

1 NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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4 THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

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9 ALBANY, NEW YORK

10 January 19, 2022

11 3:11 p.m.

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13
14 REGULAR SESSION

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18 SENATOR ROXANNE J. PERSAUD, Acting President

19 ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

P R O C E E D I N G S

ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: 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 PERSAUD: 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 PERSAUD: The
reading of the Journal.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Tuesday,
January 18, 2022, the Senate met pursuant to
adjournment. The Journal of Sunday, June 16,
2022, was read and approved. On motion, Senate
adjourned.

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

Presentation of petitions.

Messages from the Assembly.

Messages from the Governor.

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: Thank you,
7 Madam President.

8 I move to adopt the Resolution
9 Calendar, with the exception of Resolutions 1631
10 and 1706.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: All
12 those in favor of adopting the Resolution
13 Calendar please signify by stating aye.

14 (Response of "Aye.")

15 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Opposed,
16 nay.

17 (No response.)

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The
19 Resolution Calendar is adopted, with the
20 exception of Resolutions 1631 and 1706.

21 Senator Gianaris.

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: At this time can
23 we take up the reading of the calendar, please.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The
25 Secretary will read.

1 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 41,
2 Senate Print 7713, by Senator Ortt, an act to
3 amend the Executive Law.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
5 last section.

6 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
7 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
8 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
10 roll.

11 (The Secretary called the roll.)

12 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
13 the results.

14 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
15 Calendar Number 41, voting in the negative:
16 Senator Skoufis.

17 Ayes, 62. Nays, 1.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
19 is passed.

20 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 45,
21 Senate Print 7717, by Senator Kavanagh, an act to
22 amend the Public Health Law.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
24 last section.

25 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This

1 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
2 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
4 roll.

5 (The Secretary called the roll.)

6 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
7 the results.

8 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 63.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
10 is passed.

11 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 48,
12 Senate Print 7720, by Senator Thomas, an act to
13 amend the General Business Law.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
15 last section.

16 THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This
17 act shall take effect immediately.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
19 roll.

20 (The Secretary called the roll.)

21 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
22 the results.

23 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
24 Calendar Number 48, those Senators voting in the
25 negative are Senators Griffo and Martucci.

1 Ayes, 61. Nays, 2.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
3 is passed.

4 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 49,
5 Senate Print 7721, by Senator Kennedy, an act to
6 amend the Tax Law.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
8 last section.

9 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
10 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
11 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
13 roll.

14 (The Secretary called the roll.)

15 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
16 the results.

17 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 63.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
19 is passed.

20 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 51,
21 Senate Print 7723, by Senator Gaughran, an act to
22 amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
24 last section.

25 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This

1 act shall take effect immediately.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
3 roll.

4 (The Secretary called the roll.)

5 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
6 the results.

7 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
8 Calendar Number 51, voting in the negative:
9 Senator Lanza.

10 Ayes, 62. Nays, 1.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
12 is passed.

13 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 52,
14 Senate Print 7724, by Senator Biaggi, an act to
15 amend the Banking Law.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
17 last section.

18 THE SECRETARY: Section 8. This
19 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
20 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
22 roll.

23 (The Secretary called the roll.)

24 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
25 the results.

1 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
2 Calendar Number 52, voting in the negative:
3 Senator Serino.

4 Ayes, 62. Nays, 1.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
6 is passed.

7 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 53,
8 Senate Print 7725, by Senator Bailey, an act to
9 amend the Labor Law.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
11 last section.

12 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
13 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
14 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
16 roll.

17 (The Secretary called the roll.)

18 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
19 the results.

20 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 63.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
22 is passed.

23 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 54,
24 Senate Print 7726, by Senator Skoufis, an act to
25 amend the Public Health Law.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
2 last section.

3 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
4 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
5 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
7 roll.

8 (The Secretary called the roll.)

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
10 the results.

11 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
12 Calendar Number 54, voting in the negative:
13 Senator Martucci.

14 Ayes, 62. Nays, 1.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
16 is passed.

17 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 59,
18 Senate Print 7731, by Senator Skoufis, an act to
19 amend the Real Property Law.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
21 last section.

22 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
23 act shall take effect immediately.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
25 roll.

1 (The Secretary called the roll.)

