American history, liberty and justice for all did
6 not apply to African-Americans. And many of us
7 fought, many of the generations before us fought
8 to try to make this a country where liberty and
9 justice was for all.

10 And I don't want to get into the
11 back and forth of who did what, but as we move
12 forward today, I think it's important to remember
13 there are implications of our history. And it's
14 important that we make sure that it is shared.
15 Because one of the key items that that all comes
16 back down to is the issue of fairness.

17 What is fair? Is it fair that young
18 kids of color could stay at Rikers Island for
19 years on end and not have trial? I don't think
20 that's fair. Everyone has to decide what they
21 believe is fair.

22 Is it fair that many companies of
23 MWBE descent haven't had opportunities for
24 contracts -- state contracts, city contracts,
25 federal contracts? And in the RFPs it states,

1 well, you need to have experience. But if you
2 didn't have the opportunity before because you
3 were prevented from having opportunities such as
4 that, how could you have the experience today?

5 And so I guess I want us to keep in
6 mind that when we talk about our history, it's
7 not just a thing of the past. There are
8 implications of that past that carry on into the
9 present, and it's incumbent upon us to make sure
10 that we try to create fairness to compensate for
11 some of our past indiscretions as a country.

12 I'm a proud American. I love this
13 country. I love where I was born. I was born in
14 Harlem, USA. I claim Harlem, USA as the black
15 capital of America. But I also know that we have
16 a ways to go to address some of our past
17 indiscretions as a country. And for us to do it,
18 we have to do it together. All of us have to do
19 it together.

20 And so just keep that in mind. I
21 know it's easy to either just kind of listen to
22 what people say -- and I know some -- you know, I
23 know there's a desire to say, Oh, okay, well,
24 that happened back then. And I'm not racist, I'm
25 not this, I'm not that, I'm accepting of

1 everyone, so all of that from the past is the
2 past, and let's just leave it there.

3 And I just want to implore you to
4 think about the fact that there are consequences
5 to previous decisions. If you have parents who
6 are of a certain mindset and certain skills, you
7 benefit from those one way or the other. This is
8 just a part of human nature. And so as we
9 celebrate Black History Month, I want us to all
10 to keep in mind that when some of us fight so
11 hard for issues like criminal justice reform and
12 making sure that people of color get contracts,
13 get opportunities to participate in the American
14 economy, try to make sure that people of color
15 get the opportunity to get pension fund money so
16 that they can be owners and do amazing things, it
17 is because we recognize our history and we're
18 trying to create a more perfect union.

19 Thank you, Mr. President.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
21 Sanders.

22 SENATOR SANDERS: Thank you,
23 Mr. President.

24 I jumped up earlier because I was
25 just so in awe of my colleague that I just wanted

1 to claim his name. It didn't work well.

2 Thank you for the opportunity. I
3 want to thank you, Madam Leader, for bringing
4 this to the floor.

5 Black history is American history.
6 American history cannot be separated from black
7 history. In a few seconds, a few moments, I want
8 to take you through a tour of some military
9 history, since we're speaking of the military
10 today. I want to remind us -- and I'm sure
11 everyone in this body knows -- that the first
12 person to die for American freedom was Crispus
13 Attucks. He was a black man. The first person
14 to die for American freedom, up in Boston, was
15 Crispus Attucks.

16 But there was a time when, in the
17 military, it was believed that -- in fact, they
18 didn't want blacks in the military because they
19 did not think that they would fight. They
20 thought they were cowards who would run away. In
21 fact, all of the -- although there was enough
22 history to show a difference, they really thought
23 that these folk would not fight.

24 This myth was shattered in the Civil
25 War by a group known as the 54th Massachusetts

1 Colored Regiment. And the movie Glory was made
2 about them. They were given an impossible task:
3 Invade an area where the enemy knows you're
4 coming, go after a fortified position where you
5 have no shelter, no shade, they have plenty of
6 supplies, and we want you to take that. Suicide.

7 They fought, they did amazingly.
8 They did not take that position because it simply
9 couldn't be taken. But at the same time the myth
10 of cowardice with this group went down the drain
11 at that point.

12 From there we can go quickly to the
13 famed Buffalo Soldiers, the "Smoked Yankees" of
14 the Plains Wars that were fought. Of course you
15 couldn't speak of Teddy Roosevelt and his
16 Rough Riders without realizing he had a portion
17 of his troops who were black.

18 Speaking of black, Black Jack
19 Pershing, in World War One, was one of the
20 military commanders who had black units there.
21 World War Two saw, of course, the Harlem
22 Hellfighters, the Tuskegee Airmen, who went out
23 there and showed the Nazis, the fascists, they
24 have another thing coming to them when they speak
25 of a master race. There was no master race then;

1 there is no master race now. There's the human
2 race.

3 The militaries were united after
4 World War Two; segregation in the military was
5 ended. Of course there were fights, and plenty
6 of them, for justice and freedom even within the
7 service, as there are fights to this day.

8 My friends, in this short tour that
9 we've taken, I trust that I've shown you a little
10 bit that American history cannot be separated
11 from black history. And black history should not
12 be separated from American history. We should
13 applaud all of these histories. The history of
14 the black population is a history of this
15 American experiment. An experiment. Not a
16 perfect thing, an experiment, ways that we can
17 make society better, ways that we can make the
18 world better. And all of us will play our role
19 in this great experiment.

20 Having said that, sir, I think that
21 I've experimented enough for the morning. I
22 thank you very much, Mr. President, and I shall
23 take my seat.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
25 Bailey.

1 SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you,
2 Mr. President. I also rise in support of this
3 wonderful resolution. I'd be remiss in not
4 stating that, my leader, you are black history,
5 as the first woman to lead a caucus. I salute
6 you.

