

1 NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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3
4 THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

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9 ALBANY, NEW YORK

10 March 13, 2019

11 1:04 p.m.

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14 REGULAR SESSION

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18 SENATOR BRIAN A. BENJAMIN, Acting President

19 ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

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

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

4 I ask everyone present to please
5 rise and repeat with me the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

8 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: In the
9 absence of clergy, I ask that everyone bow their
10 head in a moment of silent reflection or prayer.

11 (Whereupon, the assemblage respected
12 a moment of silence.)

13 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
14 reading of the Journal.

15 THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Tuesday,
16 March 12, 2019, the Senate met pursuant to
17 adjournment. The Journal of Monday, March 11,
18 2019, was read and approved. On motion, Senate
19 adjourned.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Without
21 objection, the Journal stands approved as read.

22 Presentation of petitions.

23 Messages from the Assembly.

24 Messages from the Governor.

25 Reports of standing committees.

1 Reports of select committees.

2 Communications and reports from
3 state officers.

4 Motions and resolutions.

5 Senator Gianaris.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
7 can we please take up previously adopted
8 Resolution 584, by Senator Tedisco, read the
9 title only, and call on Senator Tedisco to speak.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
11 Secretary will read.

12 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
13 Number 584, by Senator Tedisco, commending the
14 Capital Region Chamber of Commerce upon the
15 occasion of celebrating the Military Appreciation
16 event on March 13, 2019.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
18 Tedisco on the resolution.

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

21 Mr. President and my colleagues, one
22 of the pitfalls of scheduling a very important
23 day like this to honor our Capital region
24 military men and women is that you do that a year
25 in advance, and we've done that, and we didn't

1 really know that we would have a day like this
2 where we would be doing our one-house budget.

3 So we have quality here with us.
4 The rest are at lunch right now, because our
5 military runs on their stomach also. But if they
6 come in, we'll be saluting them.

7 But we have a very important day
8 today, and it went very well this morning as we
9 met with the media.

10 The Unified Military Affairs
11 Council, UMAC, is a program of the Capital Region
12 Chamber, in partnership with the Saratoga County
13 Chamber and the Chamber of Southern Saratoga
14 County, to highlight the importance of the
15 military presence in the Capital Region and
16 ensure its long-term viability and success.

17 I'm proud to be the Senate sponsor
18 of UMAC Day, with Senator Breslin, and to have
19 support from our local Capital Region Senate
20 delegation also. Today we are calling attention
21 to the global, national, statewide and regional
22 impact the Capital Region military units have in
23 protecting our safety and security, contributing
24 also, very importantly, to our local economy.

25 These military units do more than

1 protect our state and nation and way of life.
2 They are an important and positive part of our
3 community, contributing more than \$1 billion --
4 this is billion with a B -- a year to the Capital
5 Region's economy and supporting thousands of jobs
6 in the 49th Senate District and across the
7 Capital Region.

8 Today we're shining the spotlight on
9 the everyday American heroes who work at our
10 bases -- the best, the brightest, the most
11 compassionate fighting force for good on earth,
12 the men and women of the United States armed
13 forces.

14 I also want to note that not only am
15 I proud to support our servicemen and -women and
16 our veterans, but I'm proud to have my staff --
17 my legislative director, Michael Kenneally, who
18 is here, who served as a sergeant in the U.S. Air
19 Force. He's over there in the corner. And I
20 know you're very proud of all of your staff who
21 may have served somewhere in the armed forces.

22 I just wanted to say a few things
23 about the military installations we have us with
24 today. From Scotia we have the Stratton Air
25 National Guard Base, which is home to the 109th

1 Airlift Wing, part of the Air National Guard.
2 The unit flies the world's only ski-equipped
3 LC-130s, or "skibirds," as well as traditional
4 C-130 "wheelbirds."

5 The 109th has the responsibility of
6 flying missions for the National Science
7 Foundation-led program to the polar ice cap and
8 to Antarctica. Last fall I had the pleasure,
9 with several of my colleagues, to take a flight
10 on an LC-130 around the Capital Region, and it
11 was truly an incredible experience to see
12 firsthand the great job our servicemen and -women
13 do.

14 Out of Ballston Spa, we have the
15 Nuclear Power Training Unit, which trains half of
16 the U.S. Navy's officers and enlisted personnel
17 to operate the U.S. Navy's reactor plants on
18 nuclear-powered warships, submarines and aircraft
19 carriers.

20 And then next we have the Naval
21 Support Activity Saratoga Springs, located in the
22 Town of Milton. Its primary mission is to
23 provide operational support to the Nuclear Power
24 Training Unit in Ballston Spa.

25 The other key military installation

1 for the Capital Region, which is in Senator
2 Breslin's district, is the U.S. Army's Watervliet
3 Arsenal, which is widely known as "America's
4 cannon factory" and is an Army-owned and operated
5 manufacturing facility. It is the nation's
6 oldest continuously operated arsenal, having
7 begun its manufacturing of military hardware
8 during the War of 1812.

9 Today the Arsenal is relied upon by
10 the United States to produce the most advanced,
11 high-tech weaponry for cannons, howitzers and
12 mortar systems.

13 I would just like to introduce
14 before Senator Breslin I know would like to say a
15 few words, and maybe some of my other colleagues,
16 two of the individuals who are here with us:
17 Staff Sergeant Molly Lundquist, from the 109th --
18 stand up -- and Staff Sergeant Christopher
19 Denegar, from the 109th.

20 There were several other military
21 individuals here with us, but as I said, they
22 thought they could catch lunch before they came
23 back. They may be coming back in to greet us.

24 But I know Senator Breslin would
25 want to say a few words, and I appreciate his

1 support and sponsorship of this important
2 program.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
4 Breslin on the resolution.

5 SENATOR BRESLIN: Yes, thank you,
6 Mr. President.

7 And thank you, Senator Tedisco, for
8 all you've done for this day.

9 Any day we honor the military is a
10 worthy day. And the Capital District, as Senator
11 Tedisco has pointed out, has a number of very
12 important installations, including the one in my
13 district, which has been the longest-operating
14 production of cannons in the United States and
15 has played an instrumental role in wars going
16 back to 1812.

17 So frequently we don't exercise when
18 we look at a veteran and say "Thank you for your
19 service." But in this area, not only is it
20 "Thank you for your service," but they're an
21 economic engine to the Greater Capital District.

22 So I say to you, thank you for your
23 service. Continue it. You're the reason that we
24 debate here today a one-house resolution. But we
25 debate here, we don't do it with arms, and it's

1 because of the military, the military that's
2 protected us. So I look forward to not only this
3 day, but in years to come.

4 Thank you again.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: This
6 resolution was previously adopted on March 5th.

7 To our guests, I welcome you to the
8 Senate chamber. We extend to you the privileges
9 and courtesies of this house.

10 Please rise and be recognized.

11 (Standing ovation.)

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
13 Gianaris.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
15 there is a privileged resolution at the desk by
16 Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Resolution
17 Number 672. Please take up the resolution and
18 read it, title only.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
20 Secretary will read.

21 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
22 672, by Senator Stewart-Cousins, in response to
23 the 2019-2020 Executive Budget submission
24 (Legislative Bills S1500B, S1501, S1503B, S1504B,
25 S1505B, S1506B, S1507B, S1508B, S1509B, and

1 S1510B) to be adopted as legislation expressing
2 the position of the New York State Senate
3 relating to the 2019-2020 New York State Budget.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
5 Gianaris.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
7 we're going to proceed to debating the
8 resolution. Senator Krueger will be responding
9 for the Majority. So please proceed with the
10 debate.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
12 Krueger.

13 Senator Tedisco.

14 Senator Griffo, sorry.

15 Senator Seward.

16 SENATOR GRIFFO: Please recognize
17 Senator Seward.

18 (Laughter.)

19 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Sorry,
20 Senator Seward.

21 SENATOR SEWARD: I was hoping you
22 would eventually get to my name.

23 (Laughter.)

24 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
25 Seward. My apologies.

1 SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you,
2 Mr. President. Would Senator Krueger yield for a
3 few questions?

4 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
5 the sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR KRUEGER: I would happily
7 yield to Senator Seward.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
9 sponsor yields.

10 SENATOR SEWARD: You know, in the
11 budget reform package that was enacted back in
12 2007, one of the features of that 2007
13 legislation -- which is now law -- called for a
14 financial plan to be presented prior to voting on
15 an appropriation bill or a related legislation.
16 Now, each house is required to place on the desks
17 of its members a report relating to the bill, and
18 the one-house and the one-house resolutions meet
19 this requirement.

20 So my question to Senator Krueger
21 is, does a financial plan exist? We have not
22 received an official copy of that, nor have any
23 of the members on this side of the aisle.

24 SENATOR KRUEGER: Thank you.

25 Through you, Mr. President,

1 Senator Seward is almost correct on the 2007
2 budget reform bill, which does require, when we
3 are voting on actual budget bills, that we have
4 this plan on the desks of the members.

5 Today we are not voting on
6 underlying budget bills. Although they have been
7 produced, we are not actually asking members to
8 vote on budget bills. We are voting on a
9 resolution, which is a one-house resolution which
10 we believe outlines the primary sections of the
11 budget bills but is not a vote on a budget bill.

12 However, I also agree that we do
13 have, and should have available sometime by the
14 end of the day, a full financial plan that
15 matches the budget bills we have printed but are
16 not taking up today on the floor.

17 SENATOR SEWARD: Will Senator
18 Krueger continue to yield?

19 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
20 the sponsor yield?

21 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
23 sponsor yields.

24 SENATOR SEWARD: It has been the
25 practice in this house when this side of the

1 aisle was in the Majority to have a financial
2 plan available to all the members even prior to
3 passing a one-house resolution. And so that
4 information is vitally important to have in order
5 to make appropriate decisions regarding the
6 resolution.

7 But lacking the financial plan
8 before us at this time would lead me to ask an
9 additional question.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
11 the sponsor yield?

12 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
14 sponsor yields.

15 SENATOR SEWARD: You know, since
16 2011 we have been operating -- the Senate, the
17 Assembly, and the Governor -- with a self-imposed
18 2 percent spending cap as it relates to our
19 budgets. Many of us would like to see that
20 actually put into statute, to require that, but
21 at this point it is self-imposed.

22 And my question to Senator Krueger
23 is, what is the state operating funds spending
24 increase in this budget resolution? And also,
25 what is it on a percentage basis?

1 SENATOR KRUEGER: Thank you.

2 The Senator is correct about the
3 question on the 2 percent spending cap. And our
4 proposals laid out within our one-house
5 resolution and our budget bills in fact meet
6 the -- just below the 2 percent spending cap that
7 the Governor is calling for. Our full package is
8 actually \$8 million below the Governor's spending
9 cap and is a total of 102 million -- billion,
10 139. I guess it would be entertaining if we were
11 only talking millions, Mr. President. It's 102
12 billion, 139 million.

13 SENATOR SEWARD: Would Senator
14 Krueger continue to yield.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
16 the sponsor yield?

17 SENATOR KRUEGER: Certainly.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
19 sponsor yields.

20 SENATOR SEWARD: Yes, I would ask,
21 Senator Krueger, just how this resolution arrives
22 at that 2 percent or below 2 percent. As I read
23 the resolution, there's 862 million additional
24 dollars in education, 664 million additional
25 dollars in the health area, and many, many other

1 restorations.

2 And I'm not debating whether those
3 are right or wrong, but how do you make all those
4 restorations and still come in below the
5 2 percent spending cap?

6 SENATOR KRUEGER: Through you,
7 Mr. President, I would like to answer my
8 colleague's question, I just want to ask him a
9 question to clarify how he would like it
10 answered. May I do that?

11 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
12 the Senator yield?

13 SENATOR SEWARD: Sure.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
15 Senator yields.

16 SENATOR KRUEGER: Would you like me
17 to sort of go down a long list of each section
18 all at one time for you, or would you like me to
19 take a section -- for example, education, and
20 just talk education? Whichever way you would
21 like me to present.

22 SENATOR SEWARD: Well,
23 Mr. President, I would respond by saying I have
24 a -- my question is not directed toward the
25 specific issues and proportions of the budget.

1 But my question is how do you increase spending
2 and still stay within the 2 percent cap? A
3 general question.

4 SENATOR KRUEGER: Through you,
5 Mr. President. I will answer now that I
6 understand the question.

7 So we stay within the 2 percent cap.
8 While we increase some categories, we decrease
9 some categories, and we find additional revenues.

10 So just to start going down, we're
11 rejecting the prepayment of pension amortization
12 costs, which finds us \$500 million additional
13 money. Because each year in the history of the
14 last few years, the Governor has ended up closing
15 out the year with approximately that number that
16 he then prepays things for the next year in,
17 rather than using it in the year. So we are
18 taking and using that \$500 million.

19 We are -- on workforce management
20 efficiencies, we believe we have found a savings
21 of \$250 million over the Governor's proposals.
22 Which would require the Executive to achieve a
23 .01 percent savings through efficiencies, which
24 we think is absolutely reasonable and doable.

25 We are reestimating local assistance

1 spending by \$485 million. The Governor's 30-day
2 amended financial plan reduced local assistance
3 spending for the current fiscal year by
4 \$499 million. The Senate believes that a similar
5 level of overestimated never-to-be-spent money is
6 available within his 2019-2020 proposal, and so
7 we are taking that and reprogramming that.

8 We have identified \$85 million in
9 specific targeted reductions in spending.

10 We have proposed allocating
11 \$422 million of dedicated mass transportation
12 trust fund revenues directly to the MTA rather
13 than administering such funds through the state
14 financial plan. So this reclasses them as not
15 being an expenditure in the budget. It still
16 gets the MTA the money; it actually gets it to
17 them more quickly. It's a device that has been
18 used in different budget years, and the bond
19 market has recognized that this is actually
20 advantageous. So we're not creating any risk for
21 mass transit funds, we're actually going to get
22 the money to them faster, but in a legal way that
23 changes the formula of "on budget."

24 We are going to increase
25 Foundation Aid by \$459 million in this budget

1 year, but it reflects a fiscal-year cost of the
2 Senate's \$1.2 billion Foundation Aid increase,
3 which actually will be an \$880 million increase
4 in education funding over the Governor's
5 proposal. But since we have found different
6 monies that get applied, we are able to increase
7 by \$880 million without actually saying we're --
8 we have to put an additional \$880 million
9 directly into education.

10 We are doing Medicaid restorations
11 of \$550 million, restoring cuts that the Governor
12 proposed.

13 We have a very long list that we
14 categorize right now as "All Other Actions" that
15 is a total of \$914 million, which I am happy to
16 go and read you the entire list if you wish.
17 That's why I was asking if you wanted details in
18 each category now or perhaps later. And that
19 totals \$914 million.

20 So when we add up all these changes,
21 again, we come to \$102.139 billion for a proposed
22 budget, which is \$8 million below the 2 percent
23 spending cap.

24 SENATOR SEWARD: Would the Senator
25 continue to yield.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Would
2 the Senator yield?

3 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes, I will
4 continue to yield.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
6 Senator yields.

7 SENATOR SEWARD: I'm not going to
8 ask for additional explanation on each of those
9 points, but I was interested in one of the items
10 that you mentioned as I -- actually, two of them,
11 as you outlined that.

12 In terms of the 250 million in
13 savings and personal services on the part of the
14 state --

15 SENATOR KRUEGER: Workforce
16 management efficiencies?

17 SENATOR SEWARD: Right.

18 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes.

19 SENATOR SEWARD: Are we talking
20 layoffs, are we -- just what are we talking
21 there? And also how do you arrive at the
22 \$485 million local assistance reduction?

23 SENATOR KRUEGER: Give me one
24 moment to confer.

25 So we are actually not calling for

1 any layoffs. We believe that they have
2 overestimated the money that they end up actually
3 spending on personnel in the budget and that
4 there are easy efficiencies that they actually
5 know about, they just don't choose to book in
6 their proposal. But we are not proposing any
7 reduction in state personnel.

8 And on the \$485 million, the local
9 assistance spending -- one more second. That's
10 why we have great staff, right, you and I?

11 So on the local assistance spending
12 reestimates of \$485 million, it's also based on
13 the Governor's pattern of putting a certain
14 number in his budget each year but then when you
15 look at it halfway through the year or fully
16 through the year, he's not spending at that
17 level. And so he has it to reuse for something
18 else at the end of the year or to reapprop.

19 And so we are recognizing that
20 pattern of overestimating what he's actually
21 going to give out in local assistance and
22 reprogramming that to expenditures that we really
23 do want to see spent in this fiscal year.

24 SENATOR SEWARD: Will Senator
25 Krueger continue to yield?

1 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
2 the Senator yield?

3 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
5 Senator yields.

6 SENATOR SEWARD: Yeah, those are
7 some large numbers in terms of additional avails
8 that have been outlined. And you mentioned the
9 Governor has taken some liberties in the past.
10 One can also say that it's pretty easy to take
11 liberties with estimating the avails number as
12 well, because it's only an estimate.

13 But you've covered the -- just to be
14 clear, the state operating funds spending
15 increase you're saying is below 2 percent. What
16 is the All Funds spending increase on a
17 percentage basis? All Funds.

18 SENATOR KRUEGER: The All Funds
19 spending in our proposal is 175.2 billion.

20 SENATOR SEWARD: Excuse me, could
21 you repeat that?

22 SENATOR KRUEGER: Certainly. The
23 All Funds spending in our budget proposal is
24 \$175.2 billion.

25 SENATOR SEWARD: Will Senator

1 Krueger continue to yield?

2 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
3 the Senator yield?

4 SENATOR KRUEGER: With pleasure.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
6 Senator yields.

7 SENATOR SEWARD: Just as a quick
8 follow-up, what is that on a percentage basis?

9 SENATOR KRUEGER: The increase?

10 SENATOR SEWARD: The increase, yes.

11 SENATOR KRUEGER: It's a nominal
12 increase over the Executive. But we'll look at
13 his and quickly do the math for you. But a
14 relatively insignificant change.

15 You can either wait or we could
16 continue and then I could just burst forth with
17 that answer when we get it.

18 SENATOR SEWARD: We can move
19 forward. We'll move along.

20 If Senator Krueger would continue to
21 yield.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
23 the Senator yield?

24 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes, I would.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The

1 Senator yields.

2 SENATOR SEWARD: You know, it was
3 two weeks or so ago there was a revenue forecast
4 conference; the chairs and the rankers of the
5 fiscal committees in each house participated, the
6 Division of the Budget was there as well as the
7 State Comptroller.

8 And we had brought in five economics
9 experts to talk about our economy in New York and
10 in this country and give -- help us come up with
11 a reasonable revenue forecast. And to a person,
12 at that conference, on our panel, the message was
13 pretty clear -- very clear: Be cautious, be
14 careful. We're already seeing a slowdown, which
15 will ultimately impact available revenues from
16 the tax side.

