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NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

ALBANY, NEW YORK

January 9, 2019

1:10 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR KATHLEEN C. HOCHUL, President

ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

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

2 THE PRESIDENT: The Senate will
3 come to order.

4 I ask everyone present to please
5 rise and join me in reciting the Pledge of
6 Allegiance.

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

9 THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

10 Our invocation today will be given
11 by the Reverend Erwin Trollinger, pastor of
12 Calvary Baptist Church in White Plains,
13 New York.

14 REVEREND TROLLINGER: May we bow
15 our heads.

16 Gracious Father, we thank You for
17 this time and this event that You have called us
18 into. We've come to this moment in humble
19 reverence. We acknowledge Your will, Your plan
20 and Your potential that you have placed in every
21 elected and appointed official in this place.

22 Today, Father, fifty years ago You
23 orchestrated the swearing-in of the first
24 African-American woman into the United States
25 House of Representatives. And we are here now

1 in this chamber to witness your orchestration of
2 the first African-American woman to become the
3 Majority Leader of the New York State Senate.
4 For this we say thank You, for allowing us to
5 witness this moment, this time and this moment
6 of history that You have shown up and shown out.

7 Bless now this woman, this mother,
8 this Senator, and now this Majority Leader.
9 Grant her the wisdom that she will ask You for,
10 grant her the knowledge that she will seek You
11 for, grant her the understanding that she will
12 pray for.

13 I pray also, Father, for every
14 elected official in this Senate, that You may
15 guide them to help New York State to be a good
16 place.

17 I also pray for our Governor and
18 his cabinet.

19 And lastly, Father, I pray that You
20 will allow our Majority Leader, our Governor,
21 and our State Assembly that they will be that
22 three-strand cord that cannot be easily broken.

23 I ask you, Father, to grant this
24 prayer based upon the Africans that were
25 captured, based upon the survivors of the

1 Middle Passage, based upon the humanity that was
2 enslaved, based upon the sharecroppers, based
3 upon the women's suffrage movement, based upon
4 those who engage in civil rights, based upon the
5 immigrants of all generations that are here with
6 us now, based upon our senior citizens and our
7 children.

8 Grant this prayer in the words that
9 I have spoken with the motto of "Excelsior":
10 Upward, reaching onward and higher goals.

11 In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

12 THE PRESIDENT: Thank you,
13 Reverend.

14 The chair now hands down a message
15 from the State Board of Elections, being the
16 duly official certification of the members of
17 the Senate, and directs the same be filed. So
18 handed down and so ordered.

19 I'd also like to ask if there are
20 any Senators present who have not taken their
21 oaths of office, to please rise at this time.

22 (No response.)

23 THE PRESIDENT: Seeing none, the
24 Secretary will call the roll to ascertain that a
25 quorum exists.

1 THE SECRETARY: Senator Addabbo.
2 SENATOR ADDABBO: Here.
3 THE SECRETARY: Senator Akshar.
4 SENATOR AKSHAR: Present.
5 THE SECRETARY: Senator Amedore.
6 SENATOR AMEDORE: Present.
7 THE SECRETARY: Senator Antonacci.
8 SENATOR ANTONACCI: Present.
9 THE SECRETARY: Senator Bailey.
10 SENATOR BAILEY: Present.
11 THE SECRETARY: Senator Benjamin.
12 SENATOR BENJAMIN: Present.
13 THE SECRETARY: Senator Biaggi.
14 SENATOR BIAGGI: Present.
15 THE SECRETARY: Senator Boyle.
16 SENATOR BOYLE: Here.
17 THE SECRETARY: Senator Breslin.
18 SENATOR BRESLIN: Present.
19 THE SECRETARY: Senator Brooks.
20 SENATOR BROOKS: Present.
21 THE SECRETARY: Senator Carlucci.
22 SENATOR CARLUCCI: Present.
23 THE SECRETARY: Senator Comrie.
24 SENATOR COMRIE: Present.
25 THE SECRETARY: Senator Felder.

1 SENATOR FELDER: Here.
2 THE SECRETARY: Senator Flanagan,
3 excused.
4 Senator Funke.
5 SENATOR FUNKE: Here.
6 THE SECRETARY: Senator Gallivan.
7 SENATOR GALLIVAN: Here.
8 THE SECRETARY: Senator Gaughran.
9 SENATOR GAUGHRAN: Present.
10 THE SECRETARY: Senator Gianaris.
11 SENATOR GIANARIS: Here.
12 THE SECRETARY: Senator Griffo.
13 SENATOR GRIFFO: Here.
14 THE SECRETARY: Senator Gounardes.
15 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Present.
16 THE SECRETARY: Senator Harckham.
17 SENATOR HARCKHAM: Here.
18 THE SECRETARY: Senator Helming.
19 SENATOR HELMING: Here.
20 THE SECRETARY: Senator Hoylman.
21 SENATOR HOYLMAN: Here.
22 THE SECRETARY: Senator Jackson.
23 SENATOR JACKSON: Here.
24 THE SECRETARY: Senator Jacobs,
25 excused.

1 Senator Jordan.

2 SENATOR JORDAN: Present.

3 THE SECRETARY: Senator Kaminsky.

4 SENATOR KAMINSKY: Here.

5 THE SECRETARY: Senator Kaplan.

6 SENATOR KAPLAN: Here.

7 THE SECRETARY: Senator Kavanagh,

8 excused.

9 Senator Kennedy.

10 SENATOR KENNEDY: Here.

11 THE SECRETARY: Senator Krueger.

12 SENATOR KRUEGER: Here.

13 THE SECRETARY: Senator Lanza.

14 SENATOR LANZA: Here.

15 THE SECRETARY: Senator LaValle.

16 SENATOR LaVALLE: Here.

17 THE SECRETARY: Senator Little.

18 SENATOR LITTLE: Present.

19 THE SECRETARY: Senator Liu.

20 SENATOR LIU: Here.

21 THE SECRETARY: Senator Martinez.

22 SENATOR MARTINEZ: Here.

23 THE PRESIDENT: A quorum is

24 present.

25 In keeping with the tradition of

1 this chamber, it's my honor, as the President of
2 the New York State Senate, to welcome you to this
3 2019 session.

4 And I'd first of all like to
5 acknowledge the presence of the distinguished
6 guests we have here. We have our New York State
7 Comptroller Tom DiNapoli in our midst.

8 Thank you for joining us,
9 Comptroller.

10 (Applause.)

11 THE PRESIDENT: And on this very
12 special occasion we have the senior women of the
13 Cuomo administration, as well as the first-ever
14 female Secretary to the Governor, Melissa DeRosa.

15 Thank you for joining us here today.

16 (Applause.)

17 THE PRESIDENT: Each January for
18 the past number of years, I've stood from this
19 unique perch and looked out and seen a chamber
20 filled with individuals with a passion for public
21 service. And I also pay tribute to those who sat
22 in these seats in the past. And while they may
23 no longer answer the roll call, they should be
24 proud of the difference that they made for their
25 constituents as they held the honorable title

1 "New York State Senator."

2 To those who are returning, I hope
3 you never lose that sense of awe that every one
4 of us felt upon entering these majestic chambers.

5 And so to our returning veteran
6 Senators -- and indeed, it's amazing to see how
7 people have risen in seniority -- welcome back.
8 As I visit all 62 counties every year, it's
9 incredible to witness the pride that each one of
10 you have in the districts you're proud to
11 represent, and the people you represent.

12 We gather here fully embracing the
13 weighty responsibilities entrusted to us by the
14 electorate. And whether you were drawn to public
15 service because there was a wrong you wanted to
16 right or an injustice you wanted to correct or a
17 challenge that your community was facing or you
18 simply had the desire to leave the world a better
19 place, to all of you, on behalf of Governor Cuomo
20 and myself, I say thank you for your service and
21 look forward to serving with you in a
22 collaborative fashion.

23 But to the new class of 17 Senators,
24 I look out and I see something I've been waiting
25 for far too long, and that's a lot of women. A

1 lot.

2 (Cheers; sustained applause.)

3 THE PRESIDENT: Twenty, in fact --
4 up from 13 since we last gathered -- nearly one
5 out of three.

6 And this body is also more
7 ethnically, racially, religiously and culturally
8 diverse than at any time in the 242-year history
9 of the State of New York.

10 (Applause.)

11 THE PRESIDENT: And that in itself
12 gives each of us such a tremendous sense of
13 pride.

14 But I know each of us is fully aware
15 that it's more important than just making
16 history, it's that we make a difference. And
17 that's why you travel here, leaving spouses and
18 families, and moms and dads saying goodbye to
19 children who aren't quite sure why mom and dad
20 are missing some important milestone, and in some
21 cases leaving newborns. I know there's a lot of
22 newborn babies among us. Senator Benjamin,
23 Senator Thomas, and the appropriately excused
24 Senator Jacobs, who I think has a one-day-old
25 baby.

1 So you're missing family milestones,
2 important parts of lives. So to your families,
3 to all the families gathered here today, I thank
4 you and recognize the sacrifice that you also
5 make to allow your loved one to come here and to
6 pose ideas and debate them and to pass
7 legislation, legislation that shows the rest of
8 the nation that indeed our great State of
9 New York can lead in enhancing the lives of
10 others and promoting progressive values.