7 I salute my mentor in the other
8 house, Assembly speaker Carl Heastie, who I
9 interned with in 2004. He is black history.

10 As I walk through the halls and I
11 see interns and staff members, be reminded that
12 you are part of black history, we are all part of
13 black history.

14 There are pivotal moments in certain
15 people's lives where they say, Where were you on
16 this day? Well, that day for me was November 4,
17 2008. Some people say where were you when
18 Dr. King was killed, where were you when Kennedy
19 was shot? Well, I can tell you about November 4,
20 2008.

21 Woke up at 6:00 in the morning with
22 all the vigor in the world, ready to go vote.
23 Going to my poll site, St. Luke's Episcopal
24 Church on 222nd Street and Barnes Avenue. I had
25 voted in pretty much every election since I was

1 able to, so I figured if I got there at 6:00 I'd
2 get out at 6:05 and I'd be fine. But no, there
3 was a line -- from 222nd Street to 225th Street,
4 three city blocks.

5 And usually when you have lines that
6 extend three city blocks, there's a level of
7 consternation, there's a level of disarray or
8 anger. Not on this day. Not on November 4,
9 2008, when we were primed to elect President
10 Barack Obama.

11 That day, going from that line and
12 waiting on line and speaking to people about how
13 excited they were, about the opportunity that
14 they finally had to vote for an African-American
15 to be the president, to be the leader of a
16 country that had in the past enslaved them --
17 what a moment.

18 That night, watched the election
19 results and called my grandfather James. Born in
20 1929, my grandfather would have never thought to
21 see the day where a black man would be president
22 of the United States. All I heard on the other
23 end of the line was silence, but it was the most
24 comfortable silence that I had ever heard.

25 My grandfather was so happy and so

1 proud that day that something that he could never
2 imagine, growing up in rural North Carolina, took
3 place. The impossible, some would have it,
4 happened. That's where I was on November 4,
5 2008.

6 On November 5, 2008, I realized why
7 we still need to have Black History Month. I was
8 very excited about the election results, but I
9 arrived at a place where certain people were not
10 exactly too happy about that. And I realized
11 that we need to come together as one.

12 Understanding why this is such a
13 milestone for people of color, whether you voted
14 for him or not, whether you agree with his
15 policies or not -- the fact that you don't
16 understand why it was a milestone is a problem.
17 We can agree to disagree on many things, but
18 milestones are milestones. Accomplishments are
19 accomplishments. That's where I was, that
20 where-were-you moment.

21 Now, in the 21st century way of
22 thinking, my 3-year-old daughter Giada, the other
23 day she was going through my phone and she saw a
24 Bitmoji, she saw a "Celebrate Black History"
25 Bitmoji and she said, "Dad, what's that?" "Oh,"

1 I said, "this is black history." And she said,
2 "What's black history, Dad? I'm brown."

3 You are, my dear. But part of your
4 history as a young African-American and
5 Puerto Rican is to understand that what came
6 before you will shape where you're going.

7 We plant trees under a shade that we
8 may never see, but we still plant trees. Not
9 simply for the oxygen that the trees provide so
10 that we can breathe, not simply for the shade or
11 the sap if it's a maple tree, or what fruits may
12 come from it, but we plant that for the next
13 generation, for my 3-year-old, Giada, and my
14 1-year-old, Carina, black history is -- again, as
15 Senator Sanders and everybody else said, it's
16 American history.

17 And understanding that as they come
18 into contact with people in other areas and of
19 other ethnic backgrounds, to be proud of who they
20 are is very important. So I ask that we don't
21 reflect on black history just in February, that
22 we think about black history as American history
23 and think about the black people who have done
24 amazing things to let this country be where we
25 are today.

1 You know, last year I spoke about
2 Curt Flood, who challenged the reserve clause,
3 who is the modern father of free agency. We have
4 to think about these things we think about what
5 happens in everyday life. People of color have
6 been involved in the development of this country,
7 and don't let anybody ever tell you that it's the
8 other way around.

9 Thank you, Mr. President.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
11 Comrie.

12 SENATOR COMRIE: Thank you,
13 Mr. President.

14 I want to commend Leader Cousins for
15 doing this annual recognition of Black History
16 Month. I want to thank Senator Larkin for his
17 heartfelt speech and reminding us that we are all
18 one people and we all need to remind each other
19 every day that we are one people, in the true
20 spirit of America.

21 It's appropriate on Fort Drum Day,
22 when we honor our military, that they're here
23 during Black History Month -- American History
24 Month. That every day should be about the
25 history of our people, about what we do as

1 Americans, how we bring each other together, how
2 we find our common purpose and how we can
3 continue to respect our history, acknowledge our
4 heroes and sheroes of what has gone on before us.

5 And as I see the Future Farmers of
6 America that are here today also, I would also
7 encourage them to explore your history, explore
8 and accept your culture, embrace your history,
9 embrace your parents' past, embrace your
10 ethnicity, and always celebrate yourself.

11 This is a month that is technically
12 Black History Month, but it's a time for us to
13 all reflect on who we are and who got us here,
14 whose shoulders we were able to walk upon and
15 follow and emulate to give us the wherewithal to
16 be legislators, to give us the desire to be
17 public servants, to give us the opportunity to be
18 elected to office.