17 So my question is, what is the
18 revenue figure that this budget resolution is
19 based on?

20 SENATOR KRUEGER: Again through
21 you, Mr. President, I also attended the revenue
22 projection forum. And it is always interesting
23 to hear from all of these experts who were
24 actually saying through 2020, New York State
25 should continue to do quite well. But then they

1 did expect a slowdown after 2020.

2 And that tells me that we do want to
3 be cautious, that we want to make sure that we
4 have adequate reserves and that we are not
5 overspending. But in our proposal today, clearly
6 we are not overspending. We are staying within
7 the 2 percent cap that my colleague has pointed
8 out his side supports, and we are staying within
9 that. The -- to answer your question on the
10 change in the All Funds spending, the Governor
11 was at 175.100 billion. We're at 175.200
12 billion, up 100 million. And the Assembly goes
13 up to 175.600 billion.

14 So I have to say I think an increase
15 of 100 million on a \$175 billion full budget is,
16 in some people's minds, a rounding error.

17 SENATOR SEWARD: If the Senator
18 would continue to yield.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
20 the Senator yield?

21 SENATOR KRUEGER: I do,
22 Mr. President.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
24 Senator yields.

25 SENATOR SEWARD: I appreciate that

1 information. However, my question was directed
2 at what is the revenue figure that this budget
3 resolution is based on?

4 SENATOR KRUEGER: So we take the
5 Comptroller's \$190 million revenue increase from
6 the Governor's proposal and we factor that in to
7 be included in what we call our base budget
8 revenue availability.

9 SENATOR SEWARD: So the -- if the
10 Senator would continue to yield.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
12 the Senator yield?

13 SENATOR KRUEGER: Certainly.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
15 Senator yields.

16 SENATOR SEWARD: So you're saying
17 that you have accepted the Comptroller's number?

18 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes, we accepted
19 the Comptroller's number that there was an
20 additional \$190 million in revenue above and
21 beyond the Governor's proposed revenue in his
22 Executive Budget and 30-day amendments.

23 SENATOR SEWARD: If Senator Krueger
24 would continue to yield.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does

1 the Senator yield?

2 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
4 Senator yields.

5 SENATOR SEWARD: You know, the
6 reason that the Comptroller issued his revenue
7 number is because there was no three-way
8 consensus reached in terms of the appropriate
9 revenue number among the Senate, the Assembly and
10 the Division of the Budget, representing the
11 Governor.

12 Is there any movement toward a
13 three-way agreement on available revenues?

14 SENATOR KRUEGER: Through you --

15 SENATOR SEWARD: Just to complete
16 my thought and question, that is the first step
17 in finalizing a timely State Budget, which is now
18 less than three weeks away from the deadline,
19 that three-way agreement on a revenue number.

20 SENATOR KRUEGER: Through you,
21 Mr. President. So my colleague is correct, we
22 did not come to agreement, three way, through the
23 primary way that we get to revenue consensus.
24 And so we all agreed that we were going to give
25 it to the Comptroller to make a determination.

1 Not necessarily easily agreed, but basically a
2 default if you don't make an agreement by X date,
3 it goes to the Comptroller. We are accepting
4 that because I think that is actually what is
5 required, that we accept that. And we are fully
6 intending to move forward in three-way
7 negotiations with the Governor and the Assembly,
8 not only on a final revenue number to be spent --
9 because there is some difference between us,
10 although not very much -- and also to, of course,
11 fight the real -- the important good fight of how
12 we take that revenue and expend it in different
13 ways.

14 So I actually believe we might see
15 Mothership starting as early as this evening.
16 Which for those of us who have been here for a
17 while know, it's to some degree the bell going
18 off at a race to start the negotiations between
19 the Governor, the Assembly and the Senate once
20 both the Senate and the Assembly complete their
21 work on their one-house bills, which is what we
22 are doing now.

23 SENATOR SEWARD: Would Senator
24 Krueger continue to yield?

25 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does

1 the Senator yield?

2 SENATOR KRUEGER: Certainly.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
4 Senator yields.

5 SENATOR SEWARD: Yes, through you,
6 Mr. President. How much additional spending in
7 this budget resolution is financed with
8 nonrecurring revenue items?

9 SENATOR KRUEGER: So in our
10 one-house we did not add any one-shot revenue
11 sources. All of our changes and proposed new
12 revenues are continuing.

13 We did not deny the Governor's
14 revenue sources in his budget. And it's an
15 excellent question that I can't answer for you
16 right now how many of his revenue sources in his
17 budget were defined as nonrecurring or what we
18 sometimes call one-shots.

19 So I can't answer for him, but I can
20 say we did no addition to that of one-shots.

21 SENATOR SEWARD: If Senator Krueger
22 would continue to yield, I have more questions.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
24 the Senator yield?

25 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes, I'm happy to

1 continue.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
3 Senator yields.

4 SENATOR SEWARD: So you have
5 accepted whatever nonrecurring revenue items that
6 the Governor had included in his plan, as I
7 understood your answer.

8 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes.

9 SENATOR SEWARD: And a follow-up
10 question to that is, what is the structural
11 deficit or surplus in the outyears in terms of
12 your financial plan? Is there a structural
13 deficit going forward?

14 SENATOR KRUEGER: So we confess we
15 don't have a great answer there. We can try to
16 get you an answer. But we did not try to look at
17 how our proposals would change the Governor's
18 outyear gap. And so I apologize that I don't
19 have that answer; we should try to get you that
20 answer.

21 SENATOR SEWARD: That I think is a
22 critically important piece of information, so
23 that we can do proper planning for this budget
24 and going forward.

25 If Senator Krueger would continue to

1 yield.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
3 the Senator yield?

4 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes, I will.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
6 Senator yields.

7 SENATOR SEWARD: You know, last
8 year the Majority on this side of the aisle
9 rejected over a billion dollars of new taxes and
10 fees that the Governor had included in his budget
11 proposal last year. And on top of that, we also
12 rejected many billions of dollars more in tax
13 increases and fee increases that the Assembly had
14 included in their one-house budget last year.
15 And so we were able to enact a final budget,
16 thanks to the Majority at the time, a State
17 Budget without new taxes and fees.

18 Now, the Governor is very
19 persistent, and his Executive Budget this year
20 contains over a billion dollars in tax increases
21 for fiscal year 2020. Does the Senate one-house
22 resolution reject any of these tax increases?
23 And if so, which ones?

24 SENATOR KRUEGER: Through you,
25 Mr. President. So in the Governor's Executive

1 Budget, he does add, I'd say, three new major
2 revenue streams.

3 One is the continuation beyond the
4 ending point of what people like to call the
5 millionaire's tax, but it's really just a change
6 in the higher brackets of PIT. So the Governor
7 is continuing that for new revenue, and this
8 house supports that as well.

9 The Governor is moving forward with
10 an internet tax package to tax internet sales,
11 which I like to describe as a sales tax fairness
12 package. We were awaiting a decision in a major
13 court case, called the Wayfair case, to clarify
14 that states can in fact tax internet sales as if
15 there was a sale going on in a bricks-and-mortar
16 store.

17 Interestingly, it's not a new tax
18 increase on anyone, it's a -- the fact is if you
19 go to a store and buy something, you're going to
20 get hit with sales tax if it's categorized under
21 New York State sales tax. But for too long
22 people were going to internet marketplace
23 providers, other providers, and avoiding the
24 sales tax. That actually hurt jobs in New York
25 State. Because when fewer people go to stores,

1 fewer people are hired to work in stores in our
2 neighborhoods and our communities. When people
3 don't have to pay a tax if they go one route
4 versus another route, you're setting up an
5 unfair, uneven playing field for different
6 businesses.

7 So not only are we accepting the
8 Governor's proposal, I actually think from a
9 small business, from a local community
10 perspective this is absolutely the right thing to
11 do.

12 And since Senator Seward and I both
13 sat through the budget hearings, we both heard
14 from the Associations of Towns, Counties and
15 Cities how important this was to them.

16 So yes, it does raise revenue for
17 the localities and for the state. But it's
18 really a question of tax fairness, given our
19 changing society where so much of commerce takes
20 place via internet, not by walking into the
21 mom-and-pop store in your neighborhood.

22 And then the third change in revenue
23 that was significant was the ESCOs, by requiring
24 equal taxation if energy is being purchased
25 through ESCOs versus through utility companies.

1 And that was also something that I
2 think is long past due. Again, I am a big
3 believer, and I think my conference is, in fair
4 taxes. Where you have an even playing field,
5 everybody pays the same tax rates for the same
6 types of activity, and ultimately that leads you
7 to ensuring that you're keeping taxes lower
8 because you're building your base of who's
9 paying.

10 So those are the three major changes
11 in the Governor's budget. And I feel that we
12 made the right decision to support those in our
13 budget resolution and budget bills.

14 SENATOR SEWARD: If Senator Krueger
15 would continue to yield.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
17 the Senator yield?

18 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes, I will.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
20 Senator yields.

21 SENATOR SEWARD: My follow-up
22 question, just so I clearly understand, did you
23 reject any of the Governor's tax and fee
24 increases that was in his proposal? Did you
25 reject any of them?

1 SENATOR KRUEGER: No, I don't
2 believe there were any new fees in his Executive
3 Budget this year. And I don't think we did
4 reject any. There weren't that many new. I
5 believe primarily there were those three that
6 we've just discussed.

7 SENATOR SEWARD: If the Senator
8 would continue to yield.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
10 the Senator yield?

11 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
13 Senator yields.

14 SENATOR SEWARD: Actually, there's
15 quite a long list of new revenues that the
16 Governor had put in his budget. And my follow-up
17 question to Senator Krueger is, what new taxes
18 and fees over and above the Governor's proposal
19 are included in this resolution?

20 SENATOR KRUEGER: Before I get to
21 listing our new revenues in our budget, can you
22 just read me that list you were referencing, if
23 you don't mind, of additional taxes and fees in
24 the Governor's Executive Budget?

25 Through you, Mr. President, I'm

1 actually asking a question which is half of what
2 he's asking me, so I don't want to mess up
3 protocol.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
5 Seward, do you yield to a question?

6 SENATOR SEWARD: I'd be happy to
7 provide this information. I assumed you would
8 have had this.

9 But the extension of the
10 millionaire's tax for five years.

11 SENATOR KRUEGER: I did mention
12 that, yes.

13 SENATOR SEWARD: The opioid tax.

14 Discontinuation of the energy
15 services sales tax exemption. You mentioned
16 that.

17 SENATOR KRUEGER: That was the
18 ESCOs.

19 SENATOR SEWARD: Make the waste
20 tire fee --

21 (Interruption.)

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: Stand at ease,
23 Mr. President.

24 (Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease
25 at 1:44 p.m.)

1 (Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at
2 1:55 p.m.)

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
4 Senate will return to order.

5 Senator Gianaris.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
7 let me thank my colleagues for their patience.
8 Obviously we had a medical issue that arose, the
9 doctors are here. And you saw the gentleman that
10 fell seems to be okay and is being taken to get
11 attention. So I guess we're in a position to
12 proceed with the debate.

13 And let me also thank Senator
14 Biaggi's chief of staff, who happens to be an
15 M.D., who was on-site immediately to help resolve
16 the situation.

17 So thank you, and we can proceed.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
19 Seward.

20 SENATOR SEWARD: Yes, certainly our
21 thoughts and prayers are with the person that did
22 collapse.

23 At the time of the interruption, I
24 was going down, at Senator Krueger's request, the
25 list of Governor's tax increases that he

1 included. And my question is they've accepted
2 all of these -- if they have, in fact. Or have
3 they rejected any.

4 The extended millionaire's tax, five
5 years.

6 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes.

7 SENATOR SEWARD: The opioid tax,
8 100 million. Discontinue the energy services
9 sales tax exemption. Make the waste tire fee
10 modification extended. Impose a supplemental
11 auto rental tax surcharge outside of the MCTD.
12 Enact a comprehensive tobacco control policy.
13 Impose penalty on the use of lead paint --
14 there's a modification there. Impose business
15 inspection fees. Extend personal income tax
16 limitations on charitable contributions for five
17 years. Nonresident New York gambling winnings.
18 Enact the Cannabis Regulation and Taxation Act.
19 Impose a statutory cap on casino free play.
20 Extend certain tax rates and certain simulcast
21 provisions for five years. And student loan
22 servicer registration fees are set at \$750.

23 Those are the list of the Governor's
24 revenue actions in his proposal. The question
25 is, if Senator Krueger would continue to yield,

1 the question is has the Senate Majority in their
2 budget resolution rejected any of these revenue
3 actions presented by the Governor.

4 SENATOR KRUEGER: Through you,
5 Mr. President, I want to thank the sponsor for
6 that question.

7 So we have in fact kept open for
8 discussion but not accepted the opioid tax,
9 because we have concerns about who it would apply
10 to.

11 We have kept open the discussion
12 about cannabis legalization, of which revenue is
13 one piece of it, but we have not agreed
14 specifically with the Governor's plan. We have
15 kept open and so we would like to continue the
16 discussion on cannabis.

17 We have kept open the discussion --
18 I'm sorry, cannabis and opioid were the two that
19 we kept open. We did accept the auto rental
20 surcharge expansion, which is a relatively small
21 amount of money and would go towards mass transit
22 in upstate New York to help them with their mass
23 transit needs.

24 The list was very long, so I'm just
25 double-checking. And the issues on the free

1 poker question, the free play -- thank you. I'm
2 not sure we did define that as a tax. Because
3 that's a question of whether casinos and other
4 places can offer discounted gambling to people.
5 So we did accept the Governor's proposal there,
6 but I'm not really sure I would define it as a
7 tax. And you know me, I don't like gambling.
8 It's not hard to find me arguing against
9 gambling.

10 But we also did accept his proposal
11 to allow sports betting in the four casinos,
12 which will be revenue. So we did accept that
13 revenue, under the belief that that will actually
14 assist the upstate casinos in trying to meet
15 their new revenue.

16 So, sorry, I jumped to -- you
17 also -- through you, Mr. President. Your
18 original underlying question also asked what new
19 additions we had beyond the Governor's. So shall
20 I jump to those now?

21 SENATOR SEWARD: If I -- if the
22 Senator would yield, I would have a follow-up
23 question just on the original question.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
25 the Senator yield?

1 SENATOR KRUEGER: Certainly. Of
2 course.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
4 Senator yields. Go ahead.

5 SENATOR SEWARD: The -- my question
6 really is two-part. My reading of the budget
7 resolution was that you have accepted the
8 \$100 million opioid tax. And the other items
9 that you discuss were still open or under
10 discussion, have you included those revenues in
11 your financial plan?

12 SENATOR KRUEGER: So through you,
13 Mr. President, there was 100 million in revenue
14 booked from last year's budget for an opioid tax.
15 The courts overruled how that was written. So
16 we're not supporting adding an additional 100,
17 but we are accepting that that is part of the
18 financial plan, did not reject that, but wrote in
19 our documents that we want continued negotiation
20 on the language of how that tax would actually be
21 written and applied.

22 Because we -- and I'm sure you feel
23 the same way. We don't want to go down the road
24 of passing something that somebody goes to court
25 and finds unconstitutional for a second time.

1 And we're concerned about who that tax might
2 actually apply to, who would actually have to pay
3 the tax.

4 So we split the baby, because we
5 said yes, that 100 million is in there already
6 from last year, we're not subtracting it out from
7 the financial plan, but we didn't actually agree
8 to the specific change that the Governor has
9 proposed in his Executive Budget.

10 And on cannabis, we booked no money.

11 SENATOR SEWARD: If Senator Krueger
12 would continue to yield.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
14 the Senator yield?

15 SENATOR KRUEGER: Certainly.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
17 Senator yields.

18 SENATOR SEWARD: Yes, let's now get
19 to that portion of my question that deals with
20 what new taxes and fees -- and also, I would say,
21 revenue actions -- that, over and above the
22 Governor's proposal, are in this resolution.
23 What new taxes, fees, revenue actions are
24 included in this budget resolution?

25 SENATOR KRUEGER: Okay. So we do

1 place a sports betting via online if you go to
2 the four casinos in upstate New York to register.
3 And it's two forms of revenue. It would be a
4 sports betting licensing fee and then sports
5 betting tax receipts, projected at a total of
6 \$90 million. Again, if you choose to sports bet
7 legally in New York, you would have to pay this.
8 But if you don't choose to sports bet, it's not a
9 tax on you.

10 We did a slight change in boxing and
11 MMA taxes to have parity between the two sports.
12 So it brings in a total of \$2 million in revenue.
13 But again, the argument was more for having an
14 even playing field and parity in taxation in
15 those two not identical sports but similar
16 sports.

17 We did take unclaimed lottery funds,
18 currently estimated to be \$80 million a year, and
19 said that that money should go to education.

20 Now, every year there are unclaimed
21 lottery funds, people who never, I guess, look at
22 their ticket or decide I don't want this money.
23 I'm not sure who decides they don't want this
24 money once they buy a lottery ticket, but
25 apparently there are people who don't ever accept

1 their lottery winnings. And that up until now,
2 that unclaimed lottery funds money has simply
3 been left in the lottery to do more marketing,
4 more advertising, more internal spending.

5 We actually think the lottery has
6 plenty of money to do what they need to do to run
7 the lottery system. Apparently more and more
8 people are playing it, so we just don't believe
9 they should be able to keep this money. It was
10 never intended for them. It's never been
11 collected by the winners, so we would put that
12 into education, as lottery money is supposed to
13 go to education.

14 We speed up the effective date of
15 the auto rental tax that the Governor put in to
16 gain an additional \$7 million. So it's not a
17 growth in the rate, it's just making the
18 effective date earlier to start to draw revenue
19 earlier.

20 We deny the STAR property tax
21 proposal, which is not a reduction in STAR but
22 rather it's a continuation of current practice.

23 We actually -- and we have a
24 proposal to -- so this one's always a little
25 complicated. So we call it a major reassessment

1 impact of property tax credits, but it's actually
2 a proposal that would address an issue in
3 Long Island where there are massive tax
4 assessment increases anticipated very soon. And
5 we have drafted a proposal that would provide a
6 five-year phase-in exemption for the increase in
7 assessed value due to the Nassau County property
8 value reassessment, at the request of the North
9 Country executive.

10 So the increase in the tax burden
11 due to their increased property values would be
12 phased in at a 20 percent per year growth over
13 five years. And we are estimating that cost to
14 be \$30 million in this year to the state.

15 SENATOR SEWARD: If Senator Krueger
16 would continue to yield.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
18 the Senator yield?

19 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes, I will
20 yield.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
22 Senator yields.

