NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

ALBANY, NEW YORK

February 10, 2020

3:56 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

SENATOR BRIAN A. BENJAMIN, Acting President

ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

P R O C E E D I N G S

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The Senate will come to order.

I ask everyone present to please rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: In the absence of clergy, let us bow our heads in a moment of silent reflection or prayer.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Reading of the Journal.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Sunday, February 9, 2020, the Senate met pursuant to adjournment. The Journal of Saturday, February 8, 2020, was read and approved. On motion, Senate adjourned.

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

Presentation of petitions.

Messages from the Assembly.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Bailey

moves to discharge, from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill Number 9060 and substitute it for the identical Senate Bill 6944, Third Reading Calendar 23.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The substitution is so ordered.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Gounardes moves to discharge, from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill Number 8983 and substitute it for the identical Senate Bill 6967, Third Reading Calendar 46.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The substitution is so ordered.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Salazar moves to discharge, from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill Number 9134 and substitute it for the identical Senate Bill 7192, Third Reading Calendar 116.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The substitution is so ordered.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Hoylman moves to discharge, from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill Number 9646 and substitute it for the identical Senate Bill Number 7623, Third Reading Calendar 322.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The substitution is so ordered.

Messages from the Governor.

Reports of standing committees.

Reports of select committees.

Communications and reports from state officers.

Motions and resolutions.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, on behalf of Senator Sanders, I move to amend Senate Bill 3851A by striking out the amendments made on June 19th and restoring it to its previous print number, 3851.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The amendments are received, and the bill shall retain its place on the Third Reading Calendar.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, there's a privileged resolution at the desk. Please read its title only and recognize Senator Kennedy on the resolution.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution

2662, by Senator Kennedy, memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim February 10, 2020, as Canada Day in the State of New York.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Kennedy on the resolution.

SENATOR KENNEDY: Thank you, Mr. President.

It's a great privilege and honor of mine today to welcome and honor the relationship between the United States and Canada and to recognize a few distinguished guests that we have joining us here today on the Senate floor.

We have with us here today the Acting Consul General of Canada in New York, Khawar Nasim; the Quebec Delegate General, Catherine Loubier; Ontario's Representative to the United States, Ian Todd; Nada Jarjour, the Quebec Delegate General; and Rachael Homewood, the Senior Advisor to the Canadian Consulate, along with Peter Rose, from the Quebec Government Office in New York.

These distinguished leaders are here with us to celebrate February 10, 2020, as Canada Day here in the State of New York.

And as we all know, New York and

Canada share deep economic, historic and cultural ties, in addition to the largest bilateral tourism industry in the United States.

Billions and billions of dollars are exchanged between our two great countries and uniquely between New York State and Canada every single year. In vacation spending alone, there's over $1.6 billion in money that's spent by over 5 million Canadians that visit the State of New York each and every year.

This partnership has led to more than 700 Canadian-owned companies putting down roots and growing our economy right here in New York State. These very companies are responsible for creating hundreds and hundreds of thousands of jobs here in New York. And with a shared border measuring 444 miles in length and 17 international border crossings, our economies are tightly linked.

Canada serves as New York's primary export market, to the tune of $13.8 billion in annual exports -- and that list is only expected to grow in the years to come.

On top of that, Canada has a very unique history with us, not only here in the

State of New York but in the United States of America. The millions and millions of immigrants that came over hundreds of years ago to our hemisphere from across the pond, many of them could not get into our great country, were turned away at the border for various reasons, including disease. The country of Canada welcomed them. Many of our ancestors made their way through Canada, still live there today, and many came down and ended up settling right here in the United States and here in the great State of New York.

So our histories are very much linked, our cultures are very much linked, whether we're talking about the great American pastime of baseball, where people cross over the border to see the Toronto Blue Jays or they come over and visit the Buffalo Bills, the only New York State football team --

(Laughter.)

SENATOR KENNEDY: -- or we are sharing our rivalries, be it the Rangers or the Islanders or of course the great Buffalo Sabres organization, the Toronto Maple Leafs, the Montreal Canadiens, and the list goes on and on.

Our communities respect each other, we love each other, and we share our economies and our mutual histories and futures together.

So we welcome you with open arms. Thank you so much for visiting us here today. Thank you for celebrating Canada Day today here in the State of New York. Please offer all privileges of the house to our guests, and we look forward to our relationship growing even stronger in the years ahead.

Welcome, and thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Little on the resolution.