19 I've reflected, during this time, on
20 the people that gave me the idea and inspiration
21 to be in public service. I grew up in an
22 Episcopal church. My parents have come from
23 Jamaica, West Indies. My church, during the time
24 that I grew up, was a safe haven. It was a place
25 where people acted, they didn't talk. They came

1 to church every Sunday, they mentored us by their
2 example, they gave us a safe environment to be,
3 they gave us people that mentored us in small
4 ways and large ways. I grew up in a church that
5 was loving to people that they didn't know, and
6 they led by example. They understood that if
7 they looked back and took care of their young
8 people, if they looked back and worked in a
9 Sunday school, if they looked back and they
10 worked on the altar, if they looked back and they
11 were the church treasurer, they took time to
12 reach down and to let young people know that
13 there was a living example of steady,
14 compassionate, dedicated service.

15 And it was that that gave me the
16 roots to understand that I wanted to be in
17 service as well.

18 My parents, the most dedicated
19 people, that continued to work every day. We
20 look to -- oftentimes we look to great heroes and
21 to illustrious figures, but we have many people
22 in our communities today that are the real heroes
23 and sheroes of our community. And I wanted to
24 stand up today to just applaud all of them, those
25 people that set examples by getting up and going

1 to work every morning, by getting up and
2 volunteering in groups, by getting up and being
3 part of civic associations, part of different
4 organizations to give back to the youth or help
5 seniors.

6 Those are our heroes and sheroes.
7 Those are the people that we need to make sure
8 that we honor on a daily basis. Those are the
9 people that are passing on their culture, passing
10 on their ethnicity, passing on their history.
11 And Black History Month is a time to reflect on
12 all of that. It's bigger than just one culture
13 or one people. It's the understanding that we
14 all have to move together to make this a better
15 union, to make this a better country, to make
16 this a better State Senate, and to make our lives
17 better for our children. Because at the end of
18 the day, we're all trying to make life better for
19 the next generation.

20 So I stand today to acknowledge
21 Black History Month and thank the speaker and
22 thank all the speakers today. But I just want to
23 remind us that we're all here to try to do better
24 for the next generation.

25 Thank you, Mr. President.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
2 Parker.

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

5 I guess I rise to add my voice to my
6 colleagues who are celebrating Black History
7 Month this year. And let me begin, as many of my
8 colleagues did as well, by acknowledging Senator
9 Andrea Stewart-Cousins and the amazing work that
10 she has done as both our leader and as living
11 history in this body.

12 We don't think about it, but as I'm
13 in my 16th year here I've had an opportunity,
14 over every single time, to vote and elect for an
15 African-American to lead the Democratic
16 Conference of the State Senate. And that's
17 history within itself. Right? That's the
18 longest contiguous stretch of African-American
19 leadership in the entire State of New York.
20 Right? And so we don't think about the fact that
21 all of us are part of that history.

22 And I'm going to talk a little bit,
23 I guess, not just talking about Black History
24 Month but really using what I think is a more
25 appropriate phrase in African-American History

1 Month. And I'm changing the lexicon around,
2 African-American from black, for very specific
3 reasons. And in part because when you talk about
4 African-American, it puts you in a global context
5 of understanding that the people that we are
6 talking about just don't appear out of nowhere,
7 but they come from a very specific place.

8 Black History Month was created in
9 1926 by Carter G. Woodson, a historian, who had
10 started an organization, the Association for the
11 Study of African American Life and History. And
12 in creating that organization, it really was
13 about giving African-Americans an understanding
14 of who they were on not just a global stage, but
15 historically. Because there was an attempt to
16 essentially erase the contributions of African
17 people from the face of history in this world,
18 literally. Literally.

19 And so it's nice to talk about, you
20 know, people here and -- you know, and all the
21 things that are going on, but there really has to
22 be an understanding about why we celebrate this
23 month. This month just doesn't come about
24 because black people feel bad for themselves
25 because they've been oppressed and they need

1 something to uplift themselves. But this really,
2 in 1926, was about life and death. This really
3 was about people not having access to the
4 understanding of history.

5 So now we can go back and we can
6 name all these people and we understand the
7 historical context, but all that comes because
8 Carter G. Woodson, you know, decided that this
9 was something that needed to be done, and he
10 decided that that was going to be his
11 contribution to our history, was to have us
12 understand and focus on history.

13 He chose February because of two
14 reasons, because of the birthday of Lincoln,
15 which is February 12th, and then the birthday of
16 Frederick Douglass, which was February 14th. And
17 we heard, vis-a-vis Senator Funke's resolution a
18 couple of weeks ago, about Frederick Douglass and
19 his contribution.

20 And so this month is critical, but I
21 want us to understand that the history of
22 African-Americans doesn't begin in 1619 with the
23 first ships bringing African people in
24 enslavement here to the shores of America.
25 Right? That the history of African people and

1 African-Americans begins in Africa. And so you
2 can't understand African-Americans unless you
3 understand Africa. Right?

4 Malcolm X was famous for saying
5 that, you know, just because a cat has kittens in
6 the oven, it doesn't make them biscuits. Right?
7 We didn't transform ourselves -- we're not -- we
8 are people of African descent. We are African
9 people. Just because we were born here in
10 America don't make us any less African. Right?
11 And the same way you heard Senator Larkin earlier
12 stand up and refer to himself as being Irish.
13 Right? Different oven, different cat, still not
14 a biscuit. Right?

15 African people are no less African
16 because we were born in North Carolina or Detroit
17 or New York or Trinidad, Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba or
18 Brazil. We're still African people. And so you
19 have to understand that history in order to
20 understand the undergirdings of what you get when
21 you get here in the United States.

22 And that's part of what Carter G.
23 Woodson wanted people to understand, is to give a
24 global and historical context. When you go and
25 you look at the great civilizations of the world,

1 you know, we often begin with, you know, Greece
2 and Rome. Which are great places to start,
3 Senator Gianaris. But we oftentimes skip over
4 Africa, right, the great civilization of Kemet.
5 Right?