23 SENATOR SEWARD: I notice, Senator,
24 that you did not mention the carryout paper bag
25 fee as a revenue raiser. Is that in this -- that

1 is in this budget resolution, is it not?

2 SENATOR KRUEGER: So that was the
3 Governor's proposal -- we modified his plastic
4 bag proposal. So it's not necessarily a new fee
5 that we're adding, but it is a changed formula.
6 So in our model of a plastic bag fee, it would be
7 a ban on plastic, a 5-cent fee on other bags,
8 with the money being split between -- I'm hoping
9 I get this right; they'll tell me if I'm wrong --
10 20 percent remaining at the stores and 80 percent
11 of that going to the EPF fund to assist
12 communities with the transition from having
13 plastic bags to no longer having plastic bags.

14 Excuse me. So it's a ban on plastic
15 and a 10-to-25-cent fee on paper and other
16 nonreusable bags. It's a model that actually has
17 worked in the State of California very
18 effectively, and we have a number of counties and
19 localities in New York State who have also
20 established a similar model for themselves.

21 This is the first time we would have
22 an opportunity to see money available to go into
23 the Environmental Protection Fund while ensuring
24 that the stores who had to change their behavior
25 would have some of their costs addressed as well.

1 SENATOR SEWARD: If Senator Krueger
2 would continue to yield.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does
4 the Senator yield?

5 SENATOR KRUEGER: Yes, I will.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
7 Senator yields.

8 SENATOR SEWARD: Just so I
9 understand -- and I will get to a question --
10 under this resolution there's a ban on
11 plastic bags and then up to 20 cents for a paper
12 bag at the grocery store?

13 SENATOR KRUEGER: Minimum of 10,
14 and it could go up to 25.

15 SENATOR SEWARD: Twenty-five.

16 SENATOR KRUEGER: It's the store's
17 decision if they go up. So in the other areas of
18 the country that have applied this law, you
19 basically don't see them choosing to go up
20 because it would be a business decision on their
21 part that probably wouldn't work out that well
22 for them.

23 SENATOR SEWARD: Mr. President, if
24 Senator Krueger would continue to yield.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Does

1 the Senator yield?

2 SENATOR KRUEGER: Certainly.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
4 Senator yields.

5 SENATOR SEWARD: Senator Krueger, I
6 wanted to go back to our discussion on the
7 All Funds spending number, which I understood you
8 to say is \$100 million above the Governor.

9 SENATOR KRUEGER: The All Funds --
10 yes. We were at 175.2, he was at 175.1.

11 SENATOR SEWARD: And the
12 Comptroller -- I also understood you to say that
13 you've accepted the Comptroller's revenue number
14 of 190 million additional dollars of revenue
15 available.

16 With that, if the All Funds increase
17 is 100 million and the Comptroller is offering
18 190 million in new revenues forecasting, why
19 would you need to raise additional taxes over and
20 above the Governor?

21 SENATOR KRUEGER: So the primary
22 revenue increases are actually consistent with
23 what the Governor proposed. We're not actually
24 calling for significant amounts of new revenue
25 from our -- the list that we just gave you.

1 So by and large, we are not
2 significantly impacting the revenue -- growth in
3 revenue collected. And of course, as I said, we
4 made some changes in what we accepted and
5 rejected in the full financial plan of the
6 Governor's.

7 SENATOR SEWARD: Mr. President, I
8 have no further questions at this time.

9 Thank you.

10 SENATOR KRUEGER: Thank you. Thank
11 you.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Are
13 there any other Senators wishing to be heard?

14 Seeing and hearing none, the debate
15 is closed. The question is on the resolution.

16 Call the roll.

17 (The Secretary called the roll.)

18 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
19 Robach to explain his vote.

20 SENATOR ROBACH: Yes,
21 Mr. President, I just rise -- I am obligated
22 really to not vote for this resolution for a
23 number of reasons. For me, representing the City
24 of Rochester and Monroe County, this resolution
25 not only raises billions of dollars in taxes but

1 also took things out of the budget that have been
2 in there for years.

3 For example, the Summer of
4 Opportunity Program for the City of Rochester, in
5 a bipartisan effort, something created with Bob
6 Duffy, who was the mayor of Rochester, then
7 Lieutenant Governor, that's been removed from
8 this proposal. I'm going to do everything I can
9 to make sure it's in the final version of the
10 budget.

11 But I noticed very pointedly that
12 those funds weren't taken out for New York City
13 or anywhere else, only for the City of Rochester.

14 Also, while I was happy that
15 Workforce Development Institute was funded, a lot
16 of the money for training and inclusion, trying
17 to get women and more diversity in the building
18 trades in Rochester and get them in the queue for
19 internships, that money was not put in this
20 one-house resolution either.

21 So both generically, listening to
22 the people I represent, being against new taxes,
23 as well as, even more parochially, cutting
24 specific things to the people I represent, but
25 not seeing that done for other parts of the

1 state, is not only disappointing to me, but I
2 feel I have an obligation to vote against this
3 resolution and work with everyone in the process
4 to make sure in the final version we do the right
5 thing and treat people fairly.

6 Thank you, Mr. President.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
8 Robach to be recorded in the negative.

9 Senator Metzger to explain her vote.

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

12 I just want to say that I am very
13 pleased and proud to support this one-house
14 budget. As the Senator representing the most
15 rural district in the Democratic Conference, this
16 budget really does address the needs of all of
17 New York, both rural and urban.

18 I had a number of concerns with the
19 Executive Budget and cuts, in particular, to
20 funding for local governments. We've done a
21 lot -- we've done a lot to put those resources
22 where they need to go. Also to fund our schools,
23 funding agriculture, addressing the opioid
24 crisis. These are all issues that are so
25 important to our rural communities.

1 So I'm very pleased to vote aye.

2 Thank you.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
4 Metzger to be recorded in the affirmative.

5 Senator May to explain her vote.

6 SENATOR MAY: Thank you,
7 Mr. President.

8 I am also pleased to vote for this
9 resolution because it's been a wonderful
10 experience to see our entire conference work
11 together to address the issues of urban, suburban
12 and rural New York. My district -- like Jen's, I
13 have rural districts, but I also represent all
14 three of those very prominently.

15 And it sometimes looks like the
16 interests of those different parts of the state
17 conflict with each other, but it has been
18 wonderful to see how my conference gets it that
19 we need to support the entire state.

20 So we have additional funding for
21 agriculture and rural programs. We also are
22 supporting urban cores like Syracuse. And we
23 have a lot of things in the budget that bridge
24 both of those different kinds of interests, such
25 as much better funding for education and for

1 healthcare and for many other programs that I
2 think we need to support, like clean water and
3 drug addiction treatment and prevention and
4 libraries. There's so much that really unites
5 our state.

6 And I'm very happy to vote for this
7 resolution. Thank you.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
9 May to be recorded in the affirmative.

10 Senator Liu to explain his vote.

11 SENATOR LIU: Mr. President, thank
12 you very much for this opportunity to explain my
13 favorable vote on this budget resolution.

14 I want to echo my colleagues,
15 appreciating that that process has been both
16 enlightening and productive and I believe will
17 serve the best interests of all of our fellow
18 New Yorkers.

19 In particular, when we looked at the
20 Executive Budget, there were a number of things
21 that required modification, if not outright
22 rejection. A couple of those things I'd like to
23 highlight would be, number one, school governance
24 in the City of New York. The Executive simply
25 proposed a three-year extension of what's called

1 mayoral control. I'm happy that we are putting
2 an additional process in there, including a
3 public hearing this week, as well as in coming
4 years, to continue to examine the school
5 governance system in New York City and to make
6 sure that additional reforms and changes as
7 necessary will be enacted.

8 On the issue of funding the
9 Metropolitan Transportation Authority on a
10 long-term basis, particularly with regard to its
11 capital plan, the Executive essentially proposed
12 a blank check for the MTA that is not -- that is
13 already not known for a great deal of
14 accountability.

15 We reject that proposal in this
16 document and instead look to analyze and consider
17 additional measures that will provide such
18 revenues to the MTA, but with accountability and
19 with a clear understanding of what it will
20 deliver and provide for our constituents.

21 With that, Mr. President, I am happy
22 to support this resolution. Thank you.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
24 Liu to be recorded in the affirmative.

25 Senator Harckham to explain his

1 vote.

2 SENATOR HARCKHAM: Thank you,
3 Mr. President.

4 First I want to thank our leader and
5 our deputy leader for creating a process that got
6 us to this point, a real thorough examination of
7 all of the issues in the budget, line by line,
8 with input from stakeholders and local officials.
9 So we did a very thorough job in crafting this
10 resolution.

11 This is very good for the Lower
12 Hudson Valley. I want to thank Chair of
13 Education Shelley Mayer. A billion dollars in
14 extra Foundation Aid is critical as our property
15 taxpayers struggle to pay for a good education
16 for their children.

17 We did things like restoring Aid to
18 Localities, the AIM funding, fully restored CHIPS
19 funding for the first time, with an over
20 \$150 million increase in that program. We
21 restored the Severe Weather Infrastructure
22 Repaving Program. So there are a lot of things
23 that are very good for the Hudson Valley.

24 For my chair -- and working with
25 chairman Senator Rivera, I thank you for your

1 leadership on our task force. We are really
2 moving the needle on substance use disorder
3 treatment. For the first time, we have pushed
4 the envelope from 14 days before an insurance
5 company can interfere to 28 days. And that is
6 remarkably revolutionary because time, we know,
7 is the enemy when treating substance abuse.

8 We're also reducing the number of
9 copays on outpatient care or after-care from a
10 variety of copays. If they see multiple
11 specialists, down to one copay per day, and it
12 would be the cost of a basic office visit.

13 So there are a lot of good things in
14 this budget, and I'm going to be pleased to vote
15 for it.

16 The only one thing I want to say is
17 we talk about the legalization of cannabis, and
18 my personal feelings are irrelevant, I'm here to
19 represent the feelings of my district. And there
20 are great, great concerns. My hope is we will
21 still have this conversation out of the budget.
22 I think it's too big. My constituents think
23 there are too many moving parts. Especially the
24 further out in suburbia you get, you throw cars
25 in, it's not a good mix.

1 So I am supportive of colleagues'
2 work. I am very grateful to Senator Krueger for
3 some of the conversations and her understanding
4 of the issues up there. So we're moving in a
5 positive direction, I think this is a great
6 resolution, and I want to thank colleagues.

7 Thank you, Mr. President.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
9 Harckham to be recorded in the affirmative.

10 Senator Jackson to explain his vote.

11 SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you,
12 Mr. President.

13 My colleagues, I rise in order to
14 support the resolution.

15 I'm so happy and pleased that both
16 the Assembly and the Senate in their resolutions
17 consider how important it is that the
18 Foundation Aid formula has increased to over a
19 billion dollars in both resolutions.

20 I was hoping and expecting
21 \$1.6 billion that was recommended by the
22 Commissioner of Education and phase in the rest
23 of the \$4 billion that our children are owed
24 under the Campaign for Fiscal Equity. But I am
25 pleased with the fact that the priorities of both

1 the Assembly and the Senate is about education.

2 And I say to my colleagues here in
3 the Senate that I did a tour of several cities in
4 the State of New York with the Alliance for
5 Quality Education, for education. I went to
6 Rochester, New York, and visited schools there
7 and talked to some of the parents and leaders in
8 the administration. Rochester has a very poor
9 school district. And based on the poverty level
10 and the number of children of minorities, blacks
11 and Latinos, it is considered the eighth poorest
12 school district in the country -- not only the
13 Empire State, but the country.

14 And I had the opportunity with my
15 colleague Rachel May to go to Syracuse. And
16 Syracuse is a very, very poor school district, it
17 has 50 percent blacks and maybe 25 percent
18 Latinos. And it is also considered like the
19 tenth poorest school district -- not in the
20 Empire State, New York State, but the country.

21 I'm saying to everyone that is
22 unacceptable by anyone's standard. But not only
23 that, Schenectady, in our colleague Jim Tedisco's
24 district. I had the opportunity to meet with his
25 staff and other State Assemblymembers, the

1 superintendents and school board members there,
2 we toured the school. And that district is in
3 need, just like Rochester and Syracuse. Not at
4 the same level, but they're in need. Even the
5 superintendent said that several years ago they
6 filed an action of discrimination against
7 New York State with the federal government
8 because of the situation in Schenectady.

9 And I visited a small rural
10 community like Ellenville that has only 1600
11 students in the entire school district. One
12 campus which has a high school, a middle school
13 and an elementary school all combined. And that
14 district did not have one social worker in the
15 entire school district. And they have said that
16 they need money that they're entitled to under
17 Foundation Aid formula.

18 How much is Rochester owed? About
19 \$2900 per student. How much is Syracuse owed?
20 About \$2100 per student. How much is New York
21 City owed? Fifteen-hundred dollars per student.
22 And in essence, the Foundation Aid is the thing
23 that we need in order to ensure that the children
24 of New York State, no matter what county or
25 municipality you live in, have the opportunity,

1 an opportunity to have a sound, basic education.

2 And my colleagues, I tell you what
3 that means, that they should graduate from high
4 school knowing how to read, knowing how to write,
5 knowing how to serve on a jury and being able to
6 hold competitive employment. Not repetitive,
7 flipping burgers, but competitive in the world
8 market.

9 So I say to you that I'm very
10 pleased about this. But I also have issues as
11 far as the MTA and New York City Housing
12 Authority and many other issues. And let me just
13 read to you, if I may -- I want to read to you a
14 tweet this morning, what the New York City
15 Partnership said about this budget, and then I'll
16 close.

17 It said -- one second. Bear with
18 me, please -- "Congratulations to Andrea
19 Stewart-Cousins on a fiscally responsible budget
20 proposal that includes congestion pricing to fund
21 transit. Check out our full statement," and they
22 give you the website.

23 And what I said in response to
24 that -- I tweeted that, and I said "We are doing
25 our best to represent the needs and the wants of

1 all New Yorkers. Is it perfect? No. But we are
2 driving in the right direction, staying focused."

3 And Mr. President, I vote aye on
4 this resolution.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
6 Jackson to be recorded in the affirmative.

7 Senator Ortt to explain his vote.

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

10 I don't want to get too excited. I
11 have sat on the other side of this chamber, and I
12 know that this document really doesn't mean a
13 whole lot governmentally. But really it's more
14 telling as a political document, and it tells you
15 where the Majority would like to continue to take
16 this state.

17 This state is the highest-taxed
18 state in our country. We know that, there's data
19 that shows that. The highest-taxed state in this
20 country. Which means, in many cases, the
21 least-affordable state in this country.

22 And this budget, this document, does
23 nothing to change that ranking. In fact, it
24 doubles down on continuing to make sure we're the
25 number-one state when it comes to taxes. And

1 that's because there's a fundamental difference
2 between the Majority's view, which is they
3 probably like that ranking because it means we're
4 spending more money on the needs of New Yorkers.

5 Many folks in the Minority look at
6 that as the death knell for our districts. That
7 ranking is the reason why businesses are leaving.
8 That ranking is why students, when they graduate
9 from our schools, leave to other states -- not
10 California, but other states who are lower-taxed
11 states.

12 And this document absolutely does
13 nothing to change that trajectory. And it's
14 increasingly a question of mine and many millions
15 of New Yorkers, as the negotiations now begin in
16 earnest to produce a real budget governmentally,
17 who in that room is going to be representing
18 middle-class taxpayers in this state? I don't
19 know the answer to that question, and I'm
20 increasingly wondering if anyone in those
21 negotiations are going to be standing up for
22 middle-income earners, middle-class taxpayers,
23 the kinds of people who have been leaving this
24 state in droves for generations.

25 And I would like to add a specific

1 concern of mine. My colleague, the chair of the
2 Agriculture Committee, mentioned some things
3 about rural New Yorkers. And in the agriculture
4 budget, nothing is identified as to where the
5 money is going. There's an increase in funding,
6 which I think is important, and I'm glad we're
7 increasing funding. But I would offer to my
8 colleagues, especially to the new ones, speak to
9 your colleagues who have been here for several
10 years. Trusting executive agencies to spend the
11 money in a way -- in the best way for our
12 constituents and New Yorkers is misplaced at
13 best.

14 I do not trust the executive
15 agencies of this administration to spend the
16 money that -- this conference for many years, and
17 this house, quite frankly, supported programs on
18 the agriculture side, the Governor took them out,
19 we put them back in. We made sure those funding
20 streams and those programs were there. Not the
21 Assembly, and certainly not this administration.

22 So it's important to me and I
23 certainly hope that as those negotiations go
24 forward, more money is great. More resources for
25 our farmers and our agribusiness is great. But

1 let's make sure that we say where that money is
2 going. That is our responsibility as a
3 Legislature. And when we don't do that, we are
4 abdicating our responsibility constitutionally
5 that New Yorkers have sent us here to do.

6 Mr. President, I vote in the
7 negative.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
9 Ortt to be recorded in the negative.

10 Senator Funke to explain his vote.

11 SENATOR FUNKE: Thank you,
12 Mr. President.

13 In my opinion, simply put, this
14 budget taxes too much, spends too much, and won't
15 do a thing to create jobs in my district in
16 upstate New York.

17 A million people have left our state
18 since 2010, and nothing in this budget is going
19 to reverse that either. In fact, by increasing
20 taxes once again on higher earners, more will
21 certainly leave the state and then face tax
22 inspectors who are checking their refrigerators
23 to find out if their milk has expired and squeeze
24 every last penny out of them.

25 Specifically in this budget, it

1 raises or creates more taxes on driving, on
2 internet purchases, paper bags, real estate
3 purchases, and prescription medication. It
4 imposes a \$200 million tax to fund political
5 campaigns and those lovable negative TV
6 commercials. We believe it blows through the
7 2 percent tax cap that we -- or spending cap that
8 we imposed on our local governments. And it
9 still manages to cut funding to the neediest
10 among us who need nursing home care. And that's
11 a concern.

12 There are some good things in this
13 budget, to be sure, that all of us on this side
14 agree with and advocate for. But it only takes
15 one bad apple to ruin the bunch, as they say, and
16 the tax and spending increases in this one-house
17 represent a bushel of bad apples.

18 I vote no, Mr. President. Thank
19 you.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
21 Funke to be recorded in the negative.

22 Senator LaValle to explain his vote.

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

25 After listening to Senator Funke and

1 Senator Ortt, there's only one way you could vote
2 on this bill, and that's no. Taxes too much,
3 spends too much.

4 And in some places it doesn't spend
5 properly, like for our community colleges. The
6 Base Aid should be higher than it is. And for
7 two of SUNY's hospitals, at Stony Brook and
8 Syracuse, not a dollar aid to them, not a dollar
9 aid. And so those individuals representing
10 Syracuse should be aware that there are big
11 problems ahead for that hospital, at least in my
12 opinion.