11 And while I know no one ran for
12 office to break down barriers, on this day we
13 welcome the very first Indian American, the first
14 Iranian American, the first Taiwanese American
15 and the first Muslim to these chambers. I think
16 those breakthroughs deserve a round of applause
17 as well.

18 (Enthusiastic applause.)

19 THE PRESIDENT: And in a matter of
20 minutes, listen closely: We're going to hear the
21 shattering of this ceiling, the last great
22 frontier, as we break down that ceiling and this
23 body elects the most capable, the most
24 battle-tested, and the most qualified person to
25 be its leader. Who, by the way, happens to be a

1 woman and a woman of color. Senator Andrea
2 Stewart-Cousins, we're here to honor you as well.

3 (Cheers; extended standing ovation.)

4 THE PRESIDENT: Leader Cousins, I
5 know that you inspire me personally, and all the
6 women in this room. But more than that, you've
7 proven to every little girl in this state, brown,
8 black or white, that there are no more barriers
9 to hold them back because they can now look to
10 our state leadership for inspiration, that the
11 leader of the Senate is a woman, that two out of
12 four of the statewide elected officials, the
13 Attorney General and the Lieutenant Governor, are
14 women.

15 (Applause.)

16 THE PRESIDENT: And down the hall,
17 the majority leader of the New York State
18 Assembly is a woman.

19 So a new day has dawned in our
20 Capitol, and each and every one of you will
21 remember that you were here when history was
22 made.

23 And may we never forget why we
24 gathered on this frigid January day in the
25 Capitol of the greatest state in the nation, and

1 know that when we break on hopefully a warm,
2 sunny day in June and we gavel out the
3 242nd session, that the people of New York will
4 know that each and every one of you honored your
5 sacred oath of office that you took here today,
6 serving the people of New York to the very best
7 of your abilities.

8 Congratulations.

9 (Appause.)

10 THE PRESIDENT: I'd also like to
11 recognize and applaud the presence of our great
12 Assembly Speaker. Carl Heastie is here as well.

13 (Appause.)

14 THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris,
15 the floor is yours.

16 SENATOR GIANARIS: Good afternoon
17 and thank you, Madam President.

18 I believe there is a resolution at
19 the desk, Resolution Number 1, and I ask that it
20 be read and move for its immediate adoption.

21 THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will
22 read.

23 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
24 by Senator Gianaris, providing for the election
25 of Andrea Stewart-Cousins as Temporary President

1 of the Senate for the years 2019-2020.

2 THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris,
3 you may speak on the resolution.

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you, Madam
5 President.

6 And thank you to everyone who has
7 chosen to be with us on this historic day, and
8 congratulations to all my colleagues who are with
9 us in the chamber again.

10 In almost two and a half centuries,
11 the chambers housing New York's State Legislature
12 have seen a lot. They have seen coups, they have
13 seen ejected members, they have seen dueling
14 sessions on this very floor. They have seen
15 coleaders, they have seen coalition leaders.
16 They have seen indicted leaders. Yet in
17 241 years, the one thing neither house of our
18 state government has ever seen is a female
19 leader -- until today.

20 (Applause.)

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: Our historical
22 embarrassment ends today with the election of
23 Andrea Stewart-Cousins as our Majority Leader.
24 And what a great leader she will be.

25 When we act properly, this body

1 should select as leader the Senator among us who
2 represents the best of us, and Andrea
3 Stewart-Cousins is that person. Not just because
4 she possesses two X chromosomes, but because she
5 is uniquely suited to lead at this moment in
6 history, a moment when our nation is in crisis
7 and the best hope for America is found in our
8 state governments.

9 Andrea Stewart-Cousins understands
10 what responsible leadership requires of us
11 because her judgment and sober perspective are
12 second to none. Indeed, I have never known
13 anyone better at knowing when to temper emotions
14 and when to fuel them, at knowing when to react
15 angrily to injustice and when to forgive errors
16 in judgment, at knowing when to put carrots on
17 the plate and when to break out the stick.

18 Hers is a measured judgment born of
19 a lifetime of experience destined for this day.
20 Raised in New York City public housing, but also
21 decades as a resident of one of our great
22 suburbs. Someone who has felt discrimination up
23 close and personal, and who authored
24 Westchester's first human rights laws. Now
25 representing a district that is simultaneously

1 home to the poorest and the wealthiest of our
2 state and everything in between.

3 This experience provides her the
4 knowledge of what all New Yorkers require: A
5 government that is more responsive and
6 accountable to the needs of its residents;
7 increased access to healthcare; better education
8 for our children; more affordability for our
9 tenants and our homeowners alike; and, above all
10 else, the integrity to restore the public's faith
11 in our state government.

12 Years of public service clearly
13 establish Andrea Stewart-Cousins' high ethical
14 barometer and steady moral compass, traits that
15 are more important today than they've ever been.
16 I promise you this. Our selection of Andrea
17 Stewart-Cousins as Majority Leader will be one
18 that we can be proud of and will never regret.

19 My colleagues, after 241 long years,
20 it is time to turn the page in this chamber and
21 begin a new chapter. It is time for the
22 proverbial "three men in the room" to say goodbye
23 to everything they thought they knew about how
24 government should be run.

25 (Laughter; applause.)

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: The winds of
2 change are sweeping a fabulous scarf into your
3 room, and things will never be the same.

4 (Laughter.)

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: It is finally
6 time for a woman's touch in the highest position
7 in this body. My colleagues, it is time for
8 Andrea Stewart-Cousins to serve as
9 Majority Leader.

10 Thank you.

11 (Cheers; applause.)

12 THE PRESIDENT: The question is on
13 the resolution offered by Senator Gianaris. All
14 those in favor signify by saying aye.

15 (Response of "Aye.")

16 THE PRESIDENT: Opposed?

17 (Response of "Nay.")

18 THE PRESIDENT: The ayes have it.
19 The resolution is adopted.

20 (Cheers; sustained standing
21 ovation.)

22 THE PRESIDENT: At this time
23 Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins will come forward
24 and be sworn in as Temporary President of the
25 Senate by Chief Judge Janet DiFiore, and joined

1 by her family.

2 CHIEF JUDGE DiFIORE: Senator,
3 please place your left hand on the Bible and
4 raise your right hand and repeat after me: "I do
5 solemnly swear" --

6 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: I do
7 solemnly swear --

8 CHIEF JUDGE DiFIORE: -- "to
9 support and uphold the Constitution of the
10 United States" --

11 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- to
12 support and uphold the Constitution of the
13 United States --

14 CHIEF JUDGE DiFIORE: -- "to
15 support and uphold the Constitution of the State
16 of New York" --

17 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- to
18 support and uphold the Constitution of the State
19 of New York --

20 CHIEF JUDGE DiFIORE: -- "and to
21 faithfully discharge my duties as
22 Temporary President and Majority Leader of the
23 New York State Senate" --

24 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- and to
25 faithfully execute my duties as

1 Temporary President and Majority Leader of the
2 New York State Senate --

3 CHIEF JUDGE DiFIORE: -- "to the
4 best of my ability" --

5 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- to the
6 best of my ability --

7 CHIEF JUDGE DiFIORE: -- "so help
8 me God."

9 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- so
10 help me God.

11 (Tumultuous cheering; extended
12 standing ovation.)

13 THE PRESIDENT: Congratulations --
14 and I've been waiting to say these words --
15 Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins.
16 Congratulations.

17 (Cheers; applause.)

18 THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris.

19 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
20 can you please recognize Leader Stewart-Cousins
21 for opening session remarks.

22 THE PRESIDENT: Indeed, I'm happy
23 to.

24 Majority Leader Andrea
25 Stewart-Cousins, please come forward and deliver

1 your opening remarks.

2 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Thank
3 you. Thank you.

4 (Applause; laughter.)

5 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS:

6 (Ascending to dais.) Thank you. Thank you,
7 thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you.

8 Thank you. This is incredible.

9 And first and foremost, I want to
10 thank God. Because frankly I consider myself
11 being here amazing grace. Amazing grace.

12 (Applause.)

13 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And I am
14 eternally humbled and grateful for the
15 opportunity.

16 I want to thank the Lieutenant
17 Governor, my friend Kathy Hochul. It has just
18 been such a pleasure to work with you over the
19 years, and I know we will continue to work to do
20 great things for New York. Thank you.

21 I also, as I was thanking our
22 Reverend Trollinger, thank you for that beautiful
23 prayer. Reverend Trollinger is somebody who is a
24 spiritual mentor for everyone in Westchester.
25 Thank you so much for being here.

1 (Cheers, applause.)

2 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: I want to
3 thank my deputy, Senator Gianaris, for your kind
4 words and certainly for all the work you've done
5 on behalf of our conference. Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And
8 Senator Griffo, I know this year is going to be a
9 good one for all of us, and I look forward to
10 working with you to make sure that New Yorkers
11 are served in the very best way. Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: I'm also,
14 obviously, looking forward to a great partnership
15 with the Governor, Governor Cuomo. We've had a
16 wild ride --

17 (Laughter.)