6 The people of Kemet, it says that
7 if -- let me just go back and say this. If you
8 want to understand this history, let's go all the
9 way back. And when you find not just the first
10 humanoid, but when you find the current humanoid,
11 right, Homo sapiens sapiens, all of those
12 humanoids are actually found on the continent of
13 Africa. Right? So to the degree we have an
14 Eden, if Eden exists, right, regardless of what
15 your religious context is, if Eden exists, Eden
16 exists on the continent of Africa. Right?

17 And those people who started both
18 Nubia, Kush, and what's called Kemet -- or what
19 you commonly refer to as ancient Egypt -- say
20 that they began in a place where they say that we
21 came from the valley at the base of the Mountain
22 of the Moon. Right? Those of you who know
23 geography know that the Mountain of the Moon is
24 Kilimanjaro. Right? Functionally becoming the
25 cradle of civilization, the first significant

1 cradle of civilization in the world.

2 And so when you look at, you know,
3 ancient Egypt and you look at the Pyramids and
4 the Sphinx and all those things -- Aba symbol --
5 you're talking about African history. You're
6 talking about the underpinnings of where African
7 people come from. African people did not come to
8 this continent -- sorry, come -- well, come to
9 the New World, let me phrase it that way, come to
10 the New World tabula rasa -- in Latin, a blank
11 slate. Right? They didn't come here tabula
12 rasa.

13 But the history was told to people
14 in a way that African people had not contributed
15 anything to the world. And that was done
16 systematically in order to justify the
17 enslavement of African people. You can't enslave
18 people and use them as chattel if you first don't
19 dehumanize them. Right? Which is why certain
20 kinds of names -- people go, like, what's in a
21 name? Right? Shakespeare teaches us a rose by
22 any other name smells just as sweet. However,
23 what Shakespeare misses is that calling something
24 what it's not allows you to treat it in a
25 different way.

1 And so we don't understand African
2 people as people. Which is why I say, you know,
3 African people were never slaves. They were
4 enslaved, but never slaves. A slave is a thing.
5 And they never succumbed to their condition.

6 So when you study the history, one
7 of the things you find is a history of
8 resistance. African people did not sit on, you
9 know, plantations just working day by day and not
10 fighting back, which is what people would have
11 you believe.

12 And that history of fighting, if you
13 understand African history, is a history that you
14 see. But also the history of -- that history of
15 fighting on the continents is also what allowed
16 Europeans to come in and exploit that division.
17 That's why it's important for everyone to
18 understand the history and understand that Carter
19 G. Woodson wasn't actually explaining the history
20 for everybody, he was really saying
21 African-Americans need to understand their own
22 history. Right? Going back to Egypt.

23 They say, on one of the important
24 pyramids, "Know thyself." Know thyself. Or, as
25 my father used to tell me all the time, how do

1 you know where you're going if you don't know
2 where you've been? And if you don't know where
3 you're going, then any road will take you there.
4 Right?

5 And so African-American History
6 Month is an opportunity for us to begin looking
7 at our own history as people of African descent.

8 And Senator Sanders is absolutely
9 right that African-American history is certainly
10 American history and certainly ought to be not
11 just studied as a discrete course, but also
12 integrated into all of the courses that are
13 taught, not just K through 12, but also in our
14 universities.

15 I'm supportive of a bill that
16 Senator Hamilton has that actually would require
17 African-American history to be taught in our
18 public schools. It's certainly something that we
19 should be thinking about taking up this session
20 and making it the law in the State of New York,
21 being that, you know, we feel so good about
22 African-American History Month today. Maybe
23 we'll take it up. We've got -- what's today's
24 date? We've got about 21 more days, or something
25 like that, to take it up. Let's take that bill

1 up and pass it on the floor of the Senate as a
2 worthy tribute.

3 Senator Larkin challenged us to do
4 something. What are we doing about
5 African-American history, he said. Here's an
6 opportunity for us to do something. Take up
7 Senator Hamilton's bill, let's pass it, let's
8 make African-American history a required course
9 in every single school in the State of New York.
10 Because that history is American history, and
11 people have to understand that context.

12 By understanding that history, you
13 understand certain things like, for instance, the
14 role of the black church. Oftentimes we talk
15 about the black church, we think that -- we talk
16 about the black church as a default institution.
17 We talk about it like the only thing that black
18 people could do is go to church, so that's why
19 they organize in churches now.

20 And although that's logical from the
21 history, it's actually wrong. And you have lots
22 of great historians who get this point absolutely
23 wrong. And they get it wrong because they begin
24 in 1619 instead of going back to Egypt.

25 If you look at great

1 civilizations -- not just Egypt, but you look at
2 the Mali Empire, not to be confused with Mali the
3 country, which actually took its name from the
4 empire. If you look at the great Ghana Empire --
5 again, the country of Ghana took its name from
6 the Empire of Ghana. Right? If you look at the
7 Yoruba societies, right, the Akan, the Fulani,
8 the Twa, right, the Khoisan people, who were the
9 first people on the planet, right, who you refer
10 to as the pygmies, right, when you look at these
11 societies, they are very spiritual societies. In
12 fact, they have no secular societies in
13 traditional African culture. Which means that
14 nothing exists outside of God.

15 So that when African people get here
16 and they start getting introduced to God, they're
17 like, Oh, yeah. Yeah, we know who God is. We
18 got that. Oh, in fact we organize everything
19 under God. That in fact you look at the Yoruba
20 people and you find somebody called the Oluwo
21 Ifa, who is their spiritual leader. He's both
22 president and pope. Amongst the Akan people in
23 Ghana, right, you have the Asantehene. And the
24 Asantehene is both president and pope.