SENATOR LITTLE: Thank you, Mr. President.

It's my honor to stand and to welcome our neighbors but, more importantly, our friends to the north. My district borders Canada with Clinton County, Franklin County; the Akwesasne Reservation is partly in Canada, partly in the U.S.; and we are so intertwined.

The City of Plattsburgh has a huge number of Canadian companies which are operating in Plattsburgh, to the point that 15 percent of the workforce in Plattsburgh goes to work every

morning to a Canadian company who is operating in Plattsburgh.

And we have companies throughout the district: Kruger has two hydro plants, we have Irving Tissue in Washington County, as well as Bombardier, Nova Bus, and so many others.

So we have also, in athletics, one of the most popular economic engines in the Lake Placid area is CAN/AM Hockey, which is operating every week. And you see youngsters playing hockey, and a real international event and tournament that goes on.

And just Friday night at our local hockey team, the Adirondack Thunder, in Glens Falls, the Queensbury Middle School sang the Canadian National Anthem because we were playing a Canadian team.

So it's a pleasure to have you here. And I look forward to seeing you tonight at our Canada reception, which they are having at 5:30, and everyone is invited. So thank you very much for being here, and thanks for being such a great partner. Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Griffo on the resolution.

SENATOR GRIFFO: Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to welcome our distinguished guests today. And as another member of the Senate who has the border of Canada with northern New York, we do appreciate all of the goodwill and all of the continued conversations that we have together to ensure that we make both our state and nation here in America, as well as the provincial governments in the nation of Canada, continue to be good partners.

And I just want to add something today, and we continue looking forward to that positive relationship moving forward. And Senator Kennedy, you were very eloquent today, but there was another Kennedy more eloquent than you. And I just want to remember what President John F. Kennedy once said: Geography has made us neighbors. History has made us friends. Economics has made us partners, and necessity has made us allies. Those whom God has so joined together, let no man put asunder.

God bless you, and welcome.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Ritchie on the resolution.

SENATOR RITCHIE: Thank you.

I'd just like to add my voice to welcoming our neighbors. I actually do only live a couple of miles from the border and have a pretty regular trip across either the bridge on Alex Bay or in Ogdensburg. And we spend a lot of time there.

I do, on pretty much a daily basis, check the parking lots to see how many of our Canadian friends are there. And this afternoon is a little special for us, because our Canadian counterparts are going to be meeting at a city council meeting in Ogdensburg. They've been working on a project with us: The first bicycle ferry back and forth from Ogdensburg to Prescott. And we look forward to having that up and running. I want to say I appreciate the friendship.

And we talk about another country. When you live so close to the border, we don't see Canada as another country, we just see it as an extension of our family and friends.

So welcome, glad to have you back, and look forward to making my next trip over.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The

question is on the resolution.

All in favor signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Opposed?

(No response.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The resolution is adopted.

To our guests from Canada, I welcome you on behalf of the Senate. We extend to you all of the privileges and courtesies of this house. Please rise and be recognized.

(Standing ovation.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, at the request of Senator Kennedy, that resolution is open for cosponsorship.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The resolution is open for cosponsorship. Should you choose not to be a cosponsor of the resolution, please notify the desk.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Can we now take up the reading of the calendar, please.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 23, Assembly Print Number 9060, substituted earlier by Assemblymember Wright, an act to amend the Correction Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the same date and in the same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2019.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Akshar to explain his vote.

SENATOR AKSHAR: Mr. President, thank you.

When I come here on Monday morning, when I drive up to Albany on Monday morning, I ask myself, When will the madness ever stop?

First it was the disastrous bail reform, then the discovery reform, now we've suggested we're going to take away facial recognition from the NYPD. We've suggested that

we're going to offer elder parole. We've suggested about repealing 50-A. This weekend an attempted assassination on the NYPD. How do we respond? We say now if you get a degree when you're in prison, we will consider letting you out early.

I for one am disgusted with the message that this house continues to send to law-abiding New Yorkers. And it's abundantly clear what we're saying. We're saying, once again, that this house is putting criminals before law-abiding citizens.

Mr. President, I vote no.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Akshar to be recorded in the negative.

Senator Bailey to explain his vote.

SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

I must disagree with my esteemed colleague across the aisle, as this is a clarification on a chapter amendment that was passed last year. And I didn't hear the same energy on this bill, Mr. President, last year.