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Senator
3 Serino to explain her vote.

4 SENATOR SERINO: Thank you very
5 much, Madam President.

6 I just ask to recuse myself because
7 I am a real estate broker. Thank you.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Senator
9 Serino will be recorded as recused.

10 Announce the results.

11 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
12 Calendar Number 59, those Senators voting in the
13 negative are Senators Akshar, Borrello, Gallivan,
14 Griffo, Helming, Jordan, Lanza, Martucci,
15 Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Rath, Ritchie,
16 Stec and Weik.

17 And Senator Serino recused herself.

18 Ayes, 46. Nays, 16.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
20 is passed.

21 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 63,
22 Senate Print 7735, by Senator Liu, an act to
23 amend the General Obligations Law and the
24 Real Property Law.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the

1 last section.

2 THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This
3 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
4 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
6 roll.

7 (The Secretary called the roll.)

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
9 the results.

10 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 63.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
12 is passed.

13 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 64,
14 Senate Print 7736, by Senator Kaplan, an act to
15 amend the Penal Law.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
17 last section.

18 THE SECRETARY: Section 5. This
19 act shall take effect immediately.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
21 roll.

22 (The Secretary called the roll.)

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
24 the results.

25 THE SECRETARY: In relation to

1 Calendar Number 64, those Senators voting in the
2 negative are Senators Akshar, Borrello, Boyle,
3 Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Jordan, Lanza,
4 Martucci, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Rath,
5 Ritchie, Serino, Stec, Tedisco and Weik.

6 Ayes, 44. Nays, 19.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
8 is passed.

9 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 65,
10 Senate Print 7737, by Senator Kaminsky, an act to
11 amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
13 last section.

14 THE SECRETARY: Section 8. This
15 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
16 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
18 roll.

19 (The Secretary called the roll.)

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
21 the results.

22 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 63.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
24 is passed.

25 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 66,

1 Senate Print 7738, by Senator Brooks, an act to
2 amend the County Law.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
4 last section.

5 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
6 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
7 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
9 roll.

10 (The Secretary called the roll.)

11 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
12 the results.

13 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 63.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
15 is passed.

16 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
17 146, Senate Print 7775, by Senator Hinchey, an
18 act to amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
20 last section.

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

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
24 roll.

25 (The Secretary called the roll.)

1 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
2 the results.

3 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 63.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
5 is passed.

6 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
7 166, Senate Print 7800, by Senator Ramos, an act
8 to amend the Social Services Law.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
10 last section.

11 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
12 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
13 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
15 roll.

16 (The Secretary called the roll.)

17 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
18 the results.

19 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
20 Calendar Number 166, voting in the negative:
21 Senator Helming.

22 Ayes, 62. Nays, 1.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
24 is passed.

25 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number

1 172, Senate Print 7806, by Senator Gianaris, an
2 act to amend a chapter of the Laws of 2021.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
4 last section.

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

7 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
8 roll.

9 (The Secretary called the roll.)

10 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
11 the results.

12 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
13 Calendar Number 172, those Senators voting in the
14 negative are Senators Akshar, Borrello, Boyle,
15 Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Jordan, Lanza,
16 Martucci, Mattera, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt,
17 Palumbo, Rath, Ritchie, Serino, Stec, Tedisco and
18 Weik.

19 Ayes, 43. Nays, 20.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
21 is passed.

22 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
23 183, Senate Print 7819, by Senator Myrie, an act
24 to amend the Public Officers Law and the
25 Election Law.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
2 last section.

3 THE SECRETARY: Section 12. This
4 act shall take effect immediately.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
6 roll.

7 (The Secretary called the roll.)

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
9 the results.

10 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
11 Calendar Number 183, those Senators voting in the
12 negative are Senators Jordan, O'Mara and Ortt.

13 Ayes, 60. Nays, 3.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
15 is passed.

16 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
17 186, Senate Print 7823, by Senator Sanders, an
18 act to amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
20 last section.

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

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
24 roll.

25 (The Secretary called the roll.)

1 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
2 the results.

3 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 63.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
5 is passed.

6 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
7 194, Senate Print 7836, by Senator Kennedy, an
8 act to amend the Public Service Law.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
10 last section.

11 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
12 act shall take effect immediately.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
14 roll.