25 So then when you come here and you

1 start -- you know, people are enslaved and they
2 have rebellions, who are they organizing under?
3 Nat Turner, Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey, to
4 name a few. All what? Pastors. Because for
5 African people, you can't have -- leadership is
6 not divine leadership.

7 It is not any mistake that you in
8 fact find that the first thing that Marcus
9 Garvey, who creates the largest black
10 organization in the world, the UNIA, the
11 Universal Negro Improvement Association -- the
12 first thing he creates is the African Orthodox
13 Church. Right? It is the African Orthodox
14 Church and the army he produces that produces a
15 gentleman named the Honorable Elijah Muhammad,
16 which creates the Nation of Islam, and which
17 Malcolm X comes out of.

18 Right? And so there's a lineage
19 that is connected in this history that comes out
20 of the fact that African people really understand
21 and have what I refer to as an African spiritual
22 epistemology. That is, they understand truth and
23 knowledge vis-a-vis their relationship to the
24 spirit world.

25 And so it doesn't really matter what

1 religion it is, right, they're not organized
2 around religion. They happen to be primarily
3 Christians and Protestants, because that was what
4 they had exposure to. But most of you know that
5 50 percent of the Muslim population in the United
6 States is African-American. Right? What you
7 don't find is the National Association of Black
8 Atheists.

9 But again, this is something that
10 you only would know and understand if in fact you
11 study the history. Right? And that history then
12 allows us to understand the way in which we need
13 to interact with people and how people move
14 through the world.

15 And so as I close, I challenge us
16 not just to look at the famous names and places
17 of people -- certainly people like Sojourner
18 Truth and Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner, Gabriel
19 Prosser, Denmark Vesey, Booker T. Washington,
20 W.E.B. Du Bois, Medgar Evers, Marcus Mosiah
21 Garvey, Honorable Elijah Muhammad, Martin Luther
22 King, Ralph Abernathy, Stokely Carmichael. Not
23 only are these names important, just as
24 individual heroes and sheroes of African-American
25 movement, but to really understand the context in

1 which African-Americans have moved and how they
2 have contributed to the larger society.

3 Certainly people like the first
4 African-American president are critical for us to
5 understand. But even he comes out of -- you
6 know, one of the big debates was about his church
7 upbringing. Which was critical for him, because
8 he needed to in fact give the signal to
9 African-Americans that, look, I'm one of y'all.
10 I'm one of y'all. Right?

11 And so this becomes, I think, an
12 opportunity, a jumping-off point. This shouldn't
13 be the end of our conversation about
14 African-American history, but this month should
15 become the jumping-off point from which we
16 integrate African-American history and
17 understanding throughout the year. Which then
18 also allows us to add other people's
19 understanding to the conversation. And that's
20 what becomes the beauty and really the strength
21 of America.

22 So despite what we see, you know,
23 coming out of Washington, really the strength of
24 America, or what Senator Sanders calls this great
25 American experiment, is about the strength in our

1 diversity. Right? The fact that we are stronger
2 together. And that by working together, we can
3 go further. They say the -- let me end with this
4 African proverb. If you want to go fast, go
5 alone. If you want to go far, go together.

6 Thank you, Mr. President.

7 (Applause.)

8 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: A brief
9 announcement. There will be an Investigations
10 Committee Meeting immediately following session,
11 instead of the original scheduled time, in the
12 LOB in Room 816. And that's again the
13 Investigations Committee.

14 With that, Senator Hamilton.

15 SENATOR HAMILTON: Mr. President, I
16 rise for Black History Month. And I welcome all
17 the young boys and girls in the gallery for being
18 here, up in Albany, in the Senate chambers.

19 And I just wanted to follow up with
20 Senator Parker and follow up with Senator Larkin.
21 And Senator Larkin asked us, what are we doing
22 about black history? What are we doing to make
23 America great?

24 And so I -- in Albany, a young lady
25 came to my office and she said, "Senator

1 Hamilton, how come in school the only thing we
2 learn about black history is slavery, Martin
3 Luther King, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet
4 Tubman?" And I said to myself, you know, why are
5 we only teaching a limited amount of facts of
6 what African-Americans have contributed to
7 America?

8 And then I had some young ladies
9 come for a hackathon from Brownsville to Medgar
10 Evers College, and they came to Medgar Evers
11 College, and I asked them, "Do you know where
12 you're at?" And they said, "We're at Medgar
13 Evers College." And then I asked the young
14 ladies, "Do you know who Medgar Evers was?" And
15 none of them could mention Medgar Evers' name.

16 And through that, I said black
17 history should not be only once a month, the
18 shortest month of the year, but black history
19 should be taught in our classes from kindergarten
20 through high school.

21 And so when Senator Larkin asked
22 what are we doing to make America better, what we
23 can do is incorporate the accomplishments of
24 African-Americans in our schoolbooks so our young
25 boys and girls can see positive images of

1 themselves when they go to school.

2 So I plead upon my colleagues in the
3 Senate that when this bill comes up to introduce
4 African-American history not just one day, one
5 month out of the year, but all through the school
6 year from kindergarten through 12th grade, we can
7 incorporate what we've done in math, in science,
8 literature, like Langston Hughes.

9 So we have contributed so much, but
10 for some reason black history is excluded from
11 the history of our state and of our country. So
12 I plead upon everybody and my Senators to vote on
13 the bill that will include black history in our
14 curriculum and have more diversity in how we
15 teach each other, and to make this country a
16 better country where we're all working together
17 peacefully rather than working apart.

18 Thank you everyone, and thank you
19 for everybody coming here today. Thank you, take
20 care.

21 (Applause.)