13 And so I'm going to vote no on this
14 legislation.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
16 LaValle to be recorded in the negative.

17 Senator Hoylman to explain his vote.

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

20 You know, I first want to thank our
21 colleagues for that scintillating debate. You
22 know, there's an expression that I would rather
23 die of passion than die of boredom -- except for
24 a debate on a one-house budget resolution. So I
25 commend Senator Krueger for answering those

1 questions so completely.

2 And I think it suggests to me that
3 there is widespread agreement across the State of
4 New York about our Senate one-house resolution.
5 That's why you have both the business community
6 and labor speaking in unison in support of this
7 one-house resolution. That's why you have both
8 agricultural interests -- the Farm Bureau -- and
9 downstate interests, like our criminal justice
10 services network, speaking in favor of this
11 one-house budget resolution.

12 I'm very proud of this resolution
13 and am excited to lend my support because it
14 really is a budget for the many, not the few.
15 And that is a major change from our last year's
16 resolution.

17 For example, last year in terms of
18 funding for the Nurse Family Partnership, our
19 colleagues across the aisle provided nothing.
20 This year our Senate resolution has at least
21 \$3 million.

22 Last year our colleagues across the
23 aisle, Mr. President, provided zero resources for
24 the LGBT Health and Human Services Network. This
25 year the Senate one-house resolution includes

1 that funding.

2 Last year, even after many efforts
3 among advocates to try to convince our colleagues
4 to support the Runaway and Homeless Youth
5 Initiative, our colleagues provided no money.
6 This year, they are funded.

7 So as was said earlier by our
8 colleague across the aisle, there is additional
9 spending on behalf of the needs of New Yorkers,
10 and that's what this budget is really about. And
11 I'm very proud that we've also provided
12 significant funding to statewide foreclosure
13 prevention services. You know, 15,000 New York
14 families lost their homes due to foreclosure last
15 year. But we're going to stop that, hopefully,
16 in this year's budget.

17 And we also, thanks to the efforts
18 on behalf of my colleagues, are providing key
19 funding to civil legal services and indigent
20 legal services on both the criminal and civil
21 side.

22 And finally, I'd like to say that in
23 terms of schools and mass transit, there's a plan
24 here for a way forward. And now we're finally
25 advancing a proposal to tax the very wealthy in

1 New York with a pied-à-terre tax, which is French
2 for make the world's super-rich pay their fair
3 share.

4 (Laughter.)

5 SENATOR HOYLMAN: And I'm very,
6 very heartened by the fact that we can reallocate
7 resources from noncitizens who have second homes
8 in the City of New York to the needs of everyday
9 New Yorkers, just like our colleagues have said.

10 So I'm proud to vote aye,
11 Mr. President.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
13 Hoylman to be recorded in the affirmative.

14 Senator Helming to explain her vote.

15 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you,
16 Mr. President. I rise today to explain why I'm
17 voting no on this resolution.

18 Having less than 24 hours to review
19 the language included in these budget bills, I'm
20 left with many more questions than answers and,
21 honestly, tremendous concerns for the people of
22 this state who are already overtaxed and
23 overburdened by regulations.

24 Despite the commitment of the
25 Majority that upstate New York will not be

1 forgotten, when I look at what's before us, I
2 think that's exactly what has happened. That
3 upstate New York, primary the Finger Lakes
4 region, and all of our rural communities have
5 truly been left out of the discussion.

6 As the ranker on the Commission for
7 Rural Resources, I'm concerned about several
8 lines that are not identified in the one-house
9 budget. To begin with, when we talk about access
10 to healthcare services, the Breast Cancer
11 Coalition of Rochester provides cancer services
12 to those who have been diagnosed with breast
13 cancer or gynecological cancers, whether it's a
14 woman or whether it's men. They provide these
15 services in many of the poorest areas of upstate
16 New York. They provided services to 14 counties.
17 In past years' budgets there had been a dedicated
18 line for the Breast Cancer Coalition. Last year
19 it was \$300,000. In this year's budget, I don't
20 see a single penny identified.

21 But what I do see, I see a line with
22 \$1 million for women's services. And I implore,
23 implore the Majority to consider the Breast
24 Cancer Coalition, their \$300,000 request for
25 funding. Keep in mind, again, that they service

1 14 counties with some of the poorest people in
2 New York State.

3 I also implore you to take a look,
4 if it's not already in there -- I didn't see it.
5 When we talk about how well we've done for our
6 rural communities, I didn't see anything in there
7 for the critical access hospitals. There's 42 of
8 them across New York State. Not one of them is
9 in my district, but as an advocate for the rural
10 communities, we need to fund the rate
11 reimbursement, address the issues related to
12 that.

13 These hospitals serve the most rural
14 and geographically isolated areas of our state.
15 We cannot forget them.

16 And along those same lines, Iroquois
17 Healthcare, the physician "Take a Look"
18 program -- \$150,000. It's a phenomenal bargain
19 for the State of New York. What it does is
20 reaches out to residents in training in New York
21 City, physicians assistants and other medical
22 personnel, brings them up to New York State where
23 we have a critical shortfall of medical
24 providers, and shows them opportunities for a
25 great place to live and to work. So I hope the

1 Majority will again consider putting that back
2 in.

3 I also want to mention Finger Lakes
4 law enforcement and emergency services. We
5 talked on this floor about the importance of
6 volunteer fire departments. Every single penny
7 of the \$500,000 that has been put in the budget
8 for decades has gone to providing our volunteer
9 fire departments over six counties -- over 92
10 volunteer fire departments -- with a small amount
11 of money to help them with the purchase of
12 critical supplies, whether it's hose, whether
13 it's safety equipment, whatever it needs. It's a
14 small amount of money that goes to these fire
15 departments and it helps them serve and protect
16 our communities, it helps them keep themselves
17 safe from some of the cancers they're exposed to.
18 And it also helps keep the tax burden off of the
19 local municipalities. They're coming out of the
20 taxpayers' pockets.

21 So I implore you to consider that
22 \$500,000 and remind you again about the
23 discussions we've had about how important
24 volunteer fire departments are.

25 Wanted to touch just quickly on

1 veterans. Again, yesterday we recognized the
2 American Legion here. I'm a family member of a
3 large military family. I wholeheartedly support
4 our veterans and our active-duty service men and
5 women. And it just boggles my mind that we will
6 sit here and we'll talk about how we support our
7 veterans, and then we will remove from this
8 budget \$200,000 in funding for the Warrior Salute
9 program, which provides clinical treatment and
10 temporary housing for veterans as they overcome
11 PTSD, military sexual trauma and/or traumatic
12 brain injuries.

13 I want to know what message is this
14 sending. That we value all of our veterans, or
15 we just ignore the veterans from upstate, we just
16 care about downstate veterans? I implore you to
17 put that money back into the budget.

18 When it comes to agriculture, I
19 didn't see -- perhaps it's rolled up into the
20 funds that my colleague Senator Ortt mentioned --
21 the New York Farm Viability Institute and the
22 dairy profit teams.

23 I also just wanted to mention
24 workforce development. We obliterated the
25 Rochester programs that my colleague Senator

1 Robach talked about. Please know that those
2 programs don't just impact the City of Rochester,
3 it spreads throughout the Finger Lakes region.
4 That is going to impact our businesses, their
5 ability to get trained employees. It's also
6 going to impact the people who are looking for
7 that necessary training to find jobs. So I
8 implore you to put that back in as well.

9 On the environment, I'll just touch
10 very briefly, there's a lot of money in there.
11 It's curious to me that we call out specifically
12 Long Island. And I'd ask you to, you know, take
13 a look to make sure that the Finger Lakes are
14 included. And also that issues related to
15 blue-green algae and invasive species such as
16 woolly adelgid and the spotted lanternfly are
17 also included.

18 Again, I thank you for the work that
19 you've done on the budget. I implore you to take
20 another look at some of the programs from upstate
21 New York that have been wiped out. And I just
22 really -- those of you who are responsible for
23 committees that have anything to do with real
24 communities, really let your voices be heard and
25 push for what we need that's so important.

1 Thank you.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
3 Helming to be recorded in the negative.

4 Senator Jacobs to explain his vote.

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

7 This past December the USA Today had
8 an article, the headline being "Leaving New York?
9 Population Loss Deepest in the United States."
10 People are leaving -- this article wrote about
11 that people are leaving our state at a faster
12 rate than any other state in the nation.

13 This has been happening for some
14 time now. It is fairly obviously to anybody that
15 lives outside the New York City area that we have
16 a population crisis in state, a population-exodus
17 crisis in this state. We need to focus on that
18 if we are going to survive long-term as a state.

19 In that regard, this budget is
20 troubling to me. I have not seen an example
21 where an area has turned their population crisis
22 around, reversed an exodus of people and grown
23 again by dramatically taxing and dramatically
24 fees, and that is what we are doing now.

25 I just wanted, though, to touch on

1 one specific element of this budget, and that is
2 regarding marijuana legalization.

3 In the brief period I have been in
4 this body, I've expressed concern each and every
5 year about major policy issues being inserted
6 into this budget. And this year is no different.
7 But I have to say this year's inclusion of
8 recreational marijuana in the budget is the most
9 significant example of putting a major dramatic
10 policy in the budget that is largely a policy
11 issue and certainly, at least this year, not a
12 budgetary issue.

13 I personally am strongly against
14 broad-based legalization of marijuana. But
15 whether you are for or against this issue, you
16 must agree that it's a very significant public
17 policy issue with major ramifications on our
18 people. I could list the litany of reasons why
19 legalization is very dangerous for our future,
20 but at this point I am just asking that we do not
21 do a disservice to this legislative body and,
22 more importantly, to the citizens we represent by
23 ramming this issue through in this budget
24 process.

25 I believe we need to give this the

1 studied deliberation it deserves -- committee
2 meetings, hearings, public outreach and more.
3 Simply put, we are not fulfilling our job as
4 legislators if we pass this legislation in this
5 manner.

6 Thank you.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
8 Jacobs to be recorded in the negative.

9 Senator Gaughran to explain his
10 vote.

11 SENATOR GAUGHRAN: Thank you,
12 Mr. President.

13 I'd first like to thank both Senator
14 Krueger and Senator Seward for what I thought was
15 a very civil and thoughtful discussion. And that
16 back-and-forth honestly, as a new Senator, I
17 found to be quite valuable.

18 Look, I don't agree with everything
19 in this budget. I don't think -- probably most
20 people don't agree with everything in this
21 budget. But there's a lot we need to do, and we
22 do have to make some compromises. And I want to
23 point out a couple of things I think are
24 important.

25 Especially for the middle class, a

1 significant increase in aid to public schools.
2 This is not only going to help the children
3 across the state, but this is going to help our
4 property tax payers. And as chair of Local
5 Government, I'm very happy that this fully
6 restores the AIM funding for every village and
7 every town in this state. That also helps
8 especially the middle class.

9 And I'm pleased that it also
10 eliminates the proposed tax on carried interest
11 and that it also will make the 2 percent tax cap
12 permanent.

13 So for these and other reasons,
14 Mr. President, I vote in the affirmative.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
16 Gaughran to be recorded in the affirmative.

17 Senator Ramos to explain her vote.

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

20 I too rise in support of my
21 conference's resolution. I believe it does
22 protect the fiscal integrity of our state while
23 prioritizing the needs of working-class people.

24 Look, I'm a born and bred New Yorker
25 and I have seen Republican budgets pass nearly my

1 entire adult life. I can't say how proud I am to
2 be a member of this conference suggesting a
3 budget that really does reflect our needs. And I
4 want to just highlight a few of the things and
5 then talk a little bit about something that I
6 believe is missing in our budget.

7 But I want to commend my colleague
8 Senator Krueger on all of her hard work and of
9 course the leadership of Andrea Stewart-Cousins,
10 our conference leader.

11 I believe that with prevailing wage
12 and wage theft prevention, or otherwise known as
13 the Sweat Bill in this resolution, we're truly
14 beginning to address the inequities for many of
15 the workers who benefit -- sorry, of the workers
16 employed on projects who benefit from public
17 subsidies. And as the mother of two public
18 school children and a graduate of New York City
19 public schools, I am very, very, very proud to
20 see the Campaign for Fiscal Equity or Foundation
21 Aid funding included here.

22 I support mayoral control with
23 increased governance, and I think that there's a
24 lot of work to do there. I'm happy we are
25 planning to tax the oligarchs who really should

1 pay their fair share on their second, third, 12th
2 homes that they have in New York City. That
3 early voting is funded. That bus lane
4 cameras are funded. And as someone without a
5 driver's license, the fact that congestion
6 pricing is being included in this.

7 However, I am worried about the
8 AirTrain coming to my district to serve LaGuardia
9 Airport. It actually does not alleviate the
10 needs for better public transportation for my
11 constituents in East Elmhurst, which is a
12 transportation desert.

13 I am very happy to see the gang
14 violence funding, because we do need alternatives
15 to policing when it comes to talking about these
16 harder issues.

17 I only wish that we had included
18 driver's licenses for all, because it's a real
19 revenue generator for our state. Undocumented
20 New Yorkers are members of our families who pay
21 taxes, contribute to our economy, and deserve
22 equity just like the rest of us. Not to mention
23 that for those who drive, it actually would help
24 with car insurance rates and again would be a
25 real revenue generator for our state.

1 Nevertheless, I vote aye on this
2 resolution.

3 Thank you, Mr. President.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
5 Ramos to be recorded in the affirmative.

6 Senator Rivera to explain his vote.

7 SENATOR RIVERA: Thank you,
8 Mr. President.

9 A lot has been said already, and I
10 just wanted to again thank Senator Krueger for
11 all her work to make sure that this happened,
12 make sure that we thank the staff, who have done
13 an amazing job in helping us out.

14 I've got to tell you, I'm proud of
15 my conference. I was very glad to be part of a
16 workgroup that dealt with the health/mental
17 health part of the budget. It only took us about
18 13½ hours to go through each and every single
19 line. But every one of those Senators, whether
20 it was Senator Salazar, Senator Carlucci,
21 Senator Gaughran, Senator Breslin, Senator May,
22 or Senator Harckham, they came basically to every
23 meeting, participated, debated, asked questions.
24 We know what's in there. More importantly, we
25 know how good this budget is.

1 And I have to disagree respectfully
2 with Senator Ortt. This is not an unimportant
3 document. The opposite is true. This not only
4 puts out, as you said, a political document, but
5 more importantly lays it out on the table, what
6 are the priorities that we have as the Democratic
7 Conference. And a lot has been said already
8 about all the things that are in here. The
9 reality is that this is the start of the process.
10 We still have to have all sorts of conversations
11 with our friends in the Assembly as well as our
12 friend in the second floor. And we will have
13 some disagreements, but this is what we have
14 done, we have taken all of the priorities that we
15 have as a Democratic conference and we have put
16 them on the table.

17 And I also wanted to say to Senator
18 Helming that I agree with you very strongly:
19 When it comes to healthcare facilities, we have
20 to make sure that we take care of the entire
21 state. Which is the reason why we fought so
22 strongly to make sure that in this one-house, as
23 you will see, the restorations that we did for
24 hospitals, the restorations that we did for
25 Medicaid funding, the restorations that we did

1 for nursing homes, and the addition of \$2 million
2 for rural health that we added because we
3 recognize, just like you said, that healthcare
4 facilities all across the state, particularly
5 sometimes in rural communities, are not paid
6 attention to.

7 So we want to make sure that we
8 fight for the entire state, and I truly believe
9 that this budget does that.

10 So once again, Mr. President, I
11 proudly vote in favor of this resolution because
12 I believe it sets forward what our priorities
13 are. And I'm looking forward to the vote that we
14 will take in just a few weeks. Hopefully it will
15 be a good enough budget to vote yes on as well.

16 Thank you, Mr. President.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
18 Rivera to be recorded in the affirmative.

19 Senator Kennedy to explain his vote.

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

22 Let me start by thanking the
23 leadership of this conference, Senator Andrea
24 Stewart-Cousins, and the leader of the Senate
25 Finance Committee, Senator Krueger, as well as

1 all of the Democratic Conference members who
2 worked so diligently to put this document
3 together.

4 But it wasn't just our Democratic
5 Conference. We took input from our colleagues
6 across the aisle to make sure that this was a
7 holistic view of this state, to make sure that we
8 were addressing needs across this state. And it
9 being a \$175 billion document -- resolution -- I
10 could be here all day talking about the issues
11 that are addressed in this. I will touch on a
12 few of the most important issues that we are
13 dealing with.

14 As has been mentioned, a
15 \$1.6 billion increase in education aid that will
16 impact all of our districts across the state --
17 not just helping our kids in public education,
18 but helping the communities that depend upon this
19 money to keep their taxes down.

20 The protections that are built into
21 this document for the environment are historic in
22 nature. We restored \$550 million to our Medicaid
23 funding. That would have devastated the
24 hospitals across this state; we are making them
25 whole. We restored AIM funding in this package.

1 We retained and are expanding the film tax credit
2 that is arguably the most beneficial tax credit
3 program in the history of the state, according to
4 industry leaders, creating thousands of jobs
5 across this state that wouldn't have been created
6 without that film tax credit.

7 And perhaps one of the most
8 important pieces addressed in this resolution is
9 this conference taking the step to make the tax
10 cap in the State of New York permanent. You want
11 to help the middle class in the State of
12 New York? You want to help keep taxes down
13 across this state? We are imposing a permanent
14 property tax cap in this state. That is an
15 important step for this conference to take, and
16 we are going to see it through to the end.

17 On top of that, on top of that, we
18 addressed issues like childcare funding and
19 apprenticeship training all across this state.
20 Save the Michaels of the World, the lifesaving
21 organization dealing with the opioid crisis --
22 statewide program -- is being addressed in this
23 budget. Saving lives.

24 And as the chairman of
25 Transportation, there's so many different issues

1 that are addressed in this dealing with equity
2 and parity across this state -- not only agreeing
3 with what the Governor proposed with the CHIPS
4 funding, but taking into account all areas across
5 the state. In particular, upstate we increased
6 CHIPS funding by \$150 million. The
7 municipalities across the state were clamoring
8 for this funding.

9 The \$65 million for Extreme Winter
10 Recovery funds that will help communities,
11 including in Western New York, that are so
12 hard-hit with the extreme winter, dealing with
13 their transportation needs.

14 And then we talk about the downstate
15 transportation needs and the MTA, the heartbeat
16 of our economy, that is moving people around with
17 the public transportation system, the Long Island
18 Railroad, the subway system in the city, the
19 Metro-North.

20 The congestion pricing plan that
21 this conference is advancing in negotiations with
22 the Assembly and the Governor, taking into
23 account what the community is calling for, to
24 make sure not only are we funding the system but
25 that there's accountability and reform measures

1 taking place at the same time.