So for those reasons, I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator

Bailey to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar Number 23, those Senators voting in the negative are Senators Akshar, Amedore, Borrello, Flanagan, Funke, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Jacobs, Jordan, Lanza, Little, O'Mara, Ortt, Ranzenhofer, Ritchie, Robach and Seward. Also Senator Tedisco. Also Senator Boyle. Also Senator Serino.

Ayes, 39. Nays, 21.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 46, Assembly Print Number 8983, substituted earlier by Assemblymember Carroll, an act to amend the Vehicle and Traffic Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the same date and in the same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2019.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 56, Senate Print 1054A, by Senator Persaud, an act to amend the Penal Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar Number 56, voting in the negative: Senator Ranzenhofer.

Ayes, 59. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 111, Senate Print 7187, by Senator Kaplan, an act

to amend the Real Property Tax Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the same date and in the same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2019.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 116, Assembly Print Number 9134, substituted earlier by Assemblymember Lavine, an act to amend the Public Health Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 122, Senate Print 2494, by Senator Serrano, an act to amend the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 61.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 139, Senate Print 5723, by Senator Jackson, an act to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60. Nays, 1. Senator Felder voting in the negative.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 147, Senate Print 5574, by Senator Sepúlveda, an act to amend the Civil Practice Law and Rules.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This act shall take effect on the 30th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN:

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 61.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 156, Senate Print 4661, by Senator Kaminsky, an act to amend the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 61.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 162, Senate Print 2174, by Senator Bailey, an act to amend the Social Services Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This

act shall take effect on the 90th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 61.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 163, Senate Print 3041, by Senator Sanders, an act to amend the Social Services Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the 90th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 61.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The

bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 178, Senate Print 4188, by Senator Kennedy, an act to amend the Banking Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the 90th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar Number 178, those Senators voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Flanagan, Jacobs, Jordan, O'Mara, Ortt and Seward.

Ayes, 54. Nays, 7.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 179, Senate Print 7063, by Senator Little, an act to amend the Real Property Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read

the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the same date and in the same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2019.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 61.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 180, Senate Print 3872A, by Senator Carlucci, an act to amend the Mental Hygiene Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Carlucci to explain his vote.

SENATOR CARLUCCI: Thank you,

Mr. President.

As we've seen from recent reports, the senior population in the United States within the next 30 years is expected to double. This legislation that we have before us today will help to break down the silos that exist between the Department of Health, between Mental Health and the home care services that exist.

We have to make sure that as our seniors are aging, as all of us are aging, that we're able to meet the challenges of our time. We have to make sure that we are working together between agencies, between Mental Health and home care providers, to provide the most comprehensive, patient-centered service possible. This will lead to better outcomes, as we all know.

And this is an effort to be proactive instead of reactive, to really show an example of what's possible in treating people living with mental illness, treating them at home and making sure they can live as productive and independent lives as possible.

So, Mr. President, I'll be supporting this legislation, and I want to thank

my colleagues for doing the same.

Thank you.

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

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 61.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 322, Assembly Print Number 9646, substituted earlier by Assemblymember Magnarelli, an act to amend the Vehicle and Traffic Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 5. This act shall take effect on the same date and in the same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2020.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 61.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The bill is passed.

Senator Gianaris, that completes the reading of today's calendar.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, can we now go back to motions and resolutions and take up previously adopted Resolution 2713, by Senator Harckham, read it in its entirety, and recognize Senator Harckham.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution 2713, by Senator Harckham, mourning the death of Judith Johnson, prominent educator, distinguished citizen, and devoted member of her community.

"WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavors served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

"WHEREAS, Judith Johnson of New Hempstead, New York, died on Tuesday, October 22, 2019, at the age of 80; and

"WHEREAS, Starting her career as a teacher in the New York City schools, Judith Johnson went on to serve in administrative roles

for the Mamaroneck, Southern Westchester BOCES, Nyack, and White Plains school systems; and

"WHEREAS, Judith Johnson's immaculate career included a tenure in the United States Department of Education under President Bill Clinton, first serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary and later as the Acting Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education; and

"WHEREAS, Following this endeavor, Judith Johnson returned to New York State and served as Superintendent of Peekskill Schools from 2001 to 2011, and Interim Superintendent of Mount Vernon Schools from 2012 to 2014; and

"WHEREAS, In 2008, Judith Johnson was named New York State School Superintendent of the Year, making her the first African-American to receive this auspicious award from the New York State Council of School Superintendents; and