22 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: No other
23 members wishing to be heard? Okay.

24 Okay. The question now is on the
25 resolution. All in favor please signify by

1 saying aye.

2 (Response of "Aye.")

3 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Opposed,
4 nay.

5 (No response.)

6 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The
7 resolution is adopted.

8 Senator Stewart-Cousins has agreed
9 to open this resolution up for cosponsorship. If
10 a member would like to be a cosponsor, they
11 should notify the desk.

12 Senator Funke.

13 SENATOR FUNKE: Mr. President, we
14 have several groups in the gallery that we want
15 to recognize today, including some important
16 youth groups that are here. Would you call on
17 Senator Akshar for that.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
19 Akshar for purposes of an introduction.

20 SENATOR AKSHAR: Mr. President,
21 thank you very much for your indulgence.

22 It is certainly a busy day here in
23 this chamber, but nonetheless it's a great day.
24 I'm reminded, by the conversations that we're
25 having down here on the floor, how incredibly

1 blessed I am to be serving in this great house.

2 It's a great day for our young
3 people to be in this chamber. We are talking
4 about and celebrating Fort Drum, Black History
5 Month. We're talking about history, we're
6 talking about service, talking about diversity.
7 And you can feel the passion regardless of what
8 people are talking about.

9 And today I'm standing up to
10 acknowledge a group of young people who have a
11 great deal of passion in everything that they do.
12 Mr. President, we have with us the New York State
13 Reality Check Regional Youth Advocates of the
14 Year.

15 And Reality Check, as many of us
16 know in this room, is a youth action program that
17 is funded by the New York State Department of
18 Health, Bureau of Tobacco Control. And they aim
19 to decrease tobacco use in youth and protect our
20 youth from exposure to tobacco marketing.

21 Smoking costs the taxpayers of this
22 state nearly \$10.4 billion a year. Of course we
23 know how big the budget is, but I'm not here to
24 acknowledge budget deficits or talk about numbers
25 today, I am here to talk about the good work that

1 all of our young people are doing.

2 And I want to acknowledge them
3 because I'm proud of the work that they are doing
4 in their respective communities, specifically in
5 Senate District 52 and throughout this great
6 state. So if you'll indulge me, I want to give a
7 brief shout-out. And I'll ask you to stand if
8 you're in the audience, of course.

9 The Capital Region Youth Advocate,
10 Mikhail Hailu -- if I didn't say that right, I
11 apologize -- Schuylerville Central School. The
12 Western Region Youth Advocate, Zoe Kaminski,
13 Depew High School. Morrow Region Youth Advocate
14 of the Year Ryan Minard, Wallkill Senior High
15 School. And finally, the Central Region Youth
16 Advocate of the Year, Jacob Brady, from Johnson
17 City High School, repping SD 52 like a champ.
18 Thank you, I'm glad to see you're doing well.

19 Let me just talk about Jacob if I
20 may, very briefly. All of the young people who
21 are standing -- and Senator Funke I know is going
22 to acknowledge others -- are incredibly talented,
23 they're passionate, they're motivated young
24 people. And Jacob, I just want to acknowledge
25 your good work back home in Senate District 52.

1 You have engaged local community
2 leaders, which is not always an easy thing to do,
3 especially when you're a young person. To my
4 understanding, you didn't shy away from the news
5 media either, which isn't always our friend, of
6 course. I'm glad you took the message right to
7 the media and you made sure that they understood
8 what you stood for.

9 And thanks to your good work, it's
10 my understanding that the mayor in Johnson City
11 has listened to you, and he's currently working
12 with the village board and they're exploring
13 licensing tobacco retailers.

14 I also want to give a shout-out to
15 Keonna Browne -- Keonna, stand up -- statewide
16 Honorable Mention Youth Advocate from Binghamton
17 High School, doing remarkable work.

18 So I want to thank all of you for
19 the work that you're doing. I want to thank the
20 advocates that are with you.

21 I tell young people all the time
22 when I'm back at home, you can do anything you
23 want in life, you can accomplish whatever it
24 is -- and this is for all of the young people
25 that are in the chamber today -- if you do two

1 things. If you work hard and you dream big, you
2 can accomplish whatever it is that you set out to
3 do.

4 I would argue that you're already
5 doing those things. You're already working
6 incredibly hard and you're dreaming big because
7 you are incredibly successful.

8 So our future is in good hands
9 because of the hard work that all of you young
10 people are doing. And please know that you
11 always have the support of Team Akshar.

12 Mr. President, thank you for your
13 indulgence.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Not at
15 all, we are -- oh, Senator Funke.

16 SENATOR FUNKE: Thank you,
17 Mr. President. I wanted to take the opportunity
18 to recognize Lauren Sibel, a senior at Pittsford
19 Sutherland High School, on her outstanding
20 achievement in being awarded Reality Check of
21 New York's Youth Advocate of the Year Award for
22 her outstanding advocacy on the numerous and
23 deadly effects of tobacco use.

24 Due to Lauren's advocacy efforts
25 over the three years that she was involved in the

1 Monroe County Reality Check program, the program
2 has seen outstanding growth and great success.
3 Monroe County is truly lucky to have you, Lauren,
4 and we thank you for being here today and we
5 thank all of the advocates for being with us
6 today.

7 And perhaps they could stand,
8 Mr. President.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: On behalf
10 of the Senate, we are very proud to be honoring
11 today Reality check and all of the youth
12 advocates, their volunteers and chaperones and
13 faculty who make this possible. We'd ask you all
14 to please stand and be recognized by this body.

15 (Standing ovation.)

16 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
17 Funke.