18 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- but
19 I'm sure we will work together on our shared
20 agenda for New York.

21 (Applause.)

22 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And of
23 course I know my comptroller friend -- we always,
24 you know, point out our Comptroller because, as I
25 say, he's the best comptroller in the whole

1 country. And he also signs the checks.

2 (Laughter.)

3 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: But Tom,
4 thank you so much for all that you've done. And
5 again, I'm looking forward to working closely
6 with you.

7 (Applause.)

8 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And of
9 course my partner. (To Speaker Heastie.) I know
10 you finished up your session so that you could be
11 here.

12 SPEAKER HEASTIE: (Inaudible.)

13 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Well, I'm
14 really, really so happy that, again, we will have
15 the kind of partnership we have. I'm looking so
16 forward to it. Thank you so much for your
17 leadership.

18 (Applause.)

19 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: So I'm in
20 awe. I stand here in awe of everything that has
21 happened.

22 First of all, my conference:

23 39 members strong. Wow. Wow.

24 (Cheers; applause.)

25 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We have

1 15 new members. Wow.

2 (Cheers; applause.)

3 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We have
4 14 women in our conference. Wow.

5 (Cheers; applause.)

6 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And in
7 this chamber, 20 women. Wow.

8 (Cheers; applause.)

9 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: You know,
10 when you think about it, not that long ago women
11 weren't even allowed to walk on the floor of
12 these chambers.

13 So just because this is a visual we
14 have not seen, can all the women please stand?
15 Please stand. Please stand.

16 (Cheers; applause.)

17 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: It's been
18 amazing. Amazing.

19 So anyway, as I said, I have 15 new
20 members. And because I get a chance to introduce
21 all of my new members, I want you to just bear
22 with me. Because these people are going to
23 change New York, so you need to know who they
24 are.

25 So let me start with Alessandra

1 Biaggi.

2 (Cheering; applause.)

3 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: She's
4 already earned a reputation as a fierce advocate
5 for women's rights, fighting against sexual
6 harassment. I look forward to her serving as the
7 Senate's Ethics Committee chair and working to
8 clean up Albany and rebuild the voters' trust.

9 Next I want you to meet Jim
10 Gaughran. Jim?

11 (Cheers; applause.)

12 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Jim has
13 decades of experience in the public sector in
14 public service and will be vital as the chair of
15 the Committee on Local Government.

16 Next I want you to meet Andrew
17 Gounardes.

18 (Applause.)

19 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Andrew's
20 got a life, too, of public service, and his
21 commitment to providing a stronger voice for the
22 residents of Brooklyn is outstanding.

23 Thank you, Andrew.

24 (Applause.)

25 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And I

1 want to you to meet Pete Harckham.

2 (Applause.)

3 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Pete
4 Harckham's experience in public office is going
5 to be of great value, and we look forward to
6 working with him, I especially as a fellow
7 Westchester County representative.

8 So thank you, Pete.

9 (Applause.)

10 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: I'm
11 honored to welcome the first -- and we talked
12 about, the Lieutenant Governor talked about a lot
13 of firsts, and we've got a lot of firsts. And so
14 I'm welcoming the first Muslim State Senator,
15 Robert Jackson.

16 (Applause.)

17 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Robert is
18 a powerful advocate for education fairness.

19 And Robert, we're lucky to have you
20 in the Senate.

21 Join me in welcoming Senator Anna
22 Kaplan.

23 (Applause.)

24 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Another
25 first: The first Iranian American elected to the

1 State Senate. Anna will continue her service to
2 Nassau County families and will work tirelessly
3 to help grow Long Island and the New York
4 economy.

5 (Applause.)

6 THE PRESIDENT: Let us welcome --
7 we're not done yet with our firsts. Let us
8 welcome Senator John Liu, the first Chinese
9 American.

10 (Applause.)

11 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: John Liu
12 has a depth of knowledge and experience that will
13 benefit all of his constituents and all
14 New Yorkers.

15 Next, another first: Senator Monica
16 Martinez.

17 (Applause.)

18 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: The first
19 Salvadoran Senator. Dedicated her life to public
20 service, education, and a wonderful addition to
21 this body. And I know she'll fight hard for
22 Long Island families.

23 Looking forward to working with
24 Senator Rachel May. Rachel. Rachel is chairing
25 the Committee on Aging, and she will work

1 diligently to serve our seniors and represent
2 upstate families and communities.

3 Thank you, Rachel.

4 (Applause.)

5 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Pleased
6 to introduce you to Jen Metzger. Jen Metzger
7 from the Hudson Valley, she's chair of the Senate
8 Agricultural Committee, and she'll help our
9 farmers and agribusinesses grow and prosper while
10 also protecting the environment and natural
11 resources.

12 (Applause.)

13 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Another
14 first, Zellnor Myrie.

15 (Applause.)

16 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: First
17 Costa Rican Senator. He understands affordable
18 housing, a crisis that's facing many New Yorkers.
19 And as the Election Committee chair, he'll move
20 our state forward to empower voters and cut red
21 tape. Zellnor Myrie.

22 (Applause.)

23 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Next, I
24 want you to meet Jessica Ramos.

25 (Applause.)

1 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Jessica
2 has strong roots in her community, and I know
3 that her leadership, especially as Labor chair,
4 will be crucial for our progress and success.
5 Jessica Ramos.

6 (Applause.)

7 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: I want
8 you to meet Senator Julia Salazar.

9 (Applause.)

10 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Julia's
11 activism in civil rights and immigration will be
12 important as we address many crucial issues
13 facing New Yorkers. She'll be a fierce advocate
14 for her district and for all of us.

15 (Applause.)

16 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Now, both
17 Senator Ramos and Senator Salazar are firsts as
18 well: The first Colombian Senators in the
19 State Senate.

20 (Applause.)

21 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Senator
22 James Skoufis.

23 (Laughter; applause.)

24 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Senator
25 Skoufis is willing and eager -- and really

1 willing and eager --

2 (Laughter.)

3 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- to
4 stand up and fight powerful interests and corrupt
5 politics in Albany. He's already proven to be a
6 great representative in the Hudson Valley when he
7 was in the Assembly, and we're looking forward to
8 him delivering real results for his community.

9 Thank you, Senator Skoufis.

10 (Applause.)

11 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And last
12 but not least, another history-maker, the first
13 Indian American Senator, Senator Kevin Thomas.

14 (Applause.)

15 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Senator
16 Thomas has made history joining his colleagues in
17 a diverse Senate Democratic majority. His
18 experience fighting for the less fortunate and
19 ensuring fairness and opportunities will make him
20 a truly exceptional Senator for Long Island and
21 all of New York State.

22 (Applause.)

23 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: So there
24 you have all the new members.

25 And, you know, we're all sort of

1 lavishing praise on all our new members, but I
2 want to thank, obviously, the members who have
3 been through a lot. And thank you all for being
4 strong and steadfast and committed and for really
5 being the critical glue that made this moment
6 possible. Thank you all so very much. What an
7 honor to serve as your leader.

8 (Applause.)

9 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And I
10 know that Senator Griffo will get a a chance to
11 more appropriately introduce the new members, but
12 I do want to welcome Daphne Jordan --

13 (Applause.)

14 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- and --
15 Daphne, stand up -- and Bob Antonacci. Hi, Bob.

16 (Applause.)

17 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Welcome.

18 Okay. So now I'll just talk a
19 little bit about this day. And, you know, as I
20 reflect on what this day means, I think of
21 opportunities and barriers. I think of all the
22 giants whose names we know -- Sojourner, Harriet,
23 Susan, Eleanor, just to name a few, Shirley --
24 and the sacrifices that they made to make this
25 moment possible.

1 And I also think about the giants in
2 my life. You've heard, many of you before, about
3 my parents, Beryl and Bob. My father was a World
4 War II hero who served in a segregated army. He
5 won medals for his country and for his valor and
6 then came back home and was denied many things,
7 even the GI bill, because of the color of his
8 skin.

9 I think of my mother, a woman who,
10 because of her gender and her race, was not given
11 a fair shot. She always wanted to be a lawyer,
12 but that opportunity, for so many reasons, was
13 denied her. She typed a hundred words a minute
14 but was denied even an opportunity to work in a
15 corporation or private business. So she entered
16 the workforce through civil service and made her
17 mark in New York City government.

18 I think of my brother, Bobby, a
19 Vietnam War veteran who's accomplished so many
20 things in his life, always supporting, the
21 bedrock of the family.

22 I think of my late husband, Tom, and
23 all of his sacrifices that he made so that I
24 could pursue opportunities and dreams. I wish he
25 were here with me today to see all that I've

1 accomplished.

2 But I have our children, Kevin and
3 Steven and Candice, and their beautiful families,
4 my grandchildren. And we all know that our
5 families sacrifice so much for us to do this. So
6 I thank you for having been patient and loving,
7 and I am so very grateful that you are here with
8 me in this special moment. And I love you, love
9 you very much. Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Since our
12 nation's founding, those chosen by the people to
13 lead our government have faced the choice of
14 traveling down two paths, the path of putting up
15 barriers or the path of creating opportunities.