2 This week we'll be in Buffalo
3 talking about public transportation, the fourth
4 of five public hearings -- unprecedented public
5 hearings that for years the public has asked for
6 on public transportation across this state, and
7 it has not happened. This Democratic Conference
8 is taking those historic steps.

9 And as it pertains to my own system
10 out in Western New York, the NFTA, a \$100 million
11 five-year capital fund that the NFTA has been
12 calling for for years that has been unaddressed
13 by our colleagues across the aisle that we are
14 now addressing in this document. Increasing STOA
15 funds that upstate has been calling for to the
16 transit systems, including Rochester, Albany,
17 Syracuse and, yes, Buffalo and Western New York
18 and the NFTA. All the systems are getting more
19 money.

20 And again, on a local community
21 perspective, when you talk about the NFTA,
22 expanding the light rail, a billion-dollar
23 project that will come to Western New York with
24 federal funds because of the \$6 million that was
25 included in this document.

1 Not to mention the funds that we're
2 advancing for the Skyway design competition, the
3 \$175,000 that we announced with the Governor just
4 a couple of weeks ago in Western New York that
5 would be transformative in nature to continue the
6 progress and momentum.

7 So I'm so excited to move this
8 document today, to be supportive of it. I'm just
9 so pleased with the work that our Democratic
10 Conference has done.

11 And I have got to tell you, I am a
12 bit disappointed to hear some of the negative
13 rhetoric coming from across the aisle, who has
14 been in charge of this Senate chamber for the
15 better part, the better part -- not all, but the
16 better part of 100 years. It's been 107 years
17 that a Democratic majority has held as many seats
18 in this chamber, 107 years.

19 So I would say to my colleagues
20 across the aisle if they're complaining about
21 people that are leaving this state, they ought to
22 look in the mirror. And the fact of the matter
23 is the places that have been ignored over the
24 years has been upstate and Western New York, and
25 we are addressing them in this document.

1 Thank you, Mr. President. I vote
2 aye.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
4 Kennedy to be recorded in the affirmative.

5 Senator Kaplan to explain her vote.

6 SENATOR KAPLAN: Thank you,
7 Mr. President. That's going to be a very hard
8 act to follow.

9 (Laughter.)

10 SENATOR KAPLAN: I would like to
11 start by thanking my colleagues, staff, our
12 Finance chair, Senator Krueger, and our
13 Majority Leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, for
14 their hard work to put forth a fiscally
15 responsible budget that respects and supports the
16 needs of my suburban district on Long Island.

17 This is not a perfect budget. But
18 this budget includes so many of the things that
19 our residents count on, including restoration of
20 proposed cuts to AIM funding, funding our opioid
21 crisis, making the tax cap permanent, and real
22 property tax relief for homeowners whose taxes
23 could otherwise sharply increase as a result of
24 Nassau County-wide reassessment.

25 This budget includes historic

1 funding increases to ensure our kids have access
2 to the best education. This budget includes
3 record funding for water-quality improvement and
4 water infrastructure projects. It also ensures
5 fairness for suburban residents who will be
6 impacted by the proposed congestion pricing plan.

7 I am very proud that we were able to
8 achieve all of these important priorities in this
9 resolution, and I so cast my vote in the
10 affirmative. Thank you.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
12 Kaplan to be recorded in the affirmative.

13 Senator Martinez to explain her
14 vote.

15 SENATOR MARTINEZ: Thank you,
16 Mr. President.

17 First of all, I would like to begin
18 by thanking our Majority Leader, Andrea
19 Stewart-Cousins, for fostering a collaboration
20 between the conference and those stakeholders
21 across the State of New York to deliver a
22 responsible proposed budget resolution.

23 This process has been long and
24 tiresome, but we definitely learned a lot about
25 New York State and about our own individual

1 districts. From the North Country to the suburbs
2 of Long Island, we realized we represent
3 different constituencies with different interests
4 and concerns.

5 The proposed budget resolution is
6 just a beginning, and we need to move the process
7 forward to deliver a well-balanced budget which
8 will benefit all New Yorkers. You've heard what
9 we've funded so far, what we have restored for
10 all our communities across the state. And for
11 these reasons, I will be supporting this
12 resolution, even though I have my reservations.

13 Since this is a proposed budget
14 resolution, communications will remain open. I
15 am hopeful that the final budget resolution will
16 make public safety a priority to protect all
17 New Yorkers. We need to balance the needs of the
18 people while maintaining their safety. There is
19 certainly more that unites us here in this
20 chamber than divides us, like education, good
21 government, and ethics reforms, which we have
22 started to work on since the beginning of this
23 legislative session.

24 However, there are other issues that
25 depending on our districts, we have difficulty on

1 agreeing. Such is the case with the legalization
2 of cannabis as well as the language in our
3 criminal justice reform. However, I believe it's
4 something we can continue to work on and improve
5 on.

6 I will continue to voice the
7 concerns of my constituencies, and I will
8 continue to proudly serve the Third Senatorial
9 District. Mr. President, I do vote in the
10 affirmative, and I look forward to really getting
11 down and honing in on the issues that will
12 protect all New Yorkers.

13 Thank you.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
15 Martinez to be recorded in the affirmative.

16 Senator Lanza to explain his vote.

17 SENATOR LANZA: Thank you,
18 Mr. President.

19 First let me apologize for my
20 laryngitis. I know that has become a source of
21 joy for some of my friends here over the last
22 week.

23 First, I want to thank Senator
24 Krueger and Senator Seward for the discourse. I
25 wait with bated breath to the many hours to come

1 as we actually address the actual budget.

2 Mr. President, first to Senator
3 Kennedy's point. In spite of my appearance, I am
4 not 107 years old --

5 (Laughter.)

6 SENATOR LANZA: -- so I cannot
7 speak to all those years. But I can say this.
8 I've been here for 12 years, and I feel as though
9 some of my colleagues across the aisle have taken
10 advantage of the fact that government civics are
11 not adequately taught in our schools anymore.

12 So in the 12 years I'm here, I can
13 tell you there's never been a Republican budget.
14 I wish there had been. I think the state would
15 be in a better place if there were. The
16 Republican Party, yes, controlled the Senate,
17 one-third of the government. Two-thirds, since
18 I've been here, have been controlled by the
19 Democrats.

20 Which means that there has not been
21 a Republican budget or a Democratic budget,
22 there's been a consensus budget. No budget could
23 be passed over the last 12 years that I've been
24 out here unless Democrats and Republicans came to
25 an agreement and there was compromise and a

1 budget was passed. Period. That's a fact.

2 So if we want to lay blame for the
3 policies in this state that certainly are driving
4 people away by the thousands, there's plenty to
5 go around. From this point on, it's all on you.

6 And so let me tell you why and
7 explain why I have to vote, out of responsibility
8 to my constituents, no on this proposal. Because
9 if this becomes part of the enacted budget, the
10 cost of living in New York -- for the rich and
11 the poor, from the North Country to Long Island
12 and New York City, from one end of New York to
13 the other -- is going up. That's right. To
14 those of you out there listening in New York, the
15 cost to live in New York State for every one of
16 you is going to increase.

17 And let me talk about two aspects of
18 this proposal that I think really highlight that
19 fact. You know, always be aware of a person that
20 picks your pocket and then tells you that they're
21 doing it for your own good. The internet tax.
22 We hear flowery descriptions about how this is
23 about fairness and equity and it's good for us.

24 First of all, there's a whole new
25 marketplace out there, and you know it. You and

1 your constituents more and more every day shop on
2 the internet. I know my family does, and I know
3 the people of Staten Island do. And they do so
4 to find value and convenience. And sometimes
5 when they're shopping they choose one item over
6 another because it's 75 cents less than from
7 another place. And they're entitled to do that.

8 And by the way, in terms of
9 brick-and-mortar businesses, mom and pops,
10 so-called, in New York State, more and more of
11 them are online. New York businesses are going
12 online to access that global market.

13 So if you're a business on
14 Forest Avenue in Staten Island, you're online.
15 And a lot of your business, more and more every
16 day, is coming from places like California and
17 New Mexico and Texas and Alaska. That's the
18 marketplace.

19 So I just have to put this --
20 because we talk in legalese here, and minutia,
21 and we talk about numbers and facts. I want to
22 explain what's happening to the people back in my
23 district if this becomes part of the budget. If
24 you were driving down the street in a car and you
25 were passing a store and in the window was a big

1 sign, red letters, "We've just raised the price
2 of every item in our store by 15 percent," who in
3 this chamber would stop, park, get out of their
4 car and rush into that store to go shopping? No
5 one would.

6 Well, that's what's happening with
7 this internet tax. The cost of goods on the
8 internet, whether it's Amazon or any other place
9 that you shop, that your constituents and my
10 constituents shop, is going up by 15 percent.
11 Eight percent tax, the processing fee that Amazon
12 and the others, the programs they need to write
13 to collect this tax -- everything that our
14 constituents buy online is going to cost
15 15 percent more.

16 That's not good for them. That's
17 not good for New York. I don't know, maybe some
18 of them will pick up a laptop, drive to
19 New Jersey or somewhere else, sit in a parking
20 lot and shop from there. Maybe some of them will
21 say, I'm done, I'm finished, I can't take it
22 anymore in this state, I'm going to move. I'm
23 moving to a place where it's going to cost a lot
24 less to live and raise a family.

25 The other issue is this -- this bag

1 tax caper. I'll tell you, it would be funny if
2 it wasn't so sad. I remember last year the
3 debate was about charging a nickel for plastic
4 bags. And why? Because plastic bags, we're
5 told -- I think there's some truth to this,
6 although when I drive through the city I see a
7 lot more than plastic bags on the side of the
8 road. But they're bad for the environment. And
9 we said here, to be intellectually honest, if
10 they're so bad for the environment, we shouldn't
11 charge people. It shouldn't be okay to destroy
12 the environment as long as you pay a nickel. We
13 say be honest, ban them. Well, the Governor was
14 listening. The Governor I think is being
15 intellectually honest, although I disagree with
16 the policy. At least if he believes and you
17 believe that plastic bags are bad for the
18 environment, we shouldn't have them.

19 So that's what they did. Somebody
20 said, oh, no, now what are going to do? How are
21 we getting that nickel? Enter paper bags. Now
22 they're bad for the environment. But you can
23 still have them. You can still use them. Just
24 give us a quarter.

25 And by the way, I think we're even

1 done with this charade that it's not a tax. It's
2 a tax. Because the money's coming to the state.

3 So what does that mean? You go
4 shopping, it's going to cost you more. It's
5 going to cost you more. It's going to be
6 inconvenient. It's going to be a hassle. And by
7 the way, it's not going to help the environment.

8 It's not good for New York. It's
9 not good for the people I represent. It's not
10 good for the people you represent. It's
11 dishonest. It's wrong. I'm going to vote no.

12 Two more points, questions, in this
13 proposal, questions on marijuana and congestion
14 pricing. They're questions, you leave it there.
15 I think that's smart, not to address them right
16 now because there are a lot of questions about
17 whether or not either one of those proposals
18 would be good for the State of New York.

19 That's what we're supposed to do,
20 things that are good for the State of New York.
21 Not things that drive people out. Not things
22 that tell people: You know what, you're better
23 off living somewhere else. It just doesn't work
24 here anymore. I can't do it. I can't make ends
25 meet. I don't know, maybe my district is

1 different from yours. I don't have people coming
2 to me and saying, Hey, can you add more cost to
3 my life? Can you make it more expensive for me?
4 Could you give me more taxes to pay? You know, I
5 have a lot of extra money in my pocket, I want to
6 give it to the government.

7 That doesn't happen in my district.
8 I don't know, we're different on Staten Island.
9 Senator Savino could tell you about that.

10 (Laughter.)

11 SENATOR LANZA: The questions on
12 marijuana -- there are a lot of questions. And
13 you deserve to make sure that you have the
14 answers before you do something. The people of
15 New York deserve answers.

16 I have one question -- only one, for
17 now -- on marijuana. You'd better tell the
18 people of the State of New York what the
19 projections for deaths on our roads are if this
20 becomes the law. I don't know if it's one or if
21 it's a thousand people that are going to be
22 killed by people driving while high on marijuana.
23 I don't know if it's 5,000 a year. I don't know
24 how many sons and daughters will lose their lives
25 in New York if this becomes the law. But you'd

1 better tell the people of the State of New York
2 what that number is before you shove this down
3 their throat.

4 Congestion pricing, big question.
5 What are you going to charge the people of
6 Staten Island for the privilege, the privilege of
7 traveling within their own city? You know,
8 Manhattan is part of their city. We pay for
9 bridges and tolls. We have inadequate
10 transportation infrastructure. The rest of the
11 city has ignored Staten Island for decades. We
12 don't have enough buses. We don't have a subway.
13 Oh, but lucky you on Staten Island, you want to
14 come visit your city -- your city, not someone
15 else's city -- we're going to charge you. To go
16 to a play, to go shop.

17 I think that's wrong. I think you'd
18 better have some answers for the people that I
19 represent before you do something like that.

20 So Mr. President, I'm going to vote
21 no, and I look forward to the continued debate.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
23 Lanza to be recorded in the negative.

24 Senator Serino to explain her vote.

25 SENATOR SERINO: Thank you,

1 Mr. President.

2 I'm glad to see that the programs
3 that we've led the way on are being continued:
4 The Peer-to-Peer Dwyer program, the work on Lyme
5 and tick-borne diseases, and a permanent property
6 tax cap. Budgets are about priorities. These
7 are the kinds of programs that have been and
8 should continue to be our priorities.

9 However, we know New Yorkers are
10 continuing to leave the state in droves because
11 of our high cost of living. If we truly want to
12 make New York a place we want to live instead of
13 leave, we need to make significant tax cuts and
14 they have to be our top priority.

15 I cannot in good conscience support
16 a budget that blows through the state's spending
17 cap and includes over \$2 billion in new taxes and
18 fees. I was a single mom for a portion of my
19 life, and I know what it's like to live paycheck
20 to paycheck. Every single dollar counts.
21 Twenty-five cents on paper bags, that counts.
22 Internet tax, that counts. Unfunded mandates
23 that raise local taxes, that counts. And there's
24 so much more.

25 There's a lot of waste in this

1 resolution. And I would urge my colleagues, as
2 the negotiations go on, to please focus on
3 cutting the waste and prioritizing the programs
4 that New Yorkers depend on.

5 Thank you, and I vote no.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
7 Serino to be recorded in the negative.

8 Senator Biaggi to explain her vote.

9 SENATOR BIAGGI: Thank you,
10 Mr. President.

11 I want to begin with gratitude for
12 our leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, as well as
13 our Finance chair, Senator Krueger. This process
14 has been illuminating, it has been collaborative,
15 and it has been transparent. And because of
16 that, I feel that we are in a better place to
17 serve all of New York.

18 I also want to begin with a response
19 to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle
20 because I believe in ending on a high note. For
21 those comments related to the 1 million people
22 who have left New York since 2010 --
23 unfortunately, Senator Kennedy stole my thunder a
24 little bit -- but I would encourage you to
25 perhaps purchase a mirror and to look into it.

1 Because for the past 10 years the Democrats in
2 this chamber were not in power. In fact the
3 Republicans were.

4 And as a result of that, what we
5 have seen in New York State is the largest income
6 inequality in the entire nation. And why is
7 that? That's because of an underinvestment in
8 education, in transportation, in housing and in
9 all of the things that allow for New Yorkers as a
10 whole to be able to thrive.

11 This budget is an incredibly
12 comprehensive budget, and it does a lot of good
13 for the Bronx and for Westchester. But not only
14 for the Bronx and Westchester, for the entire
15 state. And because of that, I am very proud to
16 support it. Our increase in school funding to
17 over \$1 billion, our restoration of AIM funding,
18 our increase of NYCHA funding -- which for my
19 district is incredibly important -- as well as
20 our imploring of the Executive to release the
21 \$450 million that already have been promised to
22 NYCHA. Our restoration of Medicaid and our
23 dedication and commitment to public health
24 programs, including Parkinson's disease and
25 sickle cell and the opioid crisis and eating

1 disorders. Our commitment to childcare funding
2 and the environment.

3 And, you know, to the argument
4 against the ban of plastic bags, it's a small
5 investment to ensure that our future generations
6 live in a world where the air is clean and the
7 water is able to be drank by all individuals no
8 matter where you are. And I am very proud out of
9 commitment to environmental justice, as well as
10 fixing the MTA.

11 And for those people who have their
12 criticisms about how we've gone about this, our
13 congestion pricing, New York City and New York
14 State is an economic driver for the entire state.
15 Not only the entire state, the entire country --
16 not only the entire country, the entire world
17 relies on the hub that is New York City. And if
18 we flip a switch and turn off all the trains, we
19 will be in an awful economic situation. So we
20 have got to take a step forward, and this is an
21 important step forward. And I am very much
22 looking forward to working through these things.

23 For all of those reasons -- for this
24 real budget, for this responsible budget -- I
25 vote aye, Mr. President.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
2 Biaggi to be recorded in the affirmative.

3 Senator Savino to explain her vote.

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

6 I'm going to try and be a little
7 less passionate and save it for the upcoming
8 weeks when we get into the real meat and potatoes
9 of the budget.

10 But first let me thank our leader,
11 Senator Stewart-Cousins, for putting together I
12 think some really important working groups to
13 help us to get to where we are. And Senator
14 Krueger and her team, the Finance team, the staff
15 were really amazing.

16 I've been here a little longer than
17 Senator Lanza now. He's here 12 years, I'm here
18 15 years. I've been on both sides of this aisle,
19 and for a while I was even somewhere in the
20 middle.

21 (Laughter.)

22 SENATOR SAVINO: So I -- I can
23 remember a time, Senator Lanza, when there was a
24 Republican governor for 12 years, where you
25 had -- you know, they say in the budget you have

1 to have a partner. So you had a Republican
2 Senate, you had a Republican governor, you had a
3 Democratic Assembly. So they had a pretty
4 lasting imprint on the spending plan of the State
5 of New York.

6 Now, I don't like to get into the
7 tit-for-tat, but it was during the period of time
8 when we had a Republican budget where we doubled
9 the size of the State Budget. Now, we can
10 complain about that, but quite honestly, some
11 really good things happened during that period of
12 time. And you guys might want to take a look in
13 the mirror and remember what you did.

14 Recognizing that there were millions
15 of New Yorkers that did not have health
16 insurance, you figured out a way to use Medicaid,
17 and you created the Family Health Plus program.
18 Yes, that's one of the reasons why healthcare is
19 so expensive in New York. It's one of the
20 reasons why Medicaid costs so much. It's
21 expensive, but it was a good thing. We shouldn't
22 run away from that. More people now into Family
23 Health Plus and Child Health Plus have healthcare
24 because of that decision.