18 SENATOR FUNKE: Mr. President,
19 would you now call on Senator Gianaris to
20 introduce a group in the gallery.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
22 Gianaris, for purposes of an introduction.

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

25 There's been numerous references

1 this session to the young people who are in our
2 gallery, and I want to thank them for their
3 patience. They've seen a number of remarks and
4 legislative activity today, and they're here to
5 learn.

6 I have a group from Western Queens
7 here called the Growing Up Green Middle School.
8 They come here every year. They are a great part
9 of Western Queens, and a school that hasn't been
10 around for too many years -- we were there at its
11 opening. But they're doing terrific work, and
12 their student government is here to watch us work
13 today. In fact, I think one of them chose to
14 vote on the last resolution when you asked who
15 was in favor.

16 (Laughter.)

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: So they're
18 getting ready.

19 But I do want to acknowledge their
20 presence here. We have the entire student
21 government here, but particularly I want to call
22 out President Piyush Barua, Secretary Megan
23 Tehomilic, 8th Grade Rep Elly Tuffy, 7th Grade
24 Rep Dina O'Leary. Alex Gobright is the teacher
25 and staff sponsor for the student government,

1 who's also come with them. And of course my good
2 friend Erin Acosta, who is the community and
3 family engagement coordinator. And they're also
4 joined by several of their parents as well as
5 other students.

6 So, Mr. President, if you would
7 extend the courtesies of the house to them and
8 welcome them once again here to the Senate
9 chamber, I would appreciate it.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: We would
11 like to extend our congratulations to all of the
12 individuals who have come from Growing Up Green
13 Middle School, students from student government.
14 We extend to you the privileges and courtesies of
15 the house -- oh, there you are, sorry. And we
16 would ask that you all please stand so that this
17 body may acknowledge you.

18 (Applause.)

19 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
20 Funke.

21 SENATOR FUNKE: Mr. President, can
22 we take up previously adopted Resolution Number
23 3374, by Senator Ritchie, read the title only,
24 and then call on myself to speak about that.
25 Thank you.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The
2 Secretary will read.

3 THE SECRETARY: Legislative
4 Resolution Number 3374, by Senator Ritchie,
5 memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to
6 proclaim February 17-24, 2018, as FFA Week in the
7 State of New York.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
9 Funke.

10 SENATOR FUNKE: Mr. President, I
11 rise today to recognize not only FFA Week but
12 also to welcome guests from FFA chapters from
13 across the state.

14 We all know that farmers have one of
15 the hardest jobs there is, working from sunup
16 till sundown growing fresh healthy food that
17 feeds people from across the globe.

18 My dad was a vegetable farmer, so I
19 can attest to what it's like to do the weeding
20 and the watering and the picking. That's why I
21 find it so admirable that these young people who
22 are visiting us today have decided to be part of
23 New York State's leading industry.

24 The skills these students are
25 developing through FFA are helping them not only

1 to learn about farming, but also to learn about
2 being leaders. And when you meet these young
3 people, they are so incredibly impressive.

4 As a member of the Senate
5 Agriculture Committee, I am proud to work with
6 Chairwoman Ritchie and my colleagues to encourage
7 young people to join the ranks of our hardworking
8 farmers. And I know that because of their hard
9 work and interest in farming, the future of this
10 industry in New York State is in good hands.

11 The theme of this year's FFA Week is
12 "I can, we will." I'd like to thank the students
13 here today and all of those who are part of FFA
14 across the state for their desire to be part of
15 the changing face of agriculture, and for being a
16 key part of making sure that this industry
17 remains vibrant for many years to come.

18 You can, and you will. And we need
19 to do our part in the Legislature as well.

20 Thank you, Mr. President.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
22 Golden on the resolution.

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

25 I rise and I look up into the

1 gallery and I see so many young minds that are
2 sitting up there observing all of our statesmen
3 today, whether it was on Black History Month,
4 with Senator Stewart-Cousins and Senator Larkin,
5 and of course Camp Drum Day, our military and the
6 great work that they do, not just for our state
7 but for our nation and for the world.

8 And of course I have a great school
9 up there from Brooklyn, we have a charter school
10 up there, the Hellenic Classical Charter School
11 in Brooklyn. Christina Tettonis is the
12 principal, and Mrs. Kapetanakis is the leading, I
13 guess, principal as well for the Hellenic School.

14 Give these kids a round of applause,
15 ladies and gentlemen, for their great work in
16 being here today and observing our statesmen and
17 observing what's going on here, as well as our
18 farmers.

19 I've got to tell you, I shook your
20 hands downstairs, I've seen the future of this
21 great state and the future of our country coming
22 into the 21st century. You are going to lead
23 that great economics that we will have here, the
24 the driving economics from farming that you will
25 bring to it.

1 And I'm impressed when I talk to
2 each and every one of you. From our Hellenic
3 School here in Brooklyn to our farmers across our
4 great state, I am impressed with all of these
5 young minds. And we have more young minds up
6 here. Stand up, all you farmers. Get up there,
7 all these farmers. Up, up, up, up, up, up, up.
8 Come on. The Future Farmers of America.

9 Give it up for our charter school,
10 give it up for our Future Farmers of America,
11 ladies and gentlemen, up behind us here as well.

12 (Standing ovation.)

13 SENATOR GOLDEN: Thank you, God
14 bless you, and keep up your great work. You're
15 learning a lot here today. You see what a great
16 state we live in, and you're going to make it
17 that much better a place to live, to raise a
18 family, and to stay in this great, great state.

19 Thank you, and God bless you.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
21 Funke.

22 SENATOR FUNKE: Mr. President, can
23 we now take up the noncontroversial reading of
24 the calendar.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: First, the

1 resolution, having been previously adopted, is
2 open for cosponsorship. If you would like to be
3 a cosponsor, please notify the desk.