15 (The Secretary called the roll.)

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
17 the results.

18 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
19 Calendar Number 194, those Senators voting in the
20 negative are Senators Akshar, Borrello, Jordan,
21 Martucci, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Rath, Serino,
22 Stec, Tedisco and Weik.

23 Ayes, 51. Nays, 12.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
25 is passed.

1 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
2 195, Senate Print 7837, by Senator Breslin, an
3 act to amend the Public Health Law.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Read the
5 last section.

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

8 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Call the
9 roll.

10 (The Secretary called the roll.)

11 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Announce
12 the results.

13 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
14 Calendar Number 195, Senator Gallivan in the
15 negative.

16 Ayes, 62. Nays, 1.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The bill
18 is passed.

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

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
22 Madam President.

23 At this point if we could return to
24 motions and resolutions and take up
25 Resolution 1631, by Leader Stewart-Cousins, read

1 that resolution in its entirety, and recognize
2 our Majority Leader on the resolution.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The
4 Secretary will read.

5 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
6 Number 1631, by Senator Stewart-Cousins,
7 commemorating the observance of the 37th Annual
8 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in the State of
9 New York, on January 17, 2022.

10 "WHEREAS, From time to time we take
11 note of certain individuals whom we wish to
12 recognize for their valued contributions and to
13 publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have
14 enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

15 "WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern,
16 and in full accord with its long-standing
17 traditions, it is the custom of this
18 Legislative Body to join the people of this great
19 Empire State in proudly observing the 37th Annual
20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in the State of
21 New York, on January 17, 2022, taking note of his
22 many accomplishments and contributions to
23 mankind; and

24 "WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther
25 King, Jr., was born the grandson of a slave into

1 a segregated society in Atlanta, Georgia, on
2 January 15, 1929, and was instrumental in
3 formulating a policy which ultimately destroyed
4 legal apartheid in the southern states of our
5 nation; and

6 "WHEREAS, In February of 1968,
7 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke about the
8 inevitability of his death and hoped that when we
9 spoke of his life, we would not concentrate on
10 his academic achievements: that he graduated
11 from Morehouse College, that he attended the
12 Crozer Theological Seminary and Boston
13 University, where he earned a doctorate in
14 Systematic Theology; and

15 "WHEREAS, Furthermore, Dr. Martin
16 Luther King, Jr., did not find it important that
17 we mention that he won the Nobel Peace Prize and
18 over 300 other awards; and

19 "WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King,
20 Jr.'s finest legacy of greater social justice for
21 all Americans was truly reflected in his devotion
22 to serve and respect others, and in his steadfast
23 love for all humanity; and

24 "WHEREAS, Standing in a long line of
25 great American Black leaders, Dr. Martin Luther

1 King, Jr., represents the historical culmination
2 and the living embodiment of a spirit of united
3 purpose rooted in Black African culture and the
4 American dream; and

5 "WHEREAS, An apostle of peace,
6 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., fought unrelentingly
7 for the civil rights of all Americans and taught
8 us that through nonviolence, courage displaces
9 fear, love transforms hate, acceptance dissipates
10 prejudice, and mutual regard cancels enmity; and

11 "WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King,
12 Jr., manifestly contributed to the cause of
13 America's freedom, and his commitment to human
14 dignity is visibly mirrored in the spiritual,
15 economic, and political dimensions of the civil
16 rights movement; and

17 "WHEREAS, In addition, Dr. Martin
18 Luther King, Jr.'s life was devoted to the
19 liberation of his people, and his courage
20 transcended the advocates of mindless
21 retrenchment; and

22 "WHEREAS, It is the sense of this
23 Legislative Body that the common and shared
24 responsibility of governance demands an
25 irrevocable commitment to the preservation and

1 enhancement of human dignity as exemplified by
2 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and

3 "WHEREAS, Upon the occasion of the
4 celebration of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther
5 King, Jr., it is the practice of this Legislative
6 Body to commemorate the heroic efforts of
7 Dr. King, who loved and served humanity, and who
8 was a drum major for peace, justice and
9 righteousness; and

10 "WHEREAS, The 2022 Dr. Martin Luther
11 King, Jr., holiday observance marks the
12 93rd anniversary of his birth, and the
13 37th annual holiday celebrated in the State of
14 New York in his honor; now, therefore, be it

15 "RESOLVED, That this Legislative
16 Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize
17 and pay tribute to the legendary life and
18 achievements of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., upon
19 the occasion of the anniversary of his birth and
20 the celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in
21 the State of new York and throughout the nation;
22 and be it further

23 "RESOLVED, That a copy of this
24 resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted
25 to the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian

1 Legislative Caucus."

2 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Senator
3 Stewart-Cousins on the resolution.