25 Our education system is one of the

1 most expensive in the country because we believe
2 in education. Is it enough money? Some people
3 say never enough. We're going to fight like hell
4 to get more. Some regions don't get as much as
5 they need. Some school districts are
6 shortchanged. That's our responsibility to
7 figure out how to solve that problem, and we're
8 going to do it together.

9 We have a responsibility to deal
10 with complicated policy issues in the budget. We
11 lost that fight a long time ago about what
12 belongs in the budget and what doesn't. It would
13 be so much easier if we could just do spending in
14 the budget, right? But that's a fight the
15 Legislature lost during the Pataki administration
16 when they sued him and the Court of Appeals said
17 the Governor has the right to do it. So we can,
18 you know, quibble over it, but it's before us.

19 Does marijuana belong in this
20 budget? Yes. Why? Because it is a revenue
21 enhancer. It's a complicated issue. We have to
22 deal with it. But let's think about this. If we
23 don't do it, we now have 30 states plus the
24 District of Columbia that have medical programs,
25 and they are counting. New York is one of them.

1 We have ten states that have legal adult use
2 programs, and more are coming online, including
3 New Jersey. Massachusetts to the right of us has
4 an adult use program, Vermont has an adult use
5 program, Canada has adult use. We cannot pretend
6 that if we stick our head in the sand that we
7 will not have people using legal marijuana
8 purchased in other states coming across our state
9 lines and driving.

10 Oh, and by the way, just in case you
11 don't realize it, people do buy marijuana in
12 New York. It's not that hard to get. And
13 they're driving right now under the influence,
14 ability impaired, and our police officers are
15 pulling them over, doing field sobriety tests and
16 administering whatever system of justice they
17 have to. But what we're not getting is the
18 revenue. We're not having a legal regulated
19 market. We're not replacing the black market.
20 And we're not getting any of that tax money for
21 New York. That's what we will lose if we don't
22 take up this policy initiative.

23 I understand people think they can't
24 vote for it. I quite honestly don't know why
25 when you think about this: Almost 70 percent of

1 Americans live in states that have legal
2 marijuana right now. I'm going to repeat that.
3 Seventy percent of Americans live in states that
4 have legal marijuana right now. So to think that
5 we can't do something about it -- just talk about
6 cognitive dissonance, I don't know.

7 We have a lot of issues we're going
8 to have to try and figure out over the next
9 couple of weeks, and I believe we'll get there.
10 A lot of this stuff that's built into this is
11 built into grants and things that this Senate has
12 passed over and over and over again, things we
13 really don't have to fight about.

14 I heard some of you mention that,
15 you know, the opioid tax is a new tax. It's not
16 a new tax, we enacted it last year. It's an old
17 tax repurposed because we screwed it up last
18 year. So it's not a new tax. But it's a
19 dedicated tax to a crisis that everybody in this
20 room recognizes is still damaging thousands and
21 thousands of families in this state.

22 On the sales tax, Senator Lanza, I
23 don't know, the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce
24 thinks we should do this, because they recognize
25 that our small retailers on Staten Island are

1 suffering. And so I would ask you, why should I
2 pay sales tax anywhere? Why should I walk in and
3 pay sales tax on Highland Boulevard? Why should
4 I pay sales tax in a store on New Dorp Lane? Why
5 should any of us pay sales tax to a retailer in
6 New York if I could just buy it online? It's
7 fundamentally unfair, the court has said it's
8 unfair, and we need to do this.

9 Every year we do Small Business
10 Saturday, trying to encourage people to shop in
11 our stores. Why would they do that if they can
12 avoid paying the sales tax? It's fundamentally
13 unfair. We have to fix this. We now have the
14 legal authority to do so. We should move
15 forward.

16 There are so many other things that
17 we need to do in this budget. Time is short.
18 We're going to get it done, in spite what the
19 rhetoric out there is. Again, I've been here 15
20 years. They always say we can't do it. We can.
21 We'll do the best to take care of the people of
22 the State of New York. In the end, some people
23 will be happy, some people will be not so happy.
24 But we will deliver a sound budget for the people
25 of New York State addressing the most critical

1 needs, and we will continue to do what each one
2 of us was elected to do, and that is to be
3 Senators for our districts, fighting for the
4 issues that we care about, from Staten Island,
5 from -- lookit, he's laughing -- from the North
6 Country to the South Bronx, from the East End to
7 the West Side.

8 Thank you, Mr. President. I vote
9 aye.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
11 Savino to be recorded in the affirmative.

12 Senator Kavanagh to explain his
13 vote.

14 SENATOR KAVANAGH: Thank you,
15 Mr. President. So we've heard from all three
16 sides of the aisle.

17 (Laughter.)

18 SENATOR KAVANAGH: I'd just like to
19 add my voice as a member of the Greater
20 Staten Island delegation, currently representing
21 Manhattan and parts of Brooklyn.

22 You know, this is -- a lot has been
23 said about this budget. Many of the important
24 elements have already been mentioned by my
25 colleagues on this side of the aisle. I just

1 wanted to, first of all, join those who have
2 congratulated and thanked our great leader,
3 Andrea Stewart-Cousins, for this first budget
4 that she's presided over. And, you know, really
5 an extraordinary process. Obviously we still
6 have a lot more work to do, but we're really off
7 to a great start. And also our Finance chair,
8 Liz Krueger, who, you know, fielded so many
9 questions from the other side and has really
10 shepherded this process very effectively so far.

11 I do want to focus our attention, as
12 the chair of the Housing Committee, on the many
13 aspects of this budget that are intended to stand
14 up in this chamber today for the notion that we
15 have an important role to play in ensuring that
16 people across this state have access to decent,
17 affordable housing. We're making some very big
18 and important investments in that area.

19 With respect to public housing,
20 which has been an enormous story in New York but
21 really ought to be a story across the state, we
22 are investing \$250 million in new capital money
23 in New York City, and we're investing
24 \$100 million in public housing authorities across
25 the state.

1 And we are formally calling in this
2 resolution for the Governor to release the
3 \$450 million that we have previously allocated
4 for public housing in New York City. The money
5 that has been allocated for other parts of the
6 state has flowed relatively smoothly, and most of
7 that money has been spent, and yet we've been
8 holding \$450 million at a time when that money is
9 desperately needed in New York City.

10 So that \$800 million investment that
11 we're talking about really will help us play a
12 role that is a very important part of a larger
13 process that the federal government and certainly
14 the city need to play a role in, but it's
15 important that we step up.

16 This budget restores -- as was just
17 mentioned by my colleague Senator Biaggi, I
18 believe -- the \$20 million in foreclosure
19 prevention funds. This is money that
20 89 organizations in every single county in this
21 state use to make sure that people have the
22 proper advice and the proper counseling when
23 they're facing the prospect of losing their homes
24 through foreclosure.

25 That money expires currently on

1 March 31st. A number of those organizations have
2 already been struggling to figure out how to keep
3 staff in place until we renew it. It's important
4 that both houses of the Legislature are taking
5 the position today that we should restore all
6 \$20 million of that funding.

7 Similarly, the Neighborhood
8 Preservation and Rural Preservation programs --
9 again, these are 202 organizations that many of
10 us know and love dearly. The Governor's budget
11 cut \$6.2 million out of that from current
12 funding. We're restoring all of that and adding
13 a bit more today to ensure that those programs
14 are adequately funded, and that the network that
15 supports those programs is also properly funded.

16 On the rent laws, we obviously are
17 deferring, currently -- our budget removes
18 language with respect to the rent laws that was
19 sort of put in -- there's some notional language
20 of the rent laws in the Governor's executive
21 proposal. We're removing all that because we
22 understand that is a conversation we're going to
23 have later in this session. But we are including
24 in this budget \$8.9 million each year for the
25 additional money for the administration and

1 enforcement of the rent laws.

2 That includes 94 new staff positions
3 to enforce those laws. It includes express
4 funding in reference to the TPU, the Tenant
5 Protection Unit, which has been blocked in this
6 house previously. And that 94 staff is a
7 27 percent increase in the staffing necessary to
8 enforce these laws that protect the tenancies and
9 the rights of millions of New Yorkers. And that
10 is not just a New York City issue, of course,
11 that is Westchester and Rockland and
12 Nassau County as well.

13 Finally, we are joining the Governor
14 in supporting \$72 million in storm recovery
15 funding. We still have a lot of people that are
16 struggling from the ravages of Hurricane Irene
17 and Superstorm Sandy and other big storms. It's
18 important that we continue those programs.

19 And lastly, a \$5 million investment
20 in the Manufactured Home Advantage Program, which
21 is something that I believe my colleague on the
22 other side of the aisle, my predecessor chairing
23 the Housing Committee, Senator Little, has
24 supported for a long time.

25 So this is an investment across the

1 state. It reflects the varying needs that -- you
2 know, the different needs you need in rural
3 communities than you do in my neighborhood. But
4 it represents a very important commitment on the
5 part of this house that we have a very important
6 role to play in ensuring that people have a
7 decent place to live as a basis for economic
8 opportunity, as a basis for raising their kids
9 and getting them into schools and living the
10 kinds of lives we want to see all New Yorkers
11 live.

12 Thank you, Mr. President. I vote
13 aye.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
15 Kavanagh to be recorded in the affirmative.

16 Senator Bailey to explain his vote.

17 SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you,
18 Mr. President.

19 I also echo the sentiments of my
20 colleagues. Thank you, Senator Stewart-Cousins,
21 for your steadfast leadership in this budgetary
22 one-house process. It has been incredible on
23 this side.

24 Senator Krueger, thank you, as
25 always, for, you know, manning the ship and --

1 womaning the ship or personing the ship, if we
2 have to be gender-appropriate.

3 (Laughter.)

4 SENATOR BAILEY: Just to touch on a
5 couple of things that have been touched on and
6 haven't been touched on.

7 I echo the sentiments of Senator
8 Jackson. It is heartening to see this Majority
9 take education seriously. As the father of two
10 young daughters, one approaching school age,
11 Mr. President, I see the increase in aid as a
12 welcome sign that New York really understands
13 that the key to success is through our children.
14 The key to success is through education. And the
15 more education funding that we have, the better
16 off our state will be. It's not a sprint with
17 education, it's a couple of marathons, if we're
18 really being genuine about what we have to do
19 with educating our children.

20 And when it comes to education, you
21 know, we have to make sure that we are providing
22 funding so that the next generation has
23 opportunities in other fields. And I'm very
24 proud that this conference has allocated funds
25 towards diversity in medicine. Often when people

1 of color go to doctors, they don't see people
2 that look anything like them. And there should
3 be a pathway towards careers in medicine.

4 And I'm glad that this conference is
5 committed to diversity in so many areas --
6 diversity such as the My Brother's Keeper
7 program, continuing funding for that, so that we
8 can understand that people in inner city
9 situations have a pathway out to success.

10 And I just -- before I close, I want
11 to touch on our conference's omission of criminal
12 justice reform specifically. It is not an
13 omission in heart because we are committed,
14 extremely committed -- as a member of the
15 Legislature the very first bill I introduced,
16 Mr. President, was S3334, relating to discovery
17 reform.

18 So we are committed -- very much so
19 committed, I must say again, Mr. President -- to
20 making sure that we make New York State fair once
21 and for all. But the omission of this in this
22 budget is simply that we want to make sure we get
23 it done right. You can't put things in the
24 budgetary process just for the sake of throwing
25 it in there, we have to make sure that we do it

1 right.

2 And we are committed to getting
3 discovery reform done so that people have the
4 evidence that they need. Getting bail reform
5 done so that wealth-based detention finally ends
6 in the great State of New York. And having our
7 constitutional right to a speedy trial -- which
8 doesn't seem so speedy sometimes,
9 Mr. President -- finally codified in New York
10 State law.

11 I look forward to a robust
12 discussion in the next couple of weeks about this
13 matter and so many other matters that are
14 important to people, as we say regionally, from
15 the Bronx to Brooklyn to Broome County to
16 Batavia. We want to make sure that we get a
17 budget that's done for all New Yorkers. And I
18 think that criminal justice reform, it's on the
19 way, we're going to get it done. And just
20 because you don't see in the confines of a
21 document today on March 14th -- 13th. I'm
22 getting ahead of myself. I'm already in budget
23 mode.

24 (Laughter.)

25 SENATOR BAILEY: Just because you

1 don't see it in a document today on March 13th
2 doesn't mean that we're not going to get it done.
3 We have the will to do it.

4 Mr. President, I vote aye on the
5 resolution.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
7 Bailey to be recorded in the affirmative.

8 Senator Carlucci to explain his
9 vote.

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

12 I too want to thank our leader,
13 Andrea Stewart-Cousins, for guiding us through
14 this process, making it democratic, transparent,
15 and delivering a budget that's fiscally sound and
16 responsible and addresses the needs that we've
17 been talking about: Making sure that we're
18 protecting our property tax payers by making the
19 property tax cap permanent, but more importantly,
20 by fully funding the Foundation Aid formula, by
21 making sure that we make that commitment so the
22 responsibility, the important responsibility of
23 educating our children doesn't solely rely on the
24 property tax payer but that we uphold our end of
25 the deal. This is so important.

1 And in addition to that, making sure
2 that we're addressing the issues of suburban
3 poverty by accelerating aid to districts like
4 East Ramapo and like Ossining and the harmed
5 Suburban Five that we've been talking about that
6 have seen increases in enrollment, in English
7 language learners, in levels of poverty. We have
8 to make sure that what this document does --
9 which it does -- is bring our education policy
10 into the 21st century and address the realistic,
11 the reality of today by making sure our children
12 get the education they need and they deserve.

13 We go further by making sure that we
14 not only restore programs for mental health and
15 developmental disabilities, but we expand them.
16 We make sure that we put the funding back to
17 continue the Consumer Directed Personal
18 Assistance Program that helps thousands of people
19 living with disabilities here in New York State
20 live an independent and productive life. We've
21 made that commitment here.

22 We want to make sure that we're
23 standing up for our most vulnerable populations.
24 We put funding in to acknowledge the hard work
25 and dedication that our direct service workers do

1 every day in taking care of the most vulnerable
2 populations. We say we have to provide a living
3 wage, and we go to great lengths to make sure
4 that we have a 2.9 percent cost of living
5 adjustment across the board for all human service
6 agencies. We make that commitment in this
7 budget.

8 We go even further to say we
9 understand and we acknowledge that it's not just
10 about a paycheck -- that's extremely important,
11 and we have to do that, but we also look forward
12 to a credentialing program for direct service
13 workers, that we begin a program that
14 acknowledges their experience, their education,
15 their dedication, that we can reward that and
16 make sure that this isn't just a job of taking
17 care of the most vulnerable, but it's a career,
18 it's a pathway towards a ladder towards success.
19 And we make that commitment here.

20 We're listening to the members of
21 the suburban communities where we say that we
22 make sure that the residents of Rockland and
23 Westchester and Orange Counties can continue a
24 toll freeze on the Tappan Zee Bridge. Look,
25 we're excited we could have this great new shiny

1 beautiful new Tappan Zee Bridge -- but if we
2 can't afford to cross it, that will absolutely
3 crush our economy.

4 So we have to set the message clear,
5 and we can't have people living in fear that the
6 toll might become extraordinary and a
7 debilitating factor in them getting to work and
8 living a productive life.

9 We address the concerns of
10 congestion pricing to say, Look, we understand we
11 have to make investments in the subway, but we
12 also have to make sure that we make investments
13 in the entire MTA system so that the entire
14 system is healthy. And we've been hearing the
15 concerns from the Long Island Railroad to my neck
16 of the woods, with Metro-North and West of the
17 Hudson, where I get pictures and complaints on a
18 daily basis of overcrowded trains, of missing the
19 train because it was late or it was canceled
20 altogether.

21 And the fact that we're saying that
22 an 80 percent on-time rate is acceptable? It's
23 not acceptable. What boss would say to their
24 employee, It's okay to be on time 80 percent of
25 the time? No. So we're forcing our commuters to

1 find alternative routes because they don't trust
2 the MTA.

3 So we're putting forth language that
4 says yes, we want to make investments, but we
5 want to make sure we know where the money is
6 going and that we're not throwing good money down
7 the tubes. So we're asking for a comprehensive
8 forensic audit so we know where can the
9 efficiencies be made, so that we're spending
10 taxpayer dollars and commuter fare dollars as
11 appropriately and as efficiently as possible.

12 We're making a commitment to say,
13 look, we understand that mental health is a major
14 issue. We have our crisis intervention team
15 funding here that we're expanding to make sure
16 that more law enforcement is trained to deal in a
17 mental health crisis.

18 The Washington Post has put out a
19 report that says that 25 percent of the police
20 shooting fatalities that happened in this country
21 last year involved a mental health crisis.

22 So we're setting a path. We're
23 showing the rest of the nation that we can lead
24 and we can help protect our most vulnerable
25 populations, we can help our law enforcement, we

1 can make our communities safer, we can save
2 lives, and we're doing that in this document.

3 There's so many other things that I
4 can mention, the good work that's been done by my
5 colleagues in the Democratic Conference that have
6 put together this budget by listening to the
7 concerns, the diverse concerns around the state.
8 You know, we're 19 million people from every
9 corner of the globe, living here in New York
10 State. And that is what makes us great. And
11 this document addresses it, laying out a vision
12 for our state and really for the rest of the
13 nation to follow.

14 So I'm enthusiastically supporting
15 this budget resolution. I want to thank my
16 colleagues for putting forth the work and the
17 effort to get this done, and I'll be voting yes.

18 Thank you, Mr. President.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
20 Carlucci to be recorded in the affirmative.

21 Senator Jordan to explain her vote.

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

24 While I appreciate that AIM funding
25 is restored, as is the Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Program

1 funding, and the tax cap is made permanent -- all
2 things that I've advocated for -- on the whole,
3 this budget demonstrates the brave new world that
4 New Yorkers are being forced to live in or to
5 move out of.

6 I call it Bizarro World. It's a
7 strange, frightening place where things are the
8 exactly opposite of what they should be. It's a
9 place where common sense doesn't exist and rules
10 don't apply. It's a place where the taxpayers
11 are forgotten. And a place where the Majority's
12 extreme radical agenda in taxing and spending
13 drives everything.

14 Even without going into any detail
15 at all, I would never ever vote yes on any kind
16 of budget or budget resolution without having a
17 full financial plan in front of me. Imagine, as
18 in this instance, being told today that we'll
19 have that full financial plan by the end of the
20 day. Once again, just like passing early voting
21 bills without any funding, my colleagues across
22 the aisle are putting the cart before the horse.

23 This is not a way to do business.
24 If you were corporate officers, your stockholders
25 would fire you. We can all extrapolate in real

1 terms what that should mean.