16 We know all too well which path some
17 of today's leaders have chosen. We need only to
18 look at Washington, where the administration has
19 embraced the path of putting up barriers to the
20 extreme. It has literally shut down the federal
21 government to build a wall.

22 But not all barriers are that
23 obvious. Sometimes, even in seemingly
24 progressive places like New York, barriers still
25 exist. We are going to break down some more

1 barriers.

2 (Applause.)

3 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We are
4 going to tell the rest of the country that
5 New York is about opportunities. Not barriers,
6 not walls, not division. Opportunity.

7 How are we going to tell them?
8 We're going to tell them by making democracy
9 work. We're going to implement early voting,
10 combat voter suppression --

11 (Applause.)

12 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- make
13 registering to vote easier, allow voting by mail.
14 We're finally going to give New Yorkers an
15 honest, functional, ethical government that they
16 deserve.

17 We'll restore the public trust by
18 closing the LLC loophole, reforming our campaign
19 finance system, making sure state contracts are
20 fully vetted, and shining a light on how
21 government works.

22 We're going to continue to build our
23 economy and create new jobs, we're going to stop
24 the exodus from our state, and we're going to
25 make sure all of New York -- upstate, downstate,

1 urban, suburban, rural -- grows economically.

2 (Applause.)

3 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: While our
4 national government vindictively uses the tax
5 laws to punish our state, we're going to lower
6 our tax burden for middle-class New Yorkers and
7 make the tax cap permanent.

8 (Applause.)

9 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We're
10 going to reduce mandates on local governments.
11 We're going to help our small businesses,
12 including MWBEs, thrive. We're going to make
13 sure that New York laws recognize that women's
14 rights are human rights.

15 (Applause.)

16 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We will
17 pass the Reproductive Health Act. We will pass
18 the Reproductive Health Act --

19 (Cheers; applause.)

20 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- and
21 comprehensive contraceptive care.

22 I stand here the first woman leader
23 of a legislative house in state history. And if
24 we do this right, I cannot and will not be the
25 last. Cannot and will not. But let me make my

1 voice clear. We need to deal with the scourge of
2 sexual harassment in the workplace.

3 (Applause.)

4 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We cannot
5 let this moment and movement pass. We will hold
6 hearings, and we will hold all accountable.

7 In this chamber, we will stand up
8 for our LGBTQ community and pass real
9 protections, including GENDA.

10 (Cheers; applause.)

11 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We will
12 stand up for our immigrant brothers and sisters
13 and make sure their rights are respected and
14 protected. This is New York, after all.

15 (Applause.)

16 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We'll
17 make sure our children and every New Yorker has
18 access to quality affordable healthcare. We'll
19 make sure all New York children have access to
20 quality education that they deserve and that all
21 our children have access to quality, affordable
22 higher education.

23 (Applause.)

24 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We are
25 going to pass the DREAM Act.

1 (Cheers; applause.)

2 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: And we
3 are going to name the bill for our former
4 colleague José Peralta, who championed this bill.

5 (Standing ovation.)

6 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We're
7 going to stand up for victims of child sexual
8 abuse and finally pass the Child Victims Act.

9 (Applause.)

10 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We're
11 going to protect tenants and ensure that we
12 provide affordable housing throughout New York.

13 (Applause.)

14 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We're
15 going to reform our criminal justice system.
16 We're going to pass bail reforms, speedy trial,
17 ensure our system treats everyone equally.

18 We're going to lead the way in
19 keeping our families safe from guns and gun
20 violence. We're going to keep guns out of the
21 hands of dangerous individuals, fix our flawed
22 background check process, pass safe storage
23 legislation, and ban bump stocks.

24 (Applause.)

25 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: We will

1 have bold investments in our infrastructure,
2 which has been neglected for far too long. That
3 means restoring MTA to an international transit
4 model, improving roads and bridges and tunnels
5 across our state.

6 And again, we believe in science and
7 understand the dangers of climate change. We're
8 going to work together to protect our
9 environment.

10 (Applause.)

11 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: I could
12 probably stay up here for hours. Colleagues,
13 this is just part of an ambitious agenda, and
14 there's no -- and there's nothing to stop us and
15 so much more we have to accomplish. But we've
16 been sent here to be ambitious, to make New York
17 a beacon of hope and progress for the rest of our
18 country.

19 And as I said at the beginning, our
20 leaders have always been at crossroads, and as
21 Senators, as New Yorkers, as Americans we could
22 choose the path of putting up barriers or we
23 could choose the path of creating opportunity.
24 By delivering this diverse, talented and historic
25 group of Senators to Albany, the people of our

1 great state have made it crystal-clear which path
2 they expect us to take.

3 So I address my colleagues on both
4 sides of the aisle, from every corner of
5 New York. I invite you and all of us to join to
6 create opportunity for every New Yorker, to level
7 the playing field for every child, and to make
8 this state as great as the people who live in it.

9 Thank you so very much. Let's get
10 to work.

11 (Extended standing ovation.)

12 THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator
13 Stewart-Cousins.

14 Senator Gianaris.

15 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
16 Madam President.

17 Can you please recognize
18 Senator Griffo for opening remarks.

19 THE PRESIDENT: Senator Griffo.

20 SENATOR GRIFFO: Thank you,
21 Madam President.

22 And I want to welcome this great
23 crowd in the chamber today who are here to
24 witness this significant moment and to experience
25 government firsthand.

1 As you can hear, I am fighting a
2 cold, as some of my colleagues also are probably
3 experiencing. So I know there's a lot of warmth
4 in the chamber. And I can assure you, though,
5 even though my voice sounds a little different,
6 Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins told me
7 it's not the outset of puberty.

8 (Laughter.)

9 SENATOR GRIFFO: So this is a new
10 year, and it is a new beginning and a new
11 opportunity for a new session. We have all the
12 bustle, the energy, the excitement that comes
13 along with it.

14 And I want to thank every member of
15 this body for their commitment and their
16 willingness to serve. I want to thank all of the
17 families who are here today for being here to be
18 a part of this and to experience this and to be
19 here on such a special day to witness all of
20 this. This is what you call live TV, see, it's
21 just -- let me congratulate the leader.

22 (Laughter; applause.)

23 SENATOR GRIFFO: So again, I thank
24 all the members who are here and, again, for
25 their service to this great state.

1 I also want to welcome all of the
2 new members. As Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins
3 has indicated, they all worked hard. We
4 appreciate their dedication and willingness to
5 serve this great state.

6 I particularly want to recognize two
7 of our newest members here. I will start with
8 Senator Daphne Jordan, who came from the ranks of
9 the staff, who understands what it means to work
10 long days and extra days and with very little
11 sleep. She has been an exceptional public
12 servant, and I know she will do an extraordinary
13 job representing the Capital District.

14 Welcome, Senator Jordan.

15 (Applause.)

16 SENATOR GRIFFO: From Central
17 New York, a uniquely qualified and very well
18 respected individual who comes with such
19 credentials that we are proud to have him as part
20 of our conference: Senator Bob Antonacci, former
21 local government official, who enjoys an
22 outstanding reputation in Central New York, and I
23 know that will grow across the state.

24 So Bob, welcome to you and your
25 family today.

1 (Applause.)

2 SENATOR GRIFFO: And while there
3 have been changes, our mission as public servants
4 remains the same, starting with and supporting
5 policies that will help hardworking families,
6 middle-class families to succeed and for
7 businesses to prosper and grow.

8 And as you know, we have chosen
9 Senator John Flanagan to be the leader of the
10 Republican Conference. He has recently
11 acknowledged seeking help to overcome a battle
12 with alcoholism. We applaud his courage in
13 facing down this difficult challenge, and we hope
14 by going public in a most difficult manner that
15 he will also inspire others to seek the help that
16 they need.

17 We remain united and supportive and
18 look forward to his speedy and healthy return.
19 And I know that's shared by everyone here.

20 (Applause.)

21 SENATOR GRIFFO: We also join you
22 in recognizing the historic nature of this day
23 and this very moment. Today marks the election
24 of the first woman, the first African-American
25 woman to lead this chamber.

1 And I have known Senator
2 Stewart-Cousins for a while; we arrived at the
3 same time. But after reading many of the
4 articles over the last several weeks, I think
5 it's a true chronicle of an extraordinary journey
6 with many challenges -- characterized, though, by
7 courage, by dignity, by class, hard work and
8 perseverance. And that should be an inspiration
9 to and motivation to many others.

10 So today, Senator Stewart-Cousins,
11 we salute you on this achievement and we look
12 forward to working with you in the weeks and
13 months ahead. Congratulations.

14 (Applause.)

15 SENATOR GRIFFO: There have been a
16 myriad of conversations about what kind of agenda
17 this Legislature and our Governor should support.
18 We in the Senate Republican Conference will
19 advance the most taxpayer-friendly agenda that
20 this state has ever seen. We must give our
21 families the ability to stay and raise their
22 families here in New York rather than being
23 forced to leave our great state in search of
24 lower taxes and greater opportunities.

25 More than a million people have left

1 our state since the last census. We don't need a
2 committee to identify the reasons, and it's not
3 the weather. It's high taxes. It's
4 strangulating regulations. It's crippling energy
5 costs. And it's the lack of good-paying jobs.