4 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Thank
5 you, Madam President.

6 I always look forward to this day
7 because it's a day of teaching and learning.
8 It's an opportunity for all of us. It's a
9 holiday of deep reflection. It's a holiday of
10 enduring hope. And it's a day that we are
11 reminded not only how far we've come, but also
12 how far we've yet to go.

13 As we celebrate this anniversary of
14 Dr. King -- this holiday that, by the way, was
15 signed into law by President Ronald Reagan -- I
16 want to look back at its creation and the story
17 it tells of persistent righteousness over hatred.

18 When lawmakers first brought the
19 idea for an MLK Day to the floor of the House of
20 Representatives, only two other individuals had
21 holidays reserved for them: George Washington
22 and Christopher Columbus.

23 It took more than a decade after his
24 death in 1968 for federal officials to recognize
25 the true impact of Dr. King's work. Now we

1 understand the truly shaping force of this
2 historic figure.

3 Recognizing Dr. King acknowledges
4 that our nation's power doesn't stem from holding
5 down members of our society but from recognizing
6 that our American creed requires justice for all.
7 In the debate about creating this holiday,
8 Senator Jesse Helms led a vicious filibuster
9 against its passage. Fueled by racist sentiments
10 and hateful ideology, he and others questioned
11 whether Dr. King should even be acknowledged in
12 this way.

13 But New York should be proud,
14 because it was our own statesman, Senator Daniel
15 Patrick Moynihan, who called the filibuster
16 against that holiday -- and this is his words --
17 a packet of filth. And the filibuster failed,
18 and the legislation ultimately passed in 1983.

19 But we should recognize that it
20 wasn't until the year 2000 that all 50 states
21 celebrated this national holiday. So just think
22 of it: For almost two decades after the signing
23 of the legislation, our union remained divided on
24 the legitimacy of the holiday.

25 The fight to recognize Dr. Martin

1 Luther King, Jr., Day serves as an important
2 reminder that such hallmarks of progress are
3 heavily contested. Amidst our great strides,
4 it's easy to forget the history was really not
5 that long ago and that the stain of our nation's
6 racist past often seeps through to this present
7 day.

8 How ironic, in fact, that on this
9 day, the same day we're celebrating King's life
10 in this Senate chamber, the very same filibuster
11 deployed by Senator Helms is currently being used
12 to doom the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement
13 Act and the Freedom to Vote Act.

14 To add to the crisis of our
15 democracy, this past year we've seen a true
16 regression on the franchise of voting. Nearly
17 500 bills were introduced nationwide with some
18 element of vote suppression built in.

19 We know why voting is so sacred.
20 It's the right that begets all others and
21 codifies every individual as a fully endowed
22 citizen. It's the mechanism by which the people
23 hold power accountable.

24 Our flurry of advancements since
25 King's murder are in great thanks to a more

1 inclusive vote. We ushered in a promising era of
2 hope and change by electing Barack Obama as the
3 first Black president of the United States. We
4 saw those in leadership start to look more like
5 the diversity of America. We breathed a sigh of
6 relief that finally the American dream was
7 attainable for everyone and that Dr. King had not
8 died in vain.

9 Unfortunately, these sighs of relief
10 were short-lived. Our amazing accomplishments,
11 the sense of finally summiting the mountaintop
12 were met with a backlash of bigotry and vitriol,
13 the same kinds of things that Dr. King and so
14 many others fought against.

15 We've witnessed events that uprooted
16 the traumas from the past in Charlottesville,
17 when groups marched with tiki torches, spouting
18 racist and antisemitic slogans, burning crosses
19 in the night.

20 And a year ago this month, we saw
21 those same symbols of hatred and racism breaking
22 down the doors of our democracy. For the first
23 time in our nation's history, the Confederate
24 flag waved in the halls of Congress.