"WHEREAS, Furthermore, in 2015, Judith Johnson was inducted into the Rockland County Civil Rights Hall of Fame; that same year, she was chosen by legislative leaders to represent the 9th Judicial District on the Board

of Regents, which creates educational policy; and

"WHEREAS, A true pillar in her community, Judith Johnson was often seen at schools, nonprofits, and community events; this extraordinary woman truly cared about the life and well-being of all the students and families she came in contact with; and

"WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Judith Johnson leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all she served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

"RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Judith Johnson, prominent educator, distinguished citizen, and devoted member of her community, and to acknowledge all the work she did over her illustrious career to nurture the hearts and minds of young New Yorkers in the Lower Hudson Valley; and be it further

"RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Judith Johnson."

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator

Harckham on the resolution.

SENATOR HARCKHAM: Thank you, Mr. President.

It's fitting that today we are passing this resolution for Regent Judith Johnson, as tonight at 5:00 the Board of Regents will be holding a tribute in her honor at the State Museum, to which many of you have been invited and will be attending.

Although she resided technically in Rockland County, we like to claim her in Westchester County because much of her storied career happened in Westchester.

But whether she lived in Rockland or served in Westchester, her legacy of helping children and putting children first really impacted every child in this state. And Judith Johnson believed that every child had a right to an equal education regardless of the zip code from which they came. She fought tirelessly for funding for every child to get a sound education, and yet she also believed that the community which that child came from needed to surround all of the children, to help support them as they strove for that education.

Now, she had a varied career. But she started as a teacher, as an administrator, and she served prominent positions in White Plains, in Mount Vernon, and in my home city, the Peekskill School District, where she was a superintendent for 10 years. And in 2008, she was named the New York State Superintendent of the Year, the first African-American in the history of that award to win that award.

So upon her passing, you know, we need to remember her legacy. Her son was on his way here, which is why I thank everyone for holding this. He's not quite here, but we'll give him this resolution this evening.

But her legacy is a lasting one and a powerful one. She leaves big shoes to be filled. I know there are interviews underway, and thanks to Chairwoman Mayer for taking up those efforts. But she left a great legacy, and we are all better off and our children are better off for her service to the State of New York.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Carlucci on the resolution.

SENATOR CARLUCCI: Thank you,

Mr. President.

I want to thank Senator Harckham for putting forward this important resolution.

And I was just so honored and privileged to get to know Regent Judith Johnson. Before she became our Regent, she helped us on a consistent basis in finding a way forward in the East Ramapo School District. Judith Johnson lived in the East Ramapo School District and was a constituent of mine, and we were just so blessed and fortunate to have her as part of our team.

Before, she had the resume that anyone would dream of in education, and her experience in the White House, working under President Clinton, and her time as superintendent in Mount Vernon, as the previous speaker had mentioned. But what was most fitting was she spent the time. She listened. And she used her expertise for such great good things.

We have a long road ahead of us when it comes to fixing education policy in this state, and particularly for the districts that I represent like East Ramapo, like Ossining, that we've been left so far behind with the changing

dynamic in our community. And Judith Johnson got that and understood that and said, Hey, we're in the 21st century. We're dealing with situations that we haven't before, and our education policy has to keep up. And she fought and pushed and pulled to really drag our education policy into the 21st century.

And I'm just so grateful to her legacy, to the work that she did, the work that is not mentioned in the resolutions -- the tireless -- the lengthy hours that she spent, the going to the board meetings and on the side to work with us to craft legislation, whether it was the monitor in the East Ramapo School District or spin-up legislation for the East Ramapo School District, thinking of creative ways, things that hadn't been done before, but ways that we could move forward and make sure that all of our children got the best education possible.

So it's just humbling to be here and speak on the resolution to honor and commemorate the life of Judith Johnson. It's a legacy that won't be forgotten in Rockland County. And I'm hopeful it's a legacy that inspires so many throughout the State of New York.

So I want to thank my colleagues for taking up this resolution. Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Mayer on the resolution.

SENATOR MAYER: Thank you, Mr. President.

It's truly an honor to speak about the legacy of Judith Johnson, Regent and many other things.

I want to thank my colleague Senator Harckham for bringing this to the floor, and to the Board of Regents for celebrating her tonight.

You know, there were some characteristics of Judith Johnson that I think are frequently forgotten. First of all, she was incredibly courageous and forward-thinking. She did not hesitate to question and to criticize, but she did it in a most loving way. She came to every meeting thoroughly prepared, every speech had written remarks prepared. She had done her homework. But she always asked the question: What is fair, what is just, how can we do better? And she did it in the most positive way.