6 Let's find real solutions. Let's
7 work together to reverse this decline. And you,
8 me, and all of us collectively working together
9 can make a difference. There's plenty of time to
10 achieve all that we want to do and more, of all
11 the subject matter and issues that we have
12 discussed and have been presented. And while we
13 recognize and realize that everything on the
14 table is important to someone, let's start here
15 and make economic revitalization of New York our
16 top priority.

17 Whether it's education funding or
18 money for infrastructure, our hope is that this
19 Senate will continue to treat each region of this
20 state equitably. We believe that the property
21 tax should made permanent. Many of you have
22 recently pledged to join us in that effort, and
23 we welcome that.

24 Let's also continue our efforts in
25 the fight against heroin, opiate addiction, gang

1 violence and Lyme disease. Senate Republicans
2 have made great progress, with your help and
3 work, on those issues, and we encourage the
4 leadership and this chamber to continue to work
5 together to address them and to make a
6 difference.

7 And finally, this Legislature should
8 support commonsense reforms to restore
9 accountability, to make government work better,
10 to make government more efficient than ever
11 before. More disclosure, more transparency, an
12 open and honest budget process, which are
13 critically important to each and every
14 New Yorker, and it should be important to each
15 and every one of us.

16 We stand here before you today in
17 this conference ready to work and ready to serve.
18 Even though Senate Republicans may now make up a
19 numerical minority, our voice has never been as
20 important as it is today. We have much to offer.
21 We have much to contribute on behalf of the
22 millions of New Yorkers that we now serve.

23 Senator Gianaris, I look forward to
24 working with you. And I know that our
25 Mediterranean ancestry will make that very

1 passionate --

2 (Laughter.)

3 SENATOR GRIFFO: -- and we will
4 differ on policy, on politics, on philosophy and
5 procedurally.

6 (Laughter.)

7 SENATOR GRIFFO: But we will listen
8 to one another, and we will listen to what each
9 side is saying. And we should always respect one
10 another, particularly in this great house.

11 Let's end with a fitting quote from
12 a Roosevelt. No, not the former four-term
13 Democratic president that Governor Cuomo likes to
14 quote and cite. No surprise, I'm going to quote
15 the other one, President Teddy Roosevelt.

16 President Roosevelt once said: "Far
17 and away the best prize that life has to offer is
18 the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

19 The people's work is important, and
20 it is so worth doing. And all of us have made
21 that commitment here today. So that is the
22 opportunity that lies before us. Let's seize it
23 and make it ours on this very day and through
24 this entire session.

25 Thank you all. God bless you.

1 (Standing ovation.)

2 THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator
3 Griffo.

4 Senator Gianaris.

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
6 Madam President.

7 We have several procedural items to
8 take up. First, there is a resolution at the
9 desk calling for the election of the Secretary of
10 the Senate. Will you call that up, please.

11 THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will
12 read.

13 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
14 by Senator Stewart-Cousins, that Alejandra
15 Paulino of Albany, New York, be, and she hereby
16 is, elected Secretary of the Senate for the years
17 2019-2020.

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

21 (Response of "Aye.")

22 THE PRESIDENT: Opposed?

23 (No response.)

24 THE PRESIDENT: The ayes have it.
25 The resolution is adopted.

1 (Cheers; applause.)

2 THE PRESIDENT: Ms. Paulino, we ask
3 that you come forward and receive your oath of
4 office while Senator Stewart-Cousins performs the
5 swearing-in.

6 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Raise
7 your right hand.

8 "I," state your name --

9 MS. PAULINO: I, Alejandra
10 Paulino --

11 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- "do
12 solemnly swear" --

13 MS. PAULINO: -- do solemnly
14 swear --

15 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- "to
16 uphold the Constitution of the United States of
17 America" --

18 MS. PAULINO: -- to uphold the
19 Constitution of the United States of America --

20 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- "and
21 the Constitution of the State of New York" --

22 MS. PAULINO: -- and the
23 Constitution of the State of New York --

24 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- "and
25 to faithfully execute my duties as Secretary of

1 the Senate" --

2 MS. PAULINO: -- and to faithfully
3 execute my duties as Secretary of the Senate --

4 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- "to
5 the best of my ability" --

6 MS. PAULINO: -- to the best of my
7 ability --

8 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: -- "so
9 help me God."

10 MS. PAULINO: -- so help me God.

11 (Cheers; standing ovation.)

12 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: I would
13 like to recognize the members of the Assembly who
14 are present. Do you have something to report?

15 ASSEMBLYMEMBER WEINSTEIN: I'm
16 Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein, chair of Ways and
17 Means, along with our ranker, Assemblyman Will
18 Barclay, and we're here to report that the
19 Assembly has convened, we have organized, we have
20 elected our great speaker, Carl Heastie.

21 On this exciting, historic day, we
22 are pleased to report we are ready to proceed
23 with the people's business, and we look forward
24 to a very exciting year with the New York State
25 Senate.

1 Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you,
4 Assemblymembers. It is so noted in the record.

5 Senator Gianaris.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
7 Madam President.

8 There is a resolution at the desk
9 adopting the rules of the Senate. Can we please
10 take that up.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
12 Secretary will read.

13 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
14 by Senator Stewart-Cousins, to adopt the Rules of
15 the Senate for the years 2019-2020.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
17 Griffo, why do you rise?

18 SENATOR GRIFFO: Madam President, I
19 would ask that you call upon Senator Young for a
20 question on the rules resolution before us.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
22 Young.

23 SENATOR YOUNG: Thank you,
24 Madam President.

25 First of all, I want to say to my

1 colleagues, welcome back. And to our new
2 colleagues, welcome to the New York State Senate.
3 It is by far one of the most historic bodies in
4 the entire country, and I look forward to working
5 with you.

6 We are currently operating under
7 house rules. Until these new rules are passed,
8 these are the rules of the house. And so as the
9 newly appointed ranking member on the
10 Ethics Committee, I would invite my new colleague
11 Senator Biaggi to debate some of these new rules.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
13 Gianaris.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
15 as all the Senators who have previously served
16 here know, it is the prerogative of the majority
17 to decide who will answer questions about the
18 rules, and as the floor leader I will take that
19 upon myself.

20 SENATOR YOUNG: Thank you,
21 Senator Gianaris. I just thought it would be
22 appropriate, because you may remember two years
23 ago the then-chair of the Ethics Committee
24 debated the rules, and you were debating the
25 rules. But it was the chair of the majority

1 Ethics Committee.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
3 Young, I'd just ask that questions go through the
4 chair.

5 SENATOR YOUNG: Okay. So thank
6 you, Madam President.

7 When you look at these rules
8 changes, there are several issues that have not
9 changed. But there are two new rules changes
10 that we are particularly concerned about on
11 behalf of the people of New York. And we need to
12 have checks and balances in government to prevent
13 the tyranny of the majority. That's what happens
14 in Congress, that's what happens in the Assembly.

15 So I have some questions about --
16 number one, I'll start with Rule X. And part of
17 that amends the staffing allocations. We as a
18 body are responsible for making sure that we have
19 robust debate on critical issues that are
20 important to the people of this state. Your
21 conference, the new majority, has put forward a
22 very, very progressive agenda with many
23 controversial issues that are included in that
24 agenda.

25 We need to make sure that we are

1 doing the right thing to have the debate so that
2 all of the issues can be aired, all of the
3 members know exactly what they're voting on, and
4 all of the voters and the citizens of this state
5 know what their government is doing.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
7 Young, are you asking --

8 SENATOR YOUNG: So the first
9 question is --

10 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: -- Senator
11 Gianaris to yield to a question?

12 SENATOR YOUNG: The first question
13 is --

14 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
15 Young, excuse me, are you asking --

16 SENATOR YOUNG: The first question
17 is --

18 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
19 Young --

20 SENATOR YOUNG: -- the part about
21 amending the staffing allocations.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Excuse
23 me --

24 SENATOR GRIFFO: Madam President.
25 Madam President.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Yes,
2 Senator Griffo, why do you rise?

3 SENATOR GRIFFO: I think Senator
4 Young had the floor. She had been recognized,
5 she had asked to ask a question. Senator
6 Gianaris decided to take the question as floor
7 leader, which is within his purview and
8 prerogative. Senator Young is beginning to ask
9 the question. So he did agree to respond. So I
10 would ask that you allow Senator Young to ask the
11 question, please.

12 SENATOR YOUNG: So the first
13 question is --

14 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
15 Young, just to clarify, you're asking Senator
16 Gianaris to yield to a question.

17 SENATOR YOUNG: Right, because he
18 said he was the one handling the debate.
19 Correct, Madam President.

20 So the first question, through you,
21 Madam President, but to have Senator Gianaris
22 respond, is that what you've done is actually, by
23 the language in this resolution, reduce the
24 potential for the number of staffing that the
25 minority conference has. And that, again, is

1 something that's undemocratic. Because we are
2 just asking that you treat this conference the
3 same way that we treated you when you were in the
4 minority --

5 (Laughter.)