25 As a country, we've been here

1 before: An ugly wound that has yet to heal
2 reopened. These attacks showed us once again
3 that our humanity and the sanctity of our
4 democracy are intertwined. But these atrocities
5 are not part of the American dream. The dream
6 that Dr. King believed so fervently is one where
7 we don't fear each other's differences because we
8 know that those differences make us stronger. We
9 don't suppress our varied neighbors because we
10 know their presence makes us better. That's what
11 makes our nation great.

12 In the spirit of Dr. King, we must
13 continue the hard work of holding America
14 accountable for what it's professed to be on
15 paper -- a country with liberty and justice for
16 all. And that hinges on the right to vote.

17 That's why this chamber opened the
18 session with another slate of election reforms
19 and will continually pressure our federal leaders
20 to take similar action. Any tools to suppress
21 American voices must be rebuked in all forms.

22 The refusal to commit to racial and
23 social justice will erode our democracy and the
24 strength of this great nation. We know progress
25 takes time, and we know, as Dr. King said, the

1 moral arc of the universe does indeed bend
2 towards justice -- but it takes continued hard
3 work and sacrifice.

4 Luckily for us, we have this holiday
5 every year to remind us not only of Dr. King's
6 ultimate sacrifice, but that history repeats
7 itself. And as Dr. King said, change does not
8 roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes
9 through continuous struggle. May we have
10 strength for this struggle so that we indeed will
11 finally celebrate, in all of its aspects, the
12 legacy of Dr. King.

13 Thank you, Madam President.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank
15 you, Senator Stewart-Cousins.

16 Senator Bailey on the resolution.

17 SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you,
18 Madam President.

19 And thank you, Madam Leader, for
20 always sponsoring this really important
21 resolution to commemorate the life and legacy of
22 one of our nation's greatest people.

23 It's always an experience for me to
24 do this, because this is the commemoration of the
25 first time that I spoke on the floor. And I

1 haven't stopped speaking much since then.

2 (Laughter.)

3 SENATOR BAILEY: But Dr. King meant
4 a lot to a lot of people. And what he did lives
5 through all of us. It lives through hip-hop
6 artists: "The pressure weigh a ton, it's gettin'
7 too heavy; had to inspire them again like I
8 didn't already." This was the very first line on
9 Nas's album King's Disease II, the song called
10 "The Pressure." And when I hear that song, I
11 think about the struggle of Dr. King and I think
12 about the pressure that he faced on a daily
13 basis -- the scourge of racism, the pressures
14 within the community -- and I wonder how did he
15 carry on in such grace while inspiring so many
16 people.

17 So Happy 93rd Birthday, Dr. King --
18 a reverse in order of the tender age of 39 years
19 in which you left this earth far too soon.

20 And as I speak on this resolution
21 every year, I think about -- or I thought about
22 how close I was to that age of 39 years old. And
23 I wondered what could I do in the scope of my own
24 life, my own career, to even come close to what
25 Dr. King did. Now, the gravity has hit me now

1 that I am at the age of 39, the same age that
2 Dr. King left us -- and, ironically enough, that
3 Malcolm X left us. I've come to the realization
4 that it's not about measuring what I can do as
5 related to Dr. King, it is what I can do in my
6 own capacity. It is what we can do in our own
7 individual capacities.

8 So I ask myself, as the sun rises
9 each day and the moon circles the earth, I think
10 about my favorite Dr. King quote, the famous
11 Dr. King quote: "Life's most persistent and
12 urgent question is, What you are doing for
13 others?" And I think about what am I doing for
14 others. What am I doing to be a better Senator,
15 to be a better father, husband, friend?

16 On this day that we celebrate as a
17 national day of service -- make no mistake about
18 it, Madam President, the life and legacy of
19 Dr. King can never just be brought to one word.
20 But if we did have to distill it down to one
21 word, I believe that word would be "service." On
22 this unique national holiday, people from all
23 walks of life, they -- we flock to houses of
24 worship, community centers and yes, in this
25 COVID-19 era, Zoom gatherings, to extol the

1 virtues of Dr. King, to quote him and to think
2 about the life well-lived that he had.