4 The Secretary will read.

5 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 20,
6 by Senator Peralta, Senate Print 7292, an act to
7 amend a chapter of the Laws of 2017.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
9 last section.

10 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
11 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
12 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2017.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
14 roll.

15 (The Secretary called the roll.)

16 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
18 is passed.

19 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 27,
20 by Senator LaValle, Senate Print 7299, an act to
21 amend the New York State Urban Development
22 Corporation Act.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
24 last section.

25 THE SECRETARY: Section 6. This

1 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
2 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2017.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
4 roll.

5 (The Secretary called the roll.)

6 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
7 Sanders to explain his vote.

8 SENATOR SANDERS: Thank you,
9 Mr. President.

10 I am not clear on why we need to put
11 this -- we all voted, we said this was a good
12 thing, we said that we will have regional
13 revolving loan funds. And I have no idea why we
14 are putting this off.

15 The need for the funds is there. I
16 suspect that the state has the money for the
17 funds. If that's the case, need and the money,
18 let's put the money out.

19 Thank you very much, Mr. President.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
21 Sanders will be recorded in the negative.

22 Announce the result.

23 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 59. Nays, 1.
24 Senator Sanders recorded in the negative.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill

1 is passed.

2 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 84,
3 by Senator Funke, Senate Print 839, an act to
4 amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
6 last section.

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

9 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
10 roll.

11 (The Secretary called the roll.)

12 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
14 is passed.

15 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
16 141, by Senator Marchione, Senate Print 1048, an
17 act to amend the Highway Law.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
19 last section.

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

22 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
23 roll.

24 (The Secretary called the roll.)

25 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
2 is passed.

3 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
4 153, by Senator Croci, Senate Print 945, an act
5 to amend the Public Health Law.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
7 last section.

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

10 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
11 roll.

12 (The Secretary called the roll.)

13 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
15 is passed.

16 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
17 178, by Senator Griffo, Senate Print 2421, an act
18 to amend the Banking Law.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
20 last section.

21 THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This
22 act shall take effect on the first of November.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
24 roll.

25 (The Secretary called the roll.)

1 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
2 Kavanagh to explain his vote.

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

5 I commend the intent of the sponsor
6 of this bill to ensure that certain situations
7 where somebody is attempting to rob a financial
8 institution may be threatening violence but not
9 actually displaying a weapon, that that crime be
10 treated in a manner similar to other Class E
11 felonies.

12 However, I believe this bill goes
13 too far in that direction by essentially making
14 it a Class E felony if you steal the property
15 that is owned by any banking institution or
16 credit union. It does not seem to restrict
17 itself to a situation where there's a threat of
18 violence.

19 It does not even seem to restrict
20 itself to what we typically think of as a bank
21 robbery. It seems to me that under this bill it
22 would be a Class E felony to steal a pencil or a
23 chair from a banking institution.

24 So while I applaud the sponsor for
25 the effort, and the Credit Union Association --

1 some of my favorite institutions in my own
2 district are credit unions -- I think this bill
3 is off the mark, and I'll be voting no.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Senator
5 Kavanagh to be recorded in the negative.

6 Announce the result.

7 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
8 Calendar 178, those recorded in the negative are
9 Senators Comrie, Hoylman, Kavanagh, Montgomery
10 and Sanders.

11 Ayes, 55. Nays, 5.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
13 is passed.

14 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
15 187, by Senator Felder, Senate Print 3241, an act
16 to amend the General City Law.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
18 last section.

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

21 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
22 roll.

23 (The Secretary called the roll.)

24 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill

1 is passed.

2 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
3 193, by Senator Larkin, Senate Print 2387,
4 Concurrent Resolution of the Senate and Assembly.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Please
6 call the roll on the resolution.

7 (The Secretary called the roll.)

8 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The
10 resolution is passed.

11 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
12 195, by Senator Helming, Senate Print 4539, an
13 act to amend the Real Property Law.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
15 last section.

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

18 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
19 roll.

20 (The Secretary called the roll.)

21 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
23 is passed.

24 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
25 206, by Senator Valesky, Senate Print 1860, an

1 act to amend the Canal Law.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
3 last section.

4 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
5 act shall take effect on the 180th day.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
7 roll.

8 (The Secretary called the roll.)

9 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
11 is passed.

12 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
13 208, by Senator Griffo, Senate Print 2539, an act
14 to amend the Vehicle and Traffic Law.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
16 last section.

17 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
18 act shall take effect on the 90th day.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
20 roll.

21 (The Secretary called the roll.)

22 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
24 is passed.

25 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number

1 210, by Senator O'Mara, Senate Print 4086A, an
2 act to amend the Vehicle and Traffic Law.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Read the
4 last section.

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

7 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: Call the
8 roll.

9 (The Secretary called the roll.)

10 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: The bill
12 is passed.

13 Senator Funke, that completes the
14 reading of the noncontroversial calendar.

15 SENATOR FUNKE: Mr. President, one
16 more reminder. Investigations is going to meet
17 following session in Room 816 in the Legislative
18 Office Building.

19 Is there any further business at the
20 desk?

21 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: There is
22 no further business before the desk.

23 SENATOR FUNKE: I move we adjourn
24 until Monday, February 12th, at 3:00 p.m.,
25 intervening days being legislative days.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT CROCI: On motion,
2 the Senate stands adjourned until Monday,
3 February 12th, at 3:00 p.m., intervening days
4 being legislative days.

5 (Whereupon, at 1:27 p.m., the Senate
6 adjourned.)

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