6 SENATOR YOUNG: -- as far as -- as
7 far as the rules go.

8 SENATOR GRIFFO: Madam President,
9 order in the house, please.

10 SENATOR YOUNG: So I want to know,
11 Senator Gianaris, why --

12 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Order in
13 the house.

14 SENATOR YOUNG: -- through you,
15 Madam President, why that staffing allocation
16 formula has been changed.

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Are you done?

18 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
19 Gianaris.

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: Ready? Okay.

21 The language that -- to which the
22 Senator is referring was only what practice the
23 Republicans had used when they were in the
24 majority, and it was clarified. I know this is
25 the practice, because there came a time when we

1 were losing members in our conference and the
2 leader was made to go to the majority leader and
3 ask for additional funding. It was not given as
4 a right under the rules.

5 This rule, as written by the
6 Republican majority -- and the language that we
7 took out was unclear, but used in a very -- in a
8 manner that was doing exactly what this new
9 language is doing. It said "on a per-member
10 basis." It was explained to us by the majority
11 at the time that that meant, if the composition
12 of the conferences change, then the allocations
13 change.

14 So we have done nothing other than
15 make it clear for all to see what's happening.

16 SENATOR YOUNG: Through you,
17 Madam President --

18 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
19 Young.

20 SENATOR YOUNG: -- I'd like to
21 respond to Senator Gianaris. Because in our
22 rules we always had a 30 percent floor.

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
24 is Senator Young on the bill at this point?

25 SENATOR YOUNG: So -- no, but I

1 want to continue with the questioning.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
3 Young, are you asking -- asking a question of --

4 SENATOR YOUNG: Sure. Through you,
5 Madam President, I want to continue with the
6 questioning.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
8 Gianaris, do you continue to yield?

9 SENATOR GIANARIS: I do.

10 SENATOR YOUNG: The other rule is
11 Rule VIII that we have significant issues with.
12 And particularly it has to do with the committee
13 structure, number one. Because again, the
14 formula on the committees has been changed.

15 And I am asking this question of
16 you, why was that changed, on behalf of the
17 people of this state. Because as I said, we need
18 to have robust debate, we need to have fairness
19 in the system, the same way that the rules read
20 when you were in the minority. So why was that
21 changed?

22 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
23 Gianaris.

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes, thank you,
25 Madam President.

1 The rule that the Senator is
2 referring to provides for the membership of
3 committees. The New York Senate, for as long as
4 I'm aware, but certainly for over a decade, had
5 the largest member-per-committee-assignment ratio
6 in the entire country of any legislative body.
7 And not by a little bit, by a lot.

8 There was a report several years ago
9 that recommended that that number be reduced
10 because it will allow members to focus more
11 expertise on the committee assignments they have.
12 And by making the changes we're making, the
13 average per-member committee assignments now goes
14 from 7.1 per member to 5.78. We think that is
15 more in line with legislative bodies all around
16 the country. And in fact, even that number may
17 be -- will be on the high end. I'm not sure
18 we've made it under being the -- having the worst
19 ratio in that respect.

20 But the idea is to allow members to
21 develop an expertise in subject areas that will
22 operate these committees more efficiently.

23 SENATOR YOUNG: Through you,
24 Madam President.

25 So, Senator Gianaris, on some of the

1 committees it's my understanding there would be
2 just one member from the Republican conference.
3 And you said that it's utilizing people's
4 expertise. I would say that our members have a
5 lot of expertise in all of these topic areas.

6 So why, again, would you treat us
7 unfairly and take away the representation that we
8 have and the responsibility that we have to the
9 constituents in our district and to the state to
10 have more robust representation, proper
11 representation on these committees?

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
13 allow me to correct my colleague. There are no
14 committees on which the minority only has one
15 appointee. The minimum is two.

16 The smallest committee memberships
17 are seven members, and those committees break
18 down five-to-two, majority to minority.

19 SENATOR YOUNG: Thank you,
20 Madam President.

21 I would say, Senator Gianaris,
22 you're taking away people's voices in the state,
23 something that you said you would not do.

24 The other question I had has to do
25 with the Ethics and Internal Governance

1 Committee. And I --

2 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Excuse me,
3 Senator Young. Are you continuing to ask
4 Senator Gianaris to yield?

5 SENATOR YOUNG: Yes, if he will
6 yield.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
8 Gianaris, do you yield?

9 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

10 SENATOR YOUNG: Senator Gianaris,
11 first of all, I want to applaud the new
12 chairwoman of the committee, because she is
13 focused on ethics. And we all want ethics
14 reform. And in fact, we have done many ethics
15 reforms in this house over the past several
16 years, and I can go through the list in my
17 remarks later on.

18 But there is a change to make the
19 Ethics and Internal Governance Committee -- to
20 make it go from a select committee to a standing
21 committee. And by doing that, you are actually
22 changing the whole structure of the committee and
23 you are actually taking the Internal Governance
24 Committee from nine to seven members, out of
25 balance, four Democrats, three Republicans.

1 And again, we need checks and
2 balances in government. This is a time when
3 there's one-party rule in Albany. And it's
4 critically important that we have the proper
5 systems in place.

6 So why when you two years ago -- and
7 I can read you excerpts of your remarks two years
8 ago. Why two years ago did you insist on having
9 equal representation between Democrats and
10 Republicans and now, now with the new rules that
11 you're putting forward, you are changing that
12 balance and putting it out of balance? And by
13 putting it out of balance, if you're going to
14 change up the committee so it's an investigatory
15 committee, then that opens the door for
16 weaponizing that committee.

17 So I'd like to know why it's not
18 balanced like the Assembly does, why it's not
19 balanced like what the Congress does. Why is it
20 out of balance, and why are you contradicting all
21 of the points -- and I have the debate right
22 here, extensive debate, all of your remarks. And
23 why have you changed your mind, now that you're
24 in the majority, and you've got unequal
25 representation?

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you.

2 Let me start off by saying my
3 colleague is right about one thing. We are
4 completely changing the way the Ethics Committee
5 works in this body, because it didn't work under
6 the previous majority. In fact, it was infamous
7 for the fact that it hadn't met in the entire
8 time the Republicans had the majority in their
9 most recent tenure. And when it did the one time
10 last year, it did not go very well, because it
11 didn't take up any actual business other than
12 agreeing to produce a newsletter.

13 So yes, we are intending to remake
14 the Ethics Committee and make it function so that
15 the people can be well-served by a committee that
16 cares about ethics, unlike what the previous
17 majority had done.

18 It is going to perform two
19 functions. It is going to perform a legislative
20 function, which means it will have bills referred
21 to it, which never happened -- not once, not
22 ever -- under Republican control. And for that
23 to happen, in order for it to function like every
24 other committee, it needs to have an uneven
25 number of members so we don't have gridlock.

1 In fact, the ratio of membership is
2 to your benefit. You just pointed out that a
3 seven-member committee in these rules has five
4 majority members and two minority. We decided to
5 try and be fair and make this one four-to-three,
6 so there would be more of a say.

7 As it relates to investigatory work
8 of this committee, it does require -- as was
9 required in the previous rules -- that at least
10 one member from each conference has to agree for
11 the committee to take action. That is unchanged.

12 And let me just lay one thing out
13 very clearly for everybody. This is a better
14 deal than we were given. Okay? The previous
15 Ethics Committee was not three-to-three-to-three,
16 it was six coalition majority members to three
17 minority members. You're getting four-to-three.
18 You should be happy and thanking me.

19 (Laughter; applause from gallery.)

20 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Order in
21 the chamber.

22 SENATOR YOUNG: Through you,
23 Madam President, just to remind Senator Gianaris
24 of his previous words --

25 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Excuse me,

1 Senator Young. Are you continuing to ask
2 Senator Gianaris to yield?

3 SENATOR YOUNG: Yes. Because I
4 want him to respond.

5 "The issue of ethics scrutiny in
6 particular should be above politics and applied
7 fairly and equally to all." Page 25, lines 1
8 through 6.

9 "Senator Gianaris: Ethics
10 committees have always, for the very reason of
11 taking them out of politics, had an equal
12 representation from the majority and the minority
13 in both houses." Page 25, lines 15 through 19.

14 And then you said: "And again, when
15 we're dealing with ethics, Madam President, it
16 should be something that we can discuss in
17 transcendency from our political parties, but
18 also in a way that builds consensus on very
19 important issues."

20 You kept referencing the Assembly
21 rules, where they have equal representation
22 between Democrats and Republicans, in your
23 remarks.

24 And so I -- I agree with you, we
25 should do more on ethics. I think it's a good

1 idea. But why not have two committees? Why not
2 have one focused on policy, as Senator Biaggi
3 wants to do, and have the other committee focus
4 on investigations and have equal representation
5 between the two parties? Why can't we do that?
6 That would make more sense, rather than opening
7 the door to possible abuse of power.

8 And I think, you know, to the new
9 members and to the previous members, one of the
10 greatest responsibilities -- it's profound --
11 that we have is to not abuse the power that we
12 have as representatives in government. And this
13 opens the door, because this is different than
14 how other ethics committees that investigate
15 things operate.