3 But you know, sometimes -- like the
4 goodwill of the holidays fades on January 2nd
5 sometimes, the good rhetoric and the good quotes,
6 they seem to expire by some of the individuals
7 who state these quotes. Maybe there's a Dr. King
8 score card for some folks where they check a box
9 and say a quote, and they say some things that
10 they truly don't understand or don't believe, or
11 that were in direct opposition to what Dr. King
12 stood for. But maybe -- you know what,
13 Madam President, maybe I thought that they don't
14 actually know what he stood for. And it's never
15 too late to learn.

16 Dr. King famously said: "We must
17 remember that intelligence is not enough.
18 Intelligence plus character -- that is the goal
19 of true education. The complete education gives
20 one not only power of concentration, but worthy
21 objectives upon which to concentrate."

22 See, education is part of learning,
23 and learning is a natural process. I talk about
24 my kids all the time. You're never too old or
25 too young to learn anything. And as my kids

1 attend school -- my oldest, Giada, is in
2 2nd grade now, and my youngest, Carina, is in
3 kindergarten -- they've learned different things
4 throughout the years about Dr. King. And with
5 each level of education, it graduates a little
6 bit more.

7 And so I was talking to my daughters
8 and I was asking them, What did you learn?
9 Right? What did you learn this year in school
10 about Dr. King? And Giada was talking about how
11 she heard the "I Have A Dream" speech. "But did
12 you know, Dad, that Dr. King gave more than one
13 speech?" "Yes, Giada, I did." "I'd like to hear
14 those someday." "Well, maybe you'll get to hear
15 them someday, Giada."

16 She also noted that he fought for
17 civil rights. And she knew where he was born and
18 where he passed away and what he was doing when
19 he passed away. He was fighting for the rights
20 for people, sanitation workers.

21 My youngest, Carina, you know, she's
22 in kindergarten; she learned that, simply put,
23 Dr. King helped people. And he didn't want Black
24 people and white people to be separate. And it
25 wasn't fair, in Carina's eyes, that Black people

1 and white people used different bathrooms. They
2 should have been able to use the same bathroom
3 because if you have to go to the bathroom, it
4 shouldn't matter what the color of your skin is.

5 Things like that that seem so simple
6 were the things that we could not figure out as a
7 society prior to the civil rights movement.

8 You know, so we think about
9 learning. And even Dr. King's own granddaughter
10 had to learn more about him. Yolanda Renee King,
11 an incredibly well-spoken, incredibly articulate,
12 incredible activist in her own right, she said
13 that throughout her life her parents told her
14 that your family has done some really phenomenal
15 work, and that you're the granddaughter of really
16 phenomenal people who changed the country and the
17 world. And she didn't understand the
18 significance of it until she got older, so she
19 had to learn. Right?

20 She also said that MLK Day is not a
21 day off, it's a day on. It's a day of service.
22 And you have to go out and support those
23 movements. And although you may not be old
24 enough to vote, you're the future. You, in your
25 decisions, determine the future of the world.

1 Dr. King said, in his "Give Us the
2 Ballot" speech in May of 1957, "So long as I do
3 not firmly and irrevocably possess the right to
4 vote, I do not possess myself. I cannot make up
5 my mind -- it is made up for me. I cannot live
6 as a democratic citizen observing the laws that I
7 have helped to enact -- I can only submit to the
8 edict of others. The denial of this sacred right
9 is a tragic betrayal of the highest mandates of
10 our democratic tradition."

11 Learning. Now, I need to learn more
12 every day. And I know about his great catalogue
13 of speeches, and I've listened to a great many of
14 them, but each year certain things out stand out
15 more to me. His final speech, "I've Been to the
16 Mountaintop," it was far more than just a
17 prescient speech that eerily predicted his sadly
18 too-soon departure from this earth.

19 Dr. King said: "I don't know what
20 will happen now. We've got some difficult days
21 ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now,
22 because I've been to the mountaintop. And I
23 don't mind. Just like anybody, I would like to
24 live a long life. Longevity has its place. But
25 I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to

1 do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to
2 the mountain. And I've looked over, and I've
3 seen the promised land. I may not get there with
4 you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a
5 people will get to the promised land. And I'm
6 happy tonight. I'm not worried about anything.
7 I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the
8 glory of the coming of the Lord."