2 I promised my constituents that I
3 would fight for a more affordable New York. This
4 budget has no -- or in better terms, zero or
5 zilch -- promise of that. All one needs to do is
6 to look at the new taxes in this budget. It will
7 cost more to live here, not less. I believe that
8 the majority of the people in New York State,
9 those that are left, are fed up taxpayers who are
10 furious. And I'm one of them.

11 I vote no.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
13 Jordan to be recorded in the negative.

14 Senator Sepúlveda to explain his
15 vote.

16 SENATOR SEPÚLVEDA: Thank you,
17 Mr. President, for allowing me to speak.

18 I want to associate myself with the
19 comments of my colleague Senator Bailey on
20 criminal justice reform. The time for criminal
21 justice reform has long passed. We have an
22 opportunity now to help those individuals,
23 especially in black and brown communities, who
24 have suffered under the unfairness and
25 indignities of our criminal justice system.

1 Another issue that was in the
2 budget -- not specifically mentioned -- but we're
3 going to continue to reform segregated
4 confinement. As we all know, the United Nations
5 held that holding people for long periods of time
6 in segregated confinement is torture.

7 We're also going to continue to
8 expand shock incarceration, something that's very
9 important to all of us in this conference.

10 This budget is a budget for everyone
11 in the state, for the middle class, for the poor,
12 for upstate, for downstate, for our children,
13 especially those in black and brown communities
14 who have been historically underfunded in their
15 educational system. This budget is a budget for
16 the entire state and not for a selective few.

17 Now, one area that didn't appear in
18 the budget but we're going to continue to fight
19 for is the issue of the Green Light Bill, which
20 is driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants.
21 We haven't forgotten you, we're going to continue
22 to fight for you.

23 Forget about the rhetoric, forget
24 about the extremism, forget about the fear
25 tactics -- the reality is that undocumented

1 immigrants provide \$1.1 billion to the state
2 coffers, both state and local government. The
3 Green Light Bill will add an additional
4 \$55 million the first year that it goes into
5 effect and about \$30 million every year after
6 that. It will make us safer. It will allow
7 these individuals to integrate themselves into
8 the economy. And it will also lower our
9 insurance rates 10 to 20 percent.

10 So we continue to fight for you.
11 Our conference is conscious of the necessity of
12 this legislation. We are going to continue to
13 fight for everyone in this state because our
14 conference is for all and not for a select few.

15 And I want to thank our leader for
16 the fantastic job that she's done not only on
17 this budget, but from the very first day of
18 session she has demonstrated the true way to lead
19 this state.

20 Thank you.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
22 Sepúlveda to be recorded in the affirmative.

23 Senator Mayer to explain her vote.

24 SENATOR MAYER: Thank you,
25 Mr. President. I rise to very proudly cast my

1 vote in the affirmative on this resolution.

2 I want to thank our leader, my
3 colleague from Yonkers, which is important in
4 this debate, Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, for
5 her leadership, and certainly Senator Liz
6 Krueger, who I think has done a fantastic job in
7 leading us through a challenging time.

8 But I want to give special thanks to
9 my colleagues in our conference, who collectively
10 had the passion that public education was going
11 to be the focus of this budget resolution. Every
12 single member, from upstate New York to
13 Long Island, New York City, and every place in
14 between, made it clear that they wanted this
15 budget to reflect that every child in this state
16 is going to get the education they deserve
17 regardless of zip code.

18 And I find it a little bit difficult
19 to listen to my colleagues on the other side of
20 the aisle complain so bitterly about what is
21 wrong for their districts in this budget when we
22 have made a principled, conscientious effort to
23 make sure that every district, regardless of who
24 represents it, is going to be treated fairly, not
25 based on politics, but based on the need of the

1 district and the particular circumstances of that
2 district.

3 And to that end, I'm so proud that
4 we have added so significantly to Foundation Aid,
5 which is the basis of our funding formula, to
6 ensure that districts are reimbursed based on the
7 need of their communities.

8 We've also done much more than that.
9 We've added 25 million in grants to support
10 English language learners, something that doesn't
11 exist and would benefit so many districts,
12 particularly those with new communities of
13 immigrants, like Port Chester, Ossining,
14 White Plains, New Rochelle and Yonkers;
15 20 million additional for expanded
16 pre-kindergarten for districts throughout
17 New York State, again based on need. Also
18 flexibility for our districts and streamlining of
19 administrative requirements and driving
20 efficiency.

21 We have taken every step to ensure
22 that all students rise, and that is how New York
23 will rise.

24 And so I'm so proud of my colleagues
25 for uniformly, and in all together, agreeing that

1 this was a priority for our conference. I think
2 we have made a remarkable statement today that we
3 are committed to the students of New York State,
4 not based on politics, not based on who
5 represents them, not based on what district they
6 come from, but based on our commitment to
7 children regardless of where they live, and
8 particularly to ensure that the students in our
9 urban districts and our suburban districts that
10 have changed, like our City of Yonkers, get the
11 money they need. And we are focused on that, and
12 we are going to pursue it to the end.

13 I also want to thank my colleagues
14 for so many of the other things that benefit
15 suburban communities like mine -- the AIM
16 restoration, investment in public transportation,
17 investment in childcare, which matters so much to
18 the working mothers, particularly of my district.
19 A commitment to housing, recognizing that
20 suburban districts, like urban districts, suffer
21 from a lack of affordable housing.

22 And for the commitment overall to a
23 balanced, sensible budget but one that recognizes
24 we have an obligation as government officials to
25 every person, and particularly to every child.

1 That is the essence of what our government is
2 here for. That is the ultimate challenge we
3 face. And today we stand up and say we support
4 our children, we support our schools. They are
5 absolutely essential for the future of our
6 democracy.

7 And we will be so much better if we
8 followed the lead of this budget resolution in
9 putting our money where our mouth has been for a
10 long time. Now we are really doing it.

11 I proudly vote aye.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
13 Mayer to be recorded in the affirmative.

14 Are there any other Senators who
15 wish to be heard?

16 Seeing and hearing none, Senator
17 Seward to explain his vote.

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

20 First of all, I want to thank
21 Senator Krueger for her responses to my questions
22 earlier and discussing this budget resolution
23 before us today.

24 You know, at a time when New York
25 State is actually losing population and our

1 economy, particularly in vast parts of upstate
2 New York, is in trouble, and also too many of our
3 neighbors are struggling, you know, financially,
4 we need a sound budget that focuses on
5 affordability and a revitalized economy.

6 Now sadly, this plan, while there
7 are some positives in this plan, overall it fails
8 to address those key priorities -- affordability
9 and a revitalized economy here in New York State.

10 You know, when our legislative
11 hearings began back in late January, I stated
12 very clearly at the time that I wanted to know
13 how the Governor's budget plan would affect the
14 lives of everyday New Yorkers in a positive way.

15 I ask the same question about this
16 budget resolution. How is this budget wish list,
17 how is that going to help people secure
18 good-paying jobs, pay their bills, raise their
19 families right here in New York State?

20 There are no tax cuts to help people
21 afford their first home or keep up with the
22 rising cost of living. There are no initiatives
23 that will help our locally owned small businesses
24 to grow. The cost of energy won't be dropping to
25 help our manufacturers and our businesses. And

1 on the heels of the Amazon debacle, there
2 certainly is nothing here to attract out-of-state
3 businesses to come to New York.

4 And just pause for a moment and
5 think about how much easier our budget-making
6 process would be if we could look forward to
7 25,000-plus new good-paying jobs and \$27 billion
8 in new revenues because of those new jobs.

9 You know, last year the Governor
10 proposed more than \$1 billion in new taxes, and
11 we on this side of the aisle rejected them all.
12 However, this year, while our conference has
13 clearly stated the need to block new taxes and
14 fees and other revenue raisers, the new Majority
15 has embraced them as part of their tax-and-spend
16 budget and added more taxes on top of what the
17 Governor has recommended.

18 This plan, in my estimation, will
19 only accelerate the outmigration that New York
20 has been experiencing. So this budget will not
21 fix the state's affordability crisis, and it will
22 not revitalize New York's economy or stop the
23 outmigration of our population from our state,
24 which is very damaging to our communities, the
25 enrollment in our schools, and a lack of

1 employees for our employers.

2 So for all these reasons, I vote in
3 the negative.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
5 Seward to be recorded in the negative.

6 Senator Krueger to explain her vote.

7 SENATOR KRUEGER: Thank you,
8 Mr. President.

9 I want to start off by thanking all
10 the members of the Senate. I want to thank
11 Senator Seward for his participation each and
12 every day in the very long budget hearings we all
13 participated in.

14 I want to thank my leader for giving
15 me an opportunity to chair the Finance Committee.
16 Thank you very much, Madam Leader.

17 And I want to thank my colleagues on
18 the Democratic side who are so passionate and
19 involved in the issues that they have taken on as
20 chairs of their committees or other issues for
21 their districts. I've been here 17 years -- we
22 were counting how many years we've each been
23 here. I have never worked with people on either
24 side of the aisle who are so invested in learning
25 the issues, coming up with proposals,

1 understanding the complications of different
2 parts of the state.

3 And I just realized and
4 double-checked with staff, we've been in the
5 Majority for two months. Two months. We have an
6 almost entirely new staff, and they are
7 phenomenal. So I want to recognize
8 Todd Scheuermann and his work in the Finance
9 Division and all of his new people, Eric Katz and
10 Shontell -- everyone knows Shontell -- Shontell
11 Smith, overseeing both policy and counsel,
12 because budget is everything.

13 And the materials that have been
14 produced are phenomenal. And the work we're
15 doing -- I can't tell you how excited I am at
16 looking at Month 4 as we walk into Month 2.

17 And yes, Senator Seward, we're a
18 little late on one document. We'll get it to
19 you. And again, I apologize. You know, it's
20 growing pains.

21 But again, there is so much right
22 that we have pulled off in two months. And
23 despite the comments of my colleagues, we stayed
24 within the 2 percent cap. You can't say it's an
25 irresponsible budget, not compared to the budgets

1 you were preparing. And we have more money going
2 into rural and upstate New York and
3 infrastructure and public education and higher
4 education, and these are the things -- and
5 transportation. These are the things that
6 motivate people to want to bring businesses to
7 our state and for people to stay.

8 All the research shows businesses
9 decide where to go based on the quality of the
10 workforce that they can hire and having
11 infrastructure provided for them.

12 And we had a tiff over plastic bags.
13 I'm sorry, we all have to learn we have to do
14 everything necessary on climate change because if
15 we don't get that right, we won't even be around
16 to fight over this stuff in a few years. And we
17 invest even more money in water infrastructure
18 and clean water infrastructure. One of the great
19 strengths of New York State compared to many
20 places in the country is the opportunities we
21 have because we have such a good water system
22 that we have to help protect and make sure it
23 doesn't get forced into damage.

24 Any number of the individual issues
25 my colleagues raised that they said they don't

1 see this and so they vote no, please reach out to
2 us over the next few weeks, because we have
3 lump-summed quite a few things in this budget and
4 we weren't lining them out and reading them to
5 you today. But if you have concerns, reach out
6 to your colleague who's the chair of that
7 committee, reach out to me or the staff, please,
8 so that we can both address your concerns and
9 show you that we are committed to the entire
10 State of New York.

11 And when we hear the attacks that
12 we're raising taxes, you know, I just want to go
13 on record. So there's two big ones in there.
14 One is a continuation of the tax called the
15 millionaire's tax, which we've already had for
16 close to five years. The vast majority of the
17 people paying that tax are actually from the City
18 of New York. Senator Hoylman and my district --
19 actually, for the record, most in two Senate
20 districts, Senator Hoylman's, Senator Krueger's.

21 People haven't fled our districts.
22 They have not fled New York. There are actually
23 significantly more millionaires paying taxes in
24 the State of New York now than when we put this
25 tax into place, because people want to live in

1 New York, see all the advantages.

2 And to be quite honest, if you talk
3 to someone who's making \$3 million, \$5 million,
4 \$10 million a year or more, the increase in their
5 state tax is a drop in the bucket for them.

6 So that is not what has been their
7 motivator to come or go. They come here because
8 here is the opportunity. And they will want to
9 stay here in a wider swath of New York as long as
10 we make those investments. And those investments
11 cost money.

12 And the other new proposal we have,
13 which Senator Hoylman defined as his own
14 interesting definition of pied-à-terre tax, these
15 are for apartments worth more than \$5 million
16 that are owned by people who don't live in them
17 full-time. Again, the vast majority, in Senator
18 Hoylman's district and my district on the east
19 and the west side of Manhattan, core Manhattan.

20 These are people who basically have
21 money that they can't legally put in our banks
22 because of our banking laws, so they are using,
23 buying up unbelievably expensive apartments and
24 whole buildings in Manhattan to move their money
25 into the U.S. when they can't legally move it in

1 any other way. It's actually a legal problem we
2 should try to look into, but the feds supersede
3 us.

4 But the fact is they're spending
5 this money to hold their real estate just as a
6 banking system for themselves, and they should
7 absolutely pay taxes to the State of New York.
8 They're not generating other economic activity
9 for us. They don't even live here, the vast,
10 vast majority. And they overheat our real estate
11 market, take up our skies and our access to light
12 in Manhattan. And it's ridiculous to imagine
13 that they shouldn't pay their fair share into the
14 State of New York, because they are taking
15 advantage of us.

16 And every other major city in the
17 world that has this arrangement also already has
18 a pied-à-terre tax. So when people say, oh, we
19 can't vote for this because we're increasing
20 taxes, just remember you're not increasing taxes
21 on the people in your districts. Ironically,
22 you're increasing the taxes on the people in my
23 district and Senator Hoylman's district. And if
24 the people get mad enough at us, they'll fire us.
25 But I don't think they will.

1 In fact, I'm quite confident that
2 won't be why they fire us. We're trying to make
3 sure that New York State has adequate money to
4 meet the needs of the people in your districts
5 and your communities. And this conference is
6 focused on making sure we improve the future of
7 the State of New York for everyone.

8 And this is our first time out of
9 the box. It's the beginning of the process, not
10 the end. And I guess I just want to say I am so
11 proud of this document and everyone's hard work
12 who got us here. And I invite our colleagues
13 into the process as we go down the road to get to
14 a final budget.

15 And thank you very much,
16 Mr. President. I vote yes.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
18 Krueger to be recorded in the affirmative.

19 Senator Flanagan to explain his
20 vote.

21 SENATOR FLANAGAN: Thank you,
22 Mr. President. You are a patient man.

23 And speaking of patience, do you
24 like that? The patience of Job, right?
25 Something like that?

1 So I would -- I'm going to nickname
2 Senator Krueger and Senator Seward Jobs for the
3 Day, at least. Their fantastic work sitting
4 through about a hundred hours of formal hearings,
5 and certainly probably hundreds of hours outside
6 of that, deserves our respect and our gratitude
7 for everyone's efforts, staff on both sides,
8 members on both sides of the aisle. I don't ever
9 try and lose sight of that.

10 So these things, you know,
11 everyone's got them. You know, everyone's
12 playing with their iPads and their phones. A
13 little levity for the day. I'm even going to
14 make Senator Kennedy smile. So my mother watches
15 all the time. Right? She's a junkie, like most
16 parents are. Shontell's mom I remember, that
17 kind of thing.

18 So my mother texts me when Senator
19 Lanza was speaking. She gives a Senator Lanza
20 emoji with a thumbs up, like he's doing a good
21 job. But she wants you to feel better.

22 (Laughter.)

23 SENATOR FLANAGAN: So my mom is
24 worried about you as well. And it just shows
25 that people are paying attention.

1 But, you know, I had a conversation
2 with Senator Serrano after the election and
3 before we got back, and I called him to just chat
4 with him but to also congratulate him on being
5 named chair of the Democratic Conference. Not a
6 surprise. Very well respected internally, very
7 well respected in the chamber. And we chatted
8 about what roles we play. And I think it's
9 illustrative and it's historical, to a degree.
10 And we talked about what is the role of the loyal
11 opposition. And we had a conversation years ago
12 that he reminded me about, because I had talked
13 to him about this quite some time ago.

14 So we had a refresher on that
15 conversation, knowing what type of role you're
16 supposed to play. And there's nothing wrong with
17 that. There really is nothing wrong with that.
18 Because, you know, you kept our feet to the fire.
19 Sometimes you kept most of our body in the fire.
20 But you kept our feet to the fire, and we have
21 done that in the past and, respectfully, we're
22 going to do it now. And we're going to do it now
23 on behalf of the people we represent, the
24 philosophy that we represent, the principles that
25 we embrace.

1 And somebody asked me the other day
2 about Senator Stewart-Cousins. I said I like
3 Senator Stewart-Cousins. I respect Senator
4 Stewart-Cousins. As I do for Senator Krueger and
5 all the members, including the new members of
6 your conference. But I don't have to agree. We
7 don't have to agree on everything. If we do
8 agree on everything, the taxpayers should really
9 start to worry.

10 So I think we have to -- I want to
11 acknowledge the type of roles that we play. And
12 the diplomacy and the professionalism I love. I
13 love. And yeah, it's going to get heated, it's
14 going to get crazy. We're going to point fingers
15 at each other. Which is fine. And I'm not
16 talking about Senator DeFrancisco, because he's
17 not here anymore.

18 (Laughter.)

19 SENATOR FLANAGAN: And we know
20 Senator Seward will never fulfill that role, and
21 thank goodness.

22 (Laughter.)

23 SENATOR FLANAGAN: But, you know, I
24 was listening to some of my colleagues -- and I'm
25 now here not 12 years, not 15 years, but 33

1 years. And 18 of those years I spent in the
2 minority. So I get it. I get it. I spent the
3 first 16 years of my life here in the minority.
4 And during that time, there was two-party rule,
5 with one exception: 2009 and 2010, the Democrats
6 were in charge. Completely. And the Democrats
7 are in charge now. And you won. You're in
8 charge. You get all the spoils of victory. But
9 then comes the responsibility.

10 So I listened to one of my
11 colleagues from Manhattan say, you know, in the
12 budget last year there was no funding for this,
13 and now we took care of it. And there was no
14 funding for that, and now we took care of it.
15 And he may well be right, and I'll take it at
16 face value that he's right.

17 But I do know this. Last year's
18 budget the Governor proposed a billion dollars in
19 new taxes and fees. A billion dollars in new
20 taxes and fees -- and I'm looking right at
21 Senator Felder because Senator Felder introduced
22 a bill that we passed last year that everybody
23 supported that corrected a failure of the Cuomo
24 administration to adhere to some changes in the
25 federal tax code. And had we not done that, that

1 would have been between a billion and a
2 billion and a half more for taxpayers in the
3 State of New York. All across the state. Not
4 just in Senator Hoylman's district, not just in
5 Senator Krueger's district.