16 And I agree with Senator Biaggi, I
17 think we should do more on sexual harassment. I
18 commend you for that. Because we led the way
19 last year as the only house that passed a sexual
20 harassment bill so that it wouldn't be done in
21 the budget, so it wouldn't be done behind closed
22 doors. We wanted to get it out in the open.

23 But -- so Senator Gianaris, why
24 can't we do both? Why can't we have equality and
25 fairness, as we gave you on the Ethics Committee,

1 and why can't we have another committee that is
2 set up to investigate any kind of issue that may
3 arise?

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: Since we're
5 making reference to previous comments that were
6 made on this floor, let me quote Senator Young
7 only about 10 minutes ago, that you would hope
8 that you would be treated the same way we were
9 treated. And that's exactly what you're getting.
10 You're actually getting better treatment.

11 SENATOR YOUNG: Senator Gianaris --

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: If it was fair
13 for you, it's fair for us.

14 SENATOR YOUNG: Senator Gia -- no,
15 through you, Madam President, I just want
16 to say --

17 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Are you
18 asking him to continue to yield, Senator Young?

19 SENATOR YOUNG: No, I think on the
20 bill.

21 Senator Gianaris says that they're
22 writing the rules the same way that they were
23 written two years ago. That is not true. All
24 you have to do is look at the rules and compare
25 them. And we do have investigatory bodies -- the

1 Legislative Ethics Committee, JCOPE. They have
2 flaws, I agree with that. And so establishing a
3 new Ethics Committee that does investigations is
4 something that makes sense for this house.

5 But we still need the governance
6 too, and we need to have bills that actually deal
7 with ethics. And we didn't have the two mixed up
8 previously.

9 I just want to remind our members
10 and educate the new members about some of the
11 reforms we've made to ethics over the many years.
12 Just last year we proposed and passed -- and we
13 did this together -- we proposed and passed
14 comprehensive reforms to combat corruption and
15 ensure greater transparency and accountability in
16 state economic development programs. We didn't
17 accomplish that through this governance
18 committee, through the Ethics Committee. We
19 could accomplish that through the rest of the
20 committee process.

21 In 2017 we approved a constitutional
22 amendment to strip pensions from corrupt
23 officials. We supported that. We got that done.
24 We approved Senate rules limiting terms of
25 committee chairs and legislative leaders. We did

1 that. We passed a law requiring comprehensive
2 disclosure of outside income, financial
3 investments, and law clients. These dramatically
4 expanded financial disclosure filings that are
5 now publicly available.

6 I can go through the entire list; it
7 would take too long. But we have accomplished
8 ethics reform without mixing the purpose of the
9 Ethics Committee.

10 And we need that check and balance.
11 We need to make sure that power is not out of
12 balance. That's something that, you know, I
13 commend you, Senator Gianaris, you talked about
14 integrity. I commend you, Senator
15 Stewart-Cousins, Leader Stewart-Cousins, for what
16 you said. You want to make democracy work. If
17 we want to make democracy work, we have to have a
18 fair and balanced system and not have a system
19 that has the potential for abuse, for political
20 attacks, and for corruption.

21 And there's a saying that goes:
22 Remember, power corrupts; absolute power corrupts
23 absolutely. And this is something that needs to
24 be changed. I would ask my colleagues on the
25 other side to reconsider this.

1 I would ask you to establish two
2 committees, two committees, one to be focused on
3 legislation that deals with ethics reform -- I
4 wholeheartedly, we wholeheartedly embrace that
5 concept -- and have another on governance. But
6 do not mix the two, because it's a recipe, I
7 believe, for violating the rights of the people
8 of this state to have everyone's voices heard.

9 So thank you, Madam President.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
11 Seward.

12 SENATOR SEWARD: Yes,
13 Madam President. Thank you. I would ask if
14 Senator Gianaris would take another question.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
16 Gianaris, do you yield?

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
18 I've been waiting eight years to yield to
19 questions. This is great for me, so --

20 (Laughter.)

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: -- absolutely.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
23 Senator yields.

24 SENATOR SEWARD: Yes. Through you,
25 Madam President, I was listening very intently to

1 the discussion between Senator Young and
2 Senator Gianaris, and I just rise to ask for some
3 clarification in terms of Section 8, Rule IX,
4 having to do with staffing allocations.

5 The language, as I read it, implies
6 that the Minority allocation could in fact dip
7 below 30 percent of the overall allocation. Is
8 that the intent of the Majority in these new
9 rules?

10 SENATOR GIANARIS: And if I could
11 ask for a clarification. The suggestion is if
12 the composition of the relative numbers of
13 conference changes, is that what you're asking?

14 SENATOR SEWARD: Yes. What I'm
15 asking is there's reference to that the central
16 staff of the Minority shall not be less than
17 30 percent. But there's also language about a
18 shift in terms of the numbers, in terms of the
19 membership of each conference.

20 And my question is, are you
21 intending to allocate central staff monies based
22 on the numbers, or is 30 percent the target
23 number?

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: It is the
25 intention of this language to continue the

1 practice that was in place under the previous
2 majority.

3 It's my understanding that when the
4 conference representation changed, there was a
5 discussion between the leaders to maintain the
6 allotments where they were, that it was not the
7 position of the majority that by operation of
8 rule that that percentage should continue. And
9 therefore I think that would be something that we
10 would intend to continue as past practice.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
12 Seward.

13 SENATOR SEWARD: Madam President,
14 just as a follow-up.

15 So just to be clear, are we at the
16 30 percent number or not?

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes, you are.

18 SENATOR SEWARD: And will we remain
19 at the 30 percent number?

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: (Reading.) The
21 funding for the Minority conference shall not be
22 less than 30 percent and shall increase or
23 decrease to reflect any changes in the membership
24 of either conference.

25 SENATOR SEWARD: Madam President,

1 so we could dip below 30 percent?

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: I don't have an
3 answer to that question.

4 SENATOR SEWARD: Okay. Well, on
5 the bill, Madam President.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
7 Seward.

8 SENATOR SEWARD: I would just like
9 to reiterate some of the points that have been
10 raised by Senator Young.

11 In order to make democracy work, and
12 which is certainly something on both sides of the
13 aisle we can agree on, I think we need to have
14 robust debate, free flow of information here on
15 the floor. And that of course requires staffing,
16 appropriate and proper staffing.

17 So we would very much say that we
18 should be at the 30 percent as a minimum. That's
19 our position. And I -- I'm not -- I don't feel
20 we're getting a straight answer on that point,
21 whether or not we're going to dip below
22 30 percent. We believe that should be the floor.
23 And that will base my vote on these rule changes
24 unless I get a firm commitment on the 30 percent.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Seeing no

1 one else who wishes --

2 SENATOR TEDISCO: Madam President.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
4 Tedisco.

5 SENATOR TEDISCO: On the rules
6 change.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
8 Tedisco, why do you rise?

9 SENATOR TEDISCO: On the rules
10 change. I'd like to speak.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: You want
12 to speak on the resolution?

13 SENATOR TEDISCO: Yes.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator,
15 go ahead.

16 SENATOR TEDISCO: Thank you.

17 As most of you probably know here,
18 it's not too difficult of a shift for me to go
19 from the majority on the other side of the
20 building to the minority, because I spent
21 17 terms, 34 years, in the minority, part of that
22 as minority leader in the New York State
23 Assembly.

24 My district in the New York State
25 Assembly was 15 minutes from one end of it to the

1 other end of it. Had some diversity in it. My
2 new Senate district is 4,000 square miles. It's
3 two and a half hours up to Old Forge, two and a
4 half hours back down. It's diverse, it's rural,
5 it's suburban, it has a variety of concerns. But
6 collectively I think they come together in two
7 areas that they continue to ask me to move
8 forward and to discuss with you and my colleagues
9 from both sides of the aisle, and it has been
10 mentioned by our new Majority Leader.

11 They want common sense in
12 government, and they want to deal with the ethics
13 issue because they know we can't go forward if
14 we're not doing what's right in terms of taking
15 an oath of office and living up to it.

16 In terms of common sense, and in
17 terms of doing what's right ethically, this
18 misses the point. They're very concerned about
19 the fact that the inauguration speech, and the
20 things I've heard in the speeches here today, and
21 what the majority has been talking about, if you
22 listen very carefully about an upstate agenda,
23 you'll hear some crickets chirping. Nothing
24 about jobs, nothing about small business
25 opportunities, nothing about bringing up

1 cellphone usage or broadband to an area in my
2 district or upper levels of New York State.
3 Amazon is great, \$3 billion to bring them in, but
4 small businesses need broadband also. We don't
5 have that in large parts of our district.

6 When I served in the New York State
7 Assembly, if you want to talk about extremism --
8 and this is I think the beginnings of the
9 continuation, doubling down on the extremism I've
10 seen over the last 10 years from your side of the
11 aisle. Extremism is doing the opposite of what
12 your colleagues are doing in the New York State
13 Assembly. We said hello to Mr. Heastie today,
14 you honored him, you saluted him. In the New
15 York State Assembly, it's an equal number of both
16 sides of the aisle on the Ethics Committee.