9 And his speech was more than just
10 that eerie forecasting of his too-soon demise, it
11 was a call for economic justice and solidarity.
12 He called for a bank-in movement in Memphis. It
13 was an understanding that in the collective there
14 is great strength. And there's nothing that can
15 stop the collective. We know he was fighting for
16 sanitation workers, much like we fight for people
17 that do -- for laborers now.

18 Now, what did Dr. King see from that
19 proverbial mountaintop? I can't opine on that.
20 Well, I can't tell you, but I can opine on it.
21 But I can imagine that from that mountaintop what
22 he did not see was a future of legislatures
23 trying to make it harder for people to vote. I
24 imagine it certainly wasn't a future full of
25 political divisiveness. And I imagine it wasn't

1 a world where people that would eventually quote
2 him would, in the same breath, do things that
3 were directly contrary to his dream that they so
4 often invoke. I imagine he didn't see those
5 things from that mountaintop, Madam President.

6 "Ten thousand fools proclaim
7 themselves into obscurity, while one wise man
8 forgets himself into immortality." Not my words,
9 the words of Dr. King.

10 But maybe those who are willfully
11 blind and who haven't learned yet, Madam
12 President, they have a chance, an opportunity to
13 learn. Because Dr. King said, "I believe that
14 unarmed truth and unconditional love will have
15 the final word in reality." And as we know, the
16 time is always right to do what is right.

17 And that song, "The Pressure," that
18 I opened up with, it ends with the phrase "Weight
19 of the world, embrace the pressure." Dr. King
20 had the weight of the world on his shoulders, and
21 he embraced that pressure like few we have seen
22 in the history of our nation. He embraced that
23 pressure. It's a meaningful statement for all of
24 us. Remember that pressure makes diamonds. And
25 he was one of the diamonds of the civil rights

1 era, and his legacy still shines to this day.

2 May the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther
3 King, Jr., forever shine.

4 Thank you, Madam President.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank
6 you, Senator.

7 Senator Lanza on the resolution.

8 SENATOR LANZA: Thank you,
9 Madam President.

10 First I want to thank Senate Leader
11 Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins for bringing this
12 resolution to the floor.

13 You all know, through the years, I'm
14 not big on resolutions. I rarely if ever speak.
15 But in my opinion, if we could only do one
16 resolution a session, it ought to be this one.

17 Of Dr. Martin Luther King, I will
18 simply say two things today. First, I believe
19 one of the biggest problems in the world today is
20 that there are not enough people like Dr. Martin
21 Luther King living in it.

22 And of all the lessons Dr. Martin
23 Luther King left for us, there is one for me that
24 stands apart, because it is as profound as
25 anything that has ever been uttered by any human

1 being. And it is when he said and tried to teach
2 us and continues to teach us that hate cannot
3 drive out hate, only love can do that.

4 If we all embrace that sentiment, if
5 we all accept that challenge, if we all model our
6 lives around that one thought, I can only imagine
7 the great things we can do together on behalf of
8 each other and everyone across this land and
9 around the world.

10 Those words are as profound and as
11 important and true today as they were when he
12 said them, because it is an eternal truism.

13 May God bless the life and the
14 legacy of one of the greatest Americans of all
15 time, Dr. Martin Luther King.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank
17 you, Senator.

18 The question is on the resolution.
19 All in favor signify by saying aye.
20 (Response of "Aye.")

21 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Opposed?
22 (No response.)

23 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The
24 resolution is adopted.
25 Senator Gianaris.

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
2 Madam President.

3 Now let's move to Resolution 1706,
4 also by Leader Stewart-Cousins, read that
5 resolution in its entirety, and recognize the
6 Majority Leader.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The
8 Secretary will read.

9 THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution
10 Number 1706, by Senator Stewart-Cousins, mourning
11 the death of the Honorable Reginald A. LaFayette,
12 renowned civic leader in Westchester County,
13 distinguished citizen and devoted member of
14 his community.