All of us could learn a lesson from

her leadership in that regard. She viewed us as on the path to justice, but it wasn't going to happen right away. And really she was a role model in that respect.

Also she was -- her commitment to equity and justice was the most dominant theme of her life, whether in East Ramapo, coming to Yonkers, Ossining, the City of New York -- every place she went, she cared about every child and she exhibited it in the most personal way. She got joy out of every child. And you could see that when she went to schools.

She loved going to schools and seeing children. It was the experience of children that motivated her. She cared less about the adults and more about the children.

Finally, something that she did is that she talked about arts and music everywhere she went in school, she talked about the changing of her own life through exposure as a young girl in New York City to art and music. And it just carried her through the day.

It's a tremendous loss. And as we interviewed Regent candidates last week, it was clear, her shoes will not be filled. She was

really larger than life in the most human and loving way, a way that showed that she cared about children.

So it's fitting that we honor her, but also we should not forget her, because she had a lesson to teach us and we need to carry it on. May her memory be a blessing.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Bailey on the resolution.

SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank Senator Harckham as well for introducing this very important resolution about somebody who was a giant in the educational community, and her name resonated far beyond the district that she represented.

On the Sunday of her services that were up in Rockland, I happened to be attending a church service a few blocks from where I grew up on 227th Street in the Bronx. And it was mentioned that somebody was going to go to -- we were going to go to her services, and the room quieted down. Many of these folks from the Bronx, many of these folks from Lower Westchester

County all knew about Judith Johnson and the indelible impact that she had on education.

As a Bronx boy, I didn't really fully understand her greatness until I sat down with her one day, sat down with her and Dr. Hamilton, the Mount Vernon superintendent, one day. She had an incredible recall, an incredible ability to talk about educational policy -- not just in terms of theoretical, but she could really break it down. She understood where Mount Vernon was in the direction that she wanted it to go. And she was incredibly passionate about the students, everything that Senator Mayer said.

She spoke about the transformation of Thornton High School to have a more profound effort on music and the arts in the City of Mount Vernon, and she was very proud about that. And she had so many things that she wanted to do.

And every time I saw her, it was when I was visiting a school and she was visiting the school too. She wasn't just a Regent in name, she was a Regent in action. And not inaction, she was in action. Mr. President, she was in every possible school. And I felt that at

some times she was kind of checking up on me, because we'd always be at the same school at the same time.

But I am grateful for what she did and the legacy that she will leave, in that she makes sure that we understand that education is first, second and last for our children.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: Senator Skoufis on the resolution.

SENATOR SKOUFIS: Thank you, Mr. President.

And I too want to express my gratitude to Senator Harckham for bringing some attention to what is -- or who is one of the most remarkable people that I've encountered in my eight years here in the State Legislature.

And, you know, much has been made, rightfully so, about Judith Johnson's resume, her experience. I was part of the Hudson Valley delegation that interviewed her and many others when she was first seeking appointment. And seeing her resume, it is second to none -- anyone that has ever applied to the Board of Regents, second to none, the vast set of experience that

she brought to this job.

But that's not what I want to focus on. What I want to focus on is the fact that Judith Johnson is someone, once she got appointed, was someone who lived and breathed every moment on behalf of the students in this state. There are some Regents -- all of whom are good people, but some Regents who have other jobs, other commitments, other focuses. Judith Johnson, this is what she did all day, every day, 40, 50, 60 hours a week. I'd spend entire days with her in my district.

This is someone whose shoes cannot be filled. We have great applicants who are coming to fill this seat that she filled for a number of years, but there is no one who can fill the shoes of Judith Johnson. She will be greatly missed. Her mark that she has left on this state is indelible.

And I am very fortunate to have counted her as a friend and a colleague on behalf of education and the children in this state.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The resolution was previously adopted on

February 4th.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: At the request of Senator Harckham, that resolution is also open for cosponsorship.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: The resolution is open for cosponsorship. Should you choose not to be a cosponsor of the resolution, please notify the desk.

Senator Gianaris.

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

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

SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday, February 11th, at 3:00 p.m.

ACTING PRESIDENT BENJAMIN: On motion, the Senate stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 11th, at 3:00 p.m.

(Whereupon, at 4:30 p.m., the Senate adjourned.)