17 I can understand creating a
18 committee to deal with legislation as it relates
19 to ethics. I think that's a fine idea. But when
20 you're talking about nonpartisanism and working
21 together, the Senate's really going in a better
22 direction for you than they have in the past.
23 They have an equal number of Democrats and an
24 equal number of Republicans in their
25 Ethics Committee.

1 I suggest you follow their lead on
2 that, because the public is looking for
3 nonpartisanship. They don't want you to protect
4 your members potentially if something goes wrong
5 with an ethics issue. And I'm not saying you
6 will do that, but sometimes it's the appearance
7 that has the worst impact on what our
8 constituents think of those out here.

9 And God only knows we have to gain,
10 and it was mentioned, their support out here. We
11 have to show them we're going to do something
12 about ethics. Maybe we have to do that database
13 of deals, let the Comptroller start looking at
14 different things, get an outside budget
15 committee.

16 But in this case you're sending a
17 very bad message. You're sending a message that
18 potentially if ethics go wrong on your side of
19 the aisle -- not with that committee to deal with
20 legislation, with that committee to specifically
21 deal with members from your side and our side and
22 make recommendations -- it's far different from
23 what the Assembly has done and is doing, and that
24 is an equal number so we don't see a partisanship
25 in those decisions.

1 And I think you're going to find the
2 public, when they come to realize and the media
3 covers it and says, Well, the Assembly is
4 allowing both sides to have the same numbers,
5 make a discussion and make a nonpartisan decision
6 when those members come before them, but the
7 Senate has decided to change that, they want to
8 eliminate that and maybe have control of ethics
9 decisions -- it strikes of cronyism, and I don't
10 think that's the direction you want to go. It's
11 extreme, and it's doubling down on extremism from
12 what I've seen in the past.

13 Thank you, Madam President.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Seeing no
15 other Senator that wishes to be heard,
16 Senator Gianaris to close.

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
18 Madam President.

19 I want to just clarify a couple of
20 things. Because I have the good fortune of
21 sitting next to the leader in this chamber, I can
22 clarify further for Senator Seward his question.

23 It is not expected that the
24 allocation will ever dip below 30 percent. But
25 as was past practice, that is not something that

1 is by operation of rule. That will be a
2 discussion between the leaders if that ever comes
3 to pass.

4 As for the Ethics Committee and the
5 issues there, as hard as it is to believe, there
6 was some defense of the ethics record in this
7 body a few moments ago. And if the Minority
8 wants to spend their time defending the record of
9 the Senate on ethics over the last 10 years, they
10 should have at it. I will be happy to give it as
11 much time on the floor of the Senate as they
12 would like to do that, because I think most
13 objective observers realize that it was an
14 embarrassment at the time.

15 Now let's talk about the composition
16 of the committee. There's two ways to look at
17 this. We had rules last year that the current
18 minority wrote and approved. And so if you
19 want -- and under no way of looking at those
20 rules was there an equal number of both
21 conferences. If you want to look at it coalition
22 versus minority, it was six to three in favor of
23 the coalition government. If you want to look at
24 it Democrat versus Republican, it was six to
25 three, Democrat versus Republican. If you want

1 to do that, I'll add two more members to the
2 rules for the Democrats and then we'll mimic the
3 rules exactly as you had them.

4 I don't think that's what you want.
5 So we tried to be fairer and create a makeup that
6 was four-to-three. The protection we got in the
7 rules after negotiation was that any
8 investigative action would require the assent of
9 at least one committee member from each
10 conference. That remains. So the committee
11 cannot be weaponized unless one of your
12 colleagues agrees to do it.

13 That's the same protection we had
14 last year, and we had to fight to get that
15 protection. This was in the rules as we drafted
16 them.

17 So let's be clear. This
18 Ethics Committee is going to do something never
19 before done in this body. It's going to actually
20 move legislation. It's going to consider
21 legislation. It's going to take a hard look at
22 what we need to do to improve the ethics of this
23 body, which is something that I can tell you the
24 people of this state have been asking for for a
25 long, long time. And it is going to be empowered

1 to actually look at malfeasance. And it's going
2 to do so in a bipartisan manner, because it does
3 require a member from each conference to
4 participate in that.

5 That is a better deal than we got by
6 far, and no amount of misrepresenting the past is
7 going to change that.

8 Thank you, Madam President.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
10 question is on the resolution. All those in
11 favor signify by saying aye.

12 (Response of "Aye.")

13 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Opposed?

14 (Response of "Nay.")

15 SENATOR GRIFFO: Show of hands
16 requested.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: All those
18 in favor signify by raising your hands now.

19 (A show of hands in the chamber.)

20 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce
21 the results.

22 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 39.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
24 resolution is adopted.

25 Senator Gianaris.

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
2 there's a resolution at the desk pertaining to
3 the appointment of the Sergeant-at-Arms. Would
4 you please call that up?

5 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
6 Secretary will read.

7 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
8 by Senator Stewart-Cousins, that Benjamin M.
9 Sturges III be, and he hereby is, elected
10 Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate for the years
11 2019-2020.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
13 question is on the resolution. All those in
14 favor signify by saying aye.

15 (Response of "Aye.")

16 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
19 resolution is adopted.

20 For the record, Benjamin Sturges III
21 has been elected Sergeant-at-Arms for the years
22 2019-2020. It is my honor to present to you the
23 Sergeant-at-Arms.

24 (Standing ovation.)

25 THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris.

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
2 Madam President. There is another resolution at
3 the desk, to appoint Catherine Kirkland as the
4 Senate Stenographer. Could you please take that
5 up.

6 THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will
7 read.

8 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
9 by Senator Stewart-Cousins, that Catherine
10 Kirkland be, and she hereby is, elected the
11 Official Stenographer of the Senate for the years
12 2019-2020.

13 THE PRESIDENT: The question is on
14 the resolution. All those in favor signify by
15 saying aye.

16 (Response of "Aye.")

17 THE PRESIDENT: Those opposed?

18 (No response.)

19 THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is
20 adopted.

21 For the record, Catherine Kirkland
22 has been elected Official Stenographer of the
23 Senate for the years 2019-2020.

24 Congratulations. It is my honor to
25 present the Official Stenographer of the Senate.

1 (Standing ovation.)

2 THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris.

3 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
4 Madam President.

5 There's yet another resolution at
6 the desk setting forth the hours of the Senate
7 for 2019-2020. Can we please take that up.

8 THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will
9 read.

10 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
11 by Senator Stewart-Cousins, providing for the
12 hours of meeting by the Senate for the years
13 2019-2020.

14 THE PRESIDENT: The question is on
15 the resolution. All those in favor signify by
16 saying aye.

17 (Response of "Aye.")

18 THE PRESIDENT: Opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is
21 adopted.

22 Senator Gianaris.

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
24 would you please take up the resolution
25 appointing a committee of two to inform the

1 Governor.

2 THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will
3 read.

4 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
5 by Senator Stewart-Cousins, directing the
6 Temporary President to appoint a committee of two
7 to inform the Governor that the Senate is
8 organized and ready to proceed with business.

9 THE PRESIDENT: The question is on
10 the resolution. All those in favor signify by
11 saying aye.

12 (Response of "Aye.")

13 THE PRESIDENT: Opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is
16 adopted.

17 Senators Martinez and Antonacci are
18 hereby appointed to inform the Governor that the
19 Senate is ready to proceed.

20 Senator Gianaris.

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you.

22 Madam President, there's a
23 resolution concerning the committee of two to
24 inform the Assembly. Can you please take that
25 up.

1 THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will
2 read.

3 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
4 by Senator Stewart-Cousins, directing the
5 Temporary President to appoint a committee of two
6 to wait upon the Assembly and inform that body
7 that the Senate is assembled and ready to proceed
8 with business.

9 THE PRESIDENT: The question is on
10 the resolution. All those in favor signify by
11 saying aye.

12 (Response of "Aye.")

13 THE PRESIDENT: Opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is
16 adopted.

17 Senators Skoufis and Jordan are
18 hereby appointed to inform the Assembly that the
19 Senate is ready to proceed.

20 Senator Gianaris.

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
22 at this time I believe there's a hand-up at the
23 desk by Senator Stewart-Cousins naming Majority
24 members to certain standing committees. I ask
25 that it please be filed in the Journal.

1 THE PRESIDENT: The hand-up is
2 received and shall be filed with the Journal.

3 SENATOR GIANARIS: In consultation
4 with Senator Flanagan, Senator Stewart-Cousins
5 also hands up the following Minority member
6 committee assignments and asks that they also be
7 filed in the Journal.

8 THE PRESIDENT: The hand-up is
9 received and shall be filed in the Journal.

10 SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,
11 is there any further business at the desk?

12 THE PRESIDENT: There is no further
13 business at the desk.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: There being no
15 further business, I move we adjourn until Monday,
16 January 14th, at 3:00 p.m., intervening days
17 being legislative days.

18 THE PRESIDENT: On motion, the
19 Senate will stand adjourned until Monday,
20 January 14th, at 3:00 p.m., intervening days
21 being legislative days.

22 The Senate is adjourned.

23 (Appause.)

24 (Whereupon, the Senate adjourned at
25 2:48 p.m.)