6 So last year there were certain
7 things that we just didn't give the taxpayers,
8 you're right. Last year we didn't give them any
9 taxes, we didn't give them any fees. And there
10 were about -- at least \$80 million in various
11 fees, DMV fees, things that people hate. And we
12 killed every one of them.

13 You have decided not to do that. In
14 our review of this budget this year, we're
15 getting close to \$2 billion in new taxes. So
16 there is a difference. And that's fine. And
17 we're going to highlight those differences. And
18 as we go through the process, we're going to keep
19 focusing on those.

20 So what I see -- and I recall
21 Senator Stewart-Cousins, Majority Leader Senator
22 Stewart-Cousins, who last year and a couple of
23 years prior to that would get up and say, Well, I
24 see what's in here, but let me tell you what's
25 not in here. Shontell, I listened and I learned,

1 right?

2 So what I don't see -- in my
3 opinion, I don't really see anything for economic
4 development. I don't. There's no real changes.
5 A couple of things in there, a database in deals
6 and some audit stuff. But there's no tax cuts.
7 There's nothing on tax cuts. There's nothing to
8 address the cost of business in the State of
9 New York. There's absolutely nothing on
10 regulatory reform. There is nothing for small
11 business. There's nothing innovative even in
12 terms of technology or social media, whatever it
13 may be. There's nothing like that in the
14 Governor's budget, and in our estimation there's
15 nothing like that in this budget.

16 Now, we completely disagree with
17 that. And I know people are going to say
18 afterwards, Flanagan's wrong, it's not
19 \$2 billion. But you are increasing taxes. And
20 we're going to have a difference of opinion about
21 how that gets done and what is the effect on
22 people in all parts of the State of New York.

23 Now, I listened to one of my
24 colleagues from Western New York talking about
25 all the laudable things that have been

1 accomplished in this budget. And I agree with
2 some of them, but not all of them. And the idea
3 that somehow we were in charge for 107 years --
4 okay. Maybe it's off by a couple of years, but
5 I'll take it.

6 And I'll acknowledge too, as I said,
7 in 2009 and 2010, we did have one-party rule.
8 And there were \$14 million in new taxes and fees,
9 124 new taxes and fees. You owned that. And
10 frankly, that's part of the reason that we got
11 back in the majority. Things like taking away
12 rebate checks, things like the MTA payroll tax,
13 and terms of art in Albany that people back home
14 don't understand.

15 As a result of that, we have to have
16 conversations about things called the DRP. What
17 the heck is the DRP? I don't know what the DRP
18 is. The taxpayers don't know what it is. A
19 deficit reduction plan. Because there were big
20 problems in the State of New York.

21 And then we had that thing that
22 languished for year after year after year that we
23 had to claw back, claw back. And as somebody
24 from Long Island, I remember very clearly when
25 there was an increase in aid to education, we got

1 less. When there was a cut, we got more of the
2 cut. And there was that thing called the GEA.
3 And nobody knew what the GEA was outside of
4 Albany, but our taxpayers ended up learning what
5 it was about. Some of our colleagues got elected
6 on saying they would eliminate the GEA.

7 So we fought back and made
8 investments in education all along the way. And
9 we'll have debates about what level of education
10 funding there should be. But I do know this.
11 Collectively, we provided funding for the City of
12 New York, for the North Country, for the Southern
13 Tier, for the Mohawk Valley, for Long Island, for
14 the Hudson Valley.

15 And I want to single out Assem --
16 excuse me. Well, former Assemblywoman Mayer, now
17 Senator Mayer, the chair of the Education
18 Committee. Probably the thing I liked the most
19 in the education component of this budget are
20 4201s, Special Acts, 853s. Getting them
21 4 percent, doing that, that's a good thing.
22 That's a really good thing. I know how good I
23 felt being able to work on that, and I know how
24 important it is to you and to your leader. I see
25 her shaking her head.

1 So those are the things that, you
2 know, we're going to keep talking about as we
3 move along. But I think -- I want to focus on
4 what are our priorities. We want to talk about
5 tax cuts; you're talking about tax increases.
6 Maybe not full-blown, but you're still talking
7 about them.

8 Senator Bailey spoke about things
9 that are not in the budget. Criminal justice
10 reform, absolutely worthy of discussion. Should
11 be totally separate.

12 I'll compliment the Leader for
13 making sure that the role of the Legislature is
14 maintained, that we don't give unbridled
15 discretion and authority to the Executive.
16 Because even when we don't give it, he is still
17 trying to take it. We all know that. And by the
18 way, I've said that to him time and time again.
19 It's not like I'm making this up.

20 (Laughter.)

21 SENATOR FLANAGAN: You all
22 understand exactly what I'm saying.

23 (Laughter.)

24 SENATOR FLANAGAN: All right. So
25 if you look at things -- the Assembly is talking

1 about a gas tax. That hurts taxpayers. That
2 hurts the driving public. And for many of my
3 colleagues in rural communities where people
4 commute great lengths to work, you talk about a
5 gas tax, that's phhht, tear my rotator cuff, rip
6 my knee apart.

7 Then we think the energy tax is
8 going to hurt residents as well. So an energy
9 tax, an internet sales tax, an opioid tax. Let's
10 face it, opioid tax, you can talk about it a
11 hundred different ways, that's a tax on
12 somebody's prescription. Drugs are already
13 expensive enough. It's just another tax that
14 taxpayers have to bear that is going to make
15 things more difficult.

16 We clearly want to make investments,
17 we want to be talking about a lot of different
18 things. Now, the property tax cap came up. In
19 the past we have passed a New York State spending
20 cap here because we don't want to be duplicitous.
21 The Senate has advanced a spending cap, and we
22 don't want to say to local governments, you've
23 got to do this, but we'll do that.

24 We think you should have included a
25 spending cap. And I'm disappointed that it's not

1 in there, because if you say you want to adhere
2 to the 2 percent spending cap, then there should
3 be no trouble enacting a statutory spending cap.

4 Now, with regard to the property tax
5 cap being permanent, I am delighted that my
6 colleagues have found religion. Because in the
7 past when we brought up the property tax cap
8 being made permanent, there were people who
9 debated it. And that's all well and good. But a
10 year ago 10 people voted no on the Democratic
11 side. Two years ago, nine people voted no on the
12 Democratic side in terms of making the property
13 tax cap permanent.

14 And we wanted it done. And we
15 wanted a partner. And I'm listening to my
16 colleagues talk about it's going to be made
17 permanent. Well, we didn't have a partner
18 because we didn't have the Governor. I think
19 it's the responsibility of the Majority to say,
20 in terms of this budget, we will not support any
21 final budget that does not have the tax cap being
22 made permanent. Because you have two legs of the
23 chair. You have the Governor, you have this
24 house. And God knows you have the support of the
25 members on this side of the aisle. That, to me,

1 is incredibly strong, appropriate fiscal policy
2 and tax relief for people all across the State of
3 New York.

4 And I've listened before about, you
5 know, Well, there's no property tax cap in the
6 City of New York. I'll be clear, I think there
7 should be one. A lot of people disagree. That's
8 a personal opinion not always shared by everyone.

9 Congestion pricing. Congestion
10 pricing scares the hell out of me. It really
11 does. Because last year I was sitting in the
12 room in a number of discussions on this subject
13 and we were talking about basic stuff. We
14 weren't talking about it at the level it's being
15 talked about now. You know, what are you going
16 to have for the black cabs, what are you going to
17 have for the liveries, what are you going to have
18 for the -- it was -- that in and of itself was
19 complicated enough.

20 My biggest fear is that it's another
21 tax without direction. I don't think any one of
22 us could sit here and say, Okay, this is going to
23 be three, four, or \$500 million and, by God, I
24 know it's going right to the riding public, I
25 know I'm going to have a clean subway car, I'm

1 going to have a reasonable fare and all the
2 things that our residents want. There's nothing
3 out there and I haven't seen anything that would
4 make me feel that that would be the case.

5 But part of the issue with that is
6 when the MTA stuff comes up and congestion
7 pricing comes up, this is the first I'm seeing
8 where there's stuff -- excuse me, not stuff.
9 There are programs and there are dollars
10 associated with transit for other parts of the
11 state.

12 I remember vividly Governor Cuomo
13 calling me on a Sunday morning asking me to make
14 a quote on behalf of a five-year capital plan for
15 the MTA, and I told him absolutely not. I would
16 not do it until we had a five-year plan for the
17 entire state. Would not do it unless we
18 addressed the transit systems in upstate
19 New York, in every community across the State of
20 New York. And I'm looking at him, he's not
21 looking at me, but Joe Robach was an unbelievable
22 soldier and pain in the neck in that regard, and
23 rightfully so.

24 So when we have those discussions,
25 congestion pricing in the discussion is

1 important, but by God, the devil in the details
2 on that is so monumentally important. And that's
3 going to really affect the outer boroughs as well
4 as all of the people of the City of New York. So
5 there we need to tread lightly and just move
6 ahead in a proper way.

7 So there are a number of things in
8 the past that we had stopped. We want to make
9 investments. We want to be advocating on behalf
10 of the people of the State of New York that we
11 represent. And I do know this. My job title,
12 like everyone else in this room, I'm a Senator,
13 but I'm a State Senator. Senator Stewart-Cousins
14 is a State Senator. Mike Gianaris is a State
15 Senator. Which means we represent the entire
16 state, not just our own parochial area.

17 And you know what, we're going to
18 fight like heck for our area, and well we should.
19 But as we move forward, we don't agree with some
20 of the priorities that you have. And my biggest,
21 biggest concern -- and I've watched. The
22 Governor for the first time is openly
23 acknowledging that our taxes here in New York are
24 too high and people are leaving.

25 Senator Krueger gave a thoughtful

1 explanation of her feelings on things like the
2 pied-à-terre. Folks in that strata, I know them.
3 God knows I'm not one of them. But you know
4 what, I like everyone else in this room, I would
5 aspire to be in that group. I'd love to have
6 that kind of debate. But those people are
7 portable, they can walk out. Yes, they should
8 pay their fair share. But we have to be mindful
9 of that because the outmigration from New York,
10 it's for the person who can't afford to put gas
11 in their car, who can't afford to pay for their
12 home heating oil and they're using things like
13 kerosene and electric lights that shouldn't be
14 used the way they are, and it's also for the
15 uber-wealthy who can walk out in a second.

16 So we want to create a structure,
17 working with everyone here -- both sides of the
18 aisle, both houses -- to do good things for the
19 people of the State of New York. I think we've
20 demonstrated we know how to do that. Our
21 priorities are similar in many respects, but also
22 different. We will keep your feet to the fire.
23 We will absolutely keep your feet to the fire.
24 And where things are going well, we'll stand with
25 you. But where they're not, there's not one

1 person on this side of the aisle who will not
2 stand up and speak out very strongly and very
3 passionately on behalf of the people that they
4 represent.

5 I appreciate everyone listening. I
6 took the time to listen to all of my colleagues.
7 And it's always a good learning experience.
8 Senator Stewart-Cousins, thank you for allowing
9 me to speak before you.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
11 Flanagan, will you be recorded in the negative?

12 (Laughter.)

13 SENATOR FLANAGAN: That's why
14 you're up there, Senator Benjamin.

15 Thank you.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
17 Flanagan to be recorded in the negative.

18 Majority Leader Andrea
19 Stewart-Cousins to explain her vote.

20 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: I thought
21 he said yes. He didn't say yes?

22 (Laughter.)

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

25 And again, Senator Flanagan, it's

1 always -- I'm always happy to hear you and to
2 have some levity. I am very happy that you are
3 reprising your role in the minority. You did it
4 18 years; you haven't lost that knack.

5 And, you know, we were arguing
6 whether it was 107 years or whatever -- we just
7 want parity, that's all. We're just looking for
8 that.

9 (Laughter.)

10 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: So again,
11 I think we've had a long afternoon of important
12 debate. I too want to thank Senator Seward for,
13 you know, carrying the ball. And we know that it
14 is not easy. And your effort and the efforts of
15 the staff on both sides are really, really
16 appreciated.

17 And of course, Senator Krueger --
18 you know, it is so good to have you back in this
19 chair doing what you do well. And you are always
20 informed, and there is no question and no stone
21 that's left unturned in terms of these budgetary
22 discussions, and thank you.

23 And it's good to have you back here,
24 because you've been sitting out there with -- you
25 know, for months. So good to have you back here

1 with us, leading this discussion.

2 And of course we talked about our
3 staff. I want to thank Shontell, who is the
4 chief of staff and also been just incredible in
5 terms of shepherding this process with the
6 counsel and the other staff members. And of
7 course our newest addition, Todd Scheuermann,
8 whose 24 years with the Division of Budget has
9 really served us all well in not only creating a
10 document with the help of the staff, but it is
11 comprehensive and it is clear.

12 I've never, frankly -- and this is
13 not -- no, no disparagement. But I've never
14 heard so many compliments about the way the
15 budget was put together. Because at least you
16 know what's in there and what isn't in there.
17 And that really is a tribute to the collective
18 work of this great team and it bodes well, I
19 think, for the future.

20 I also want to say, and it's been
21 said over and over again, that this conference --
22 this conference got together in workgroups. And
23 the reason why so much has been addressed so
24 thoroughly is because every single person had
25 thoughtful and intelligent input into a process

1 that was collective, that was transparent, that
2 allowed people to express what it was they needed
3 to say and make sure that the things that could
4 be done were done in this budget. We've only
5 just begun, but again, the collective work shows.

6 And I am just so proud to lead a
7 conference and to work with such capable and
8 courageous people, not only standing up for the
9 things they care about, but being able to
10 understand the different dynamics in this state.

11 And I think this is just the very
12 beginning. I heard my colleagues on the other
13 side talking about some of the things they care
14 about. And I heard Senator Krueger say -- and
15 each and every one of us say -- we're happy to be
16 in this position, no question, but we also don't
17 intend to leave any segment of the state behind.
18 And so in that respect, while we get to the
19 business of doing this budget over the next few
20 weeks, we want to hear from you. And we want to
21 incorporate good ideas. We want to make sure
22 that we keep the promise.

23 And the promise that I made when I
24 started two months ago was a promise to build
25 opportunities in New York State and to tear down

1 barriers. And that's what this document is
2 about, and that's what we've done in this
3 session. With our partners in this chamber,
4 obviously; in the Assembly; and the Governor.

5 I just want to remind you that we
6 have taken historic steps already like voting
7 reforms and ethics reforms. We've protected
8 women's rights in healthcare, stood up for
9 victims of sexual abuse by finally passing the
10 Child Victims Act. We've done education reforms.
11 We've protected the rights of the LGBTQ
12 community. We've done gun safety. We stood up
13 for our Dreamers. And we passed, as Senator
14 Flanagan said, a permanent tax cap.

15 We've done more. So this Senate
16 Majority is building on the successes that we've
17 already had this session, and we intend to
18 continue in our budgetary process. We're
19 committed to passing a budget that is on time,
20 that is responsible, that's effective. And we
21 are also, as this document proves, committed to
22 staying within the 2 percent spending cap. And
23 by the way, we've also stayed within the revenue
24 projections of our State Comptroller, Tom
25 DiNapoli.

1 We know that education is the great
2 equalizer. It's why I stand here. It's why so
3 many of you are here. And that's why the budget
4 priorities of the Senate Majority provides major
5 funding increases in our education system.

6 The budget resolution also reflects
7 the increase in school aid. We have small
8 investments in New York State's mass transit
9 infrastructure, including improving the MTA and
10 supporting congestion pricing. We also have a
11 comprehensive breakout of our framework. Which
12 again, as you said, Senator Flanagan, includes
13 all of the MTA region, not just New York City.
14 And that's important.

15 We are making investments to assist
16 New York's businesses and helping them grow.
17 We're committed to affordable housing, public
18 housing, and foreclosure prevention. I know
19 Senator Jordan mentioned the early voting. In
20 this budget we are funding early voting.

21 We are putting additional resources
22 into combating the opioid epidemic. We're
23 supporting real campaign finance reforms. The
24 AIM funding that so many of us know our towns and
25 villages need, we have additional AIM funds, we

1 restored those AIM funds.

2 Yes, we're working on making the
3 property tax cap permanent, and at the same time
4 making sure that the essential funds for
5 New Yorkers' healthcare needs are in our budgets.

6 We have additional support for our
7 state's first responders, for county and state
8 police, for Red Cross emergency response
9 preparedness efforts. We've protected grassroots
10 advocates. We've preserved New York's
11 environment and natural resources. We've
12 supported the important agricultural industry in
13 this state.

14 We have so many important plans in
15 this document to help move New York forward.
16 We've identified areas in the Executive Budget
17 where tax dollars could be saved through targeted
18 spending reductions, workforce management
19 efficiencies, and spending reclassifications --
20 all cost-cutting measures that have been used in
21 the past.

22 The Senate Majority was able to
23 restore proposed cuts to essential services and
24 provide additional education and tax relief
25 support.

1 Again, in my opening remarks as
2 Senate Majority Leader, I said that the
3 State Senate would fight to create opportunities
4 for every New Yorker, to level the playing field
5 for every child, and to create a state as great
6 as the people who live in it. We have less than
7 a month to go before our budget is due. I intend
8 to work together with all of our colleagues, with
9 our colleagues on the other side as well, with
10 the Assembly, and with the Governor to put
11 together an on-time budget that reflects the
12 great priorities of this state and will help all
13 New Yorkers. I am looking forward to getting to
14 work.

15 Thank you so much, Mr. President.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN:
17 Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins to be
18 recorded in the affirmative.

19 Announce the results.

20 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
21 Senate Resolution 672, those Senators recorded in
22 the negative are Senators Akshar, Antonacci,
23 Boyle, Flanagan, Funke, Gallivan, Griffo,
24 Helming, Jacobs, Jordan, Lanza, LaValle, Little,
25 O'Mara, Ortt, Ranzenhofer, Ritchie, Robach,

1 Serino, Seward and Tedisco.

2 Ayes, 40. Nays, 21.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The
4 resolution is adopted.

5 Senator Gianaris.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
7 before I ask if there's any further business, let
8 me announce that there will be an immediate
9 meeting of the Democratic Conference in our
10 conference room following session.

11 And can you please call on
12 Senator Griffo for an announcement.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
14 Griffo.

15 SENATOR GRIFFO: Mr. President,
16 there will be an immediate meeting of the
17 Republican Conference in Room 315.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator
19 Gianaris.

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: With that,
21 Mr. President, is there any further business at
22 the desk?

23 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: There
24 is no further business at the desk.

25 SENATOR GIANARIS: I then move to

1 adjourn until tomorrow, Thursday, March 14th, at
2 11:00 a.m.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: On
4 motion, the Senate stands adjourned until
5 Thursday, March 14th, at 11:00 a.m.

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

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