15 "WHEREAS, There are certain
16 outstanding members of our community who, through
17 their selfless commitment and dedication, have
18 served to better the quality of life in our
19 community and have had a measurable positive
20 impact on the lives of its residents; the
21 Honorable Reginald A. LaFayette was one such
22 individual; and

23 "WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow
24 and deep regret that this Legislative Body
25 records the passing of the Honorable Reginald

1 A. LaFayette, noting the significance of his
2 purposeful life and accomplishments; and

3 "WHEREAS, The Honorable Reginald A.
4 LaFayette, a beloved member of the Mount Vernon,
5 New York community, died on Saturday, January 15,
6 2022, at the age of 69; and

7 "WHEREAS, Born and raised in
8 Charleston, South Carolina, Reginald A. LaFayette
9 moved to Mount Vernon in 1972, where he quickly
10 became an important and vital part of his
11 community, serving in various capacities such as
12 Deputy Comptroller, City Clerk, and New York
13 State Committeeman, representing the 84th
14 Assembly District; and

15 "WHEREAS, The Honorable Reginald A.
16 LaFayette was a member of the United States
17 Selective Service Board No. 104, Mount Vernon
18 Postal Service Board, and served on the Board of
19 Directors for both the Mount Vernon Day Care
20 Center and the Westchester Opportunity Program;
21 and

22 "WHEREAS, This kind and
23 compassionate, yet strong leader also held the
24 title of executive vice president of the
25 Mount Vernon Chapter of the NAACP, treasurer of

1 the Independent Citizen's League, and president
2 of the Mount Vernon Lion's Club; and

3 "WHEREAS, In addition to his many
4 civic endeavors, the Honorable Reginald A.
5 LaFayette was an active member of the Greater
6 Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Progressive Lodge
7 No. 64, F&AM, Prince Hall Affiliation and Terrace
8 City Lodge No. 1499 I.B.P.O.E. of W.; and

9 "WHEREAS, Throughout his illustrious
10 career, spanning several decades, the Honorable
11 Reginald A. LaFayette tirelessly worked to ensure
12 people of color and women were elected at every
13 level of government; and

14 "WHEREAS, For his steadfast and
15 unremitting commitment to his community, the
16 Honorable Reginald A. LaFayette was the recipient
17 of numerous awards and accolades, including the
18 2000 Martin Luther King Service Award, by the
19 United Black Clergy of Westchester; and

20 "WHEREAS, The Honorable Reginald A.
21 LaFayette's infinite selflessness and benevolence
22 will shine on through his family's vivid and
23 happy memories; his insight and strength will
24 forever serve as a beacon of love, light and hope
25 to the countless lives he touched; and

1 "WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic
2 spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, the
3 Honorable Reginald A. LaFayette leaves behind a
4 legacy which will long endure the passage of time
5 and will remain as a comforting memory to all who
6 were privileged to have known and loved such an
7 amazing man; he will be deeply missed, and truly
8 merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative
9 Body; now, therefore, be it

10 "RESOLVED, That this Legislative
11 Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the
12 death of the Honorable Reginald A. LaFayette, and
13 to express its deepest condolences to his family;
14 and be it further

15 "RESOLVED, That a copy of this
16 resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to
17 the family of the Honorable Reginald A.
18 LaFayette."

19 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Senator
20 Stewart-Cousins on the resolution.

21 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Thank
22 you, Madam President.

23 I rise to pay tribute to my friend,
24 a mentor, a confidant, Reginald A. LaFayette, who
25 died too soon this past Saturday at the age of

1 69, leaving the entire Westchester community
2 shaken, really, to its core. Because Reginald
3 LaFayette was someone who had always been there
4 and was somehow someone you'd expect to always be
5 there.

6 If there was, however, any day that
7 Reginald LaFayette would have wanted to die, it
8 would probably have been on the birthday of
9 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

10 So it again is ironic that in that
11 sense they shared that day, because many of us
12 know -- and my colleagues who are here will speak
13 for themselves about Reggie, but we know that he
14 dedicated his life to access to voting. He spent
15 decades between being the county commissioner for
16 elections in Westchester on the Democratic side,
17 as well as being the county chair of the party.

18 It was all about empowering people,
19 and very, very many people who looked like me, to
20 aspire to positions that we would never have had
21 access to prior, to reach judgeships and
22 appointed positions and places of power behind
23 the scenes -- and in the forefront -- with the
24 understanding that this iconic man, Reginald
25 LaFayette, was somehow always going to be there

1 as a resource, as a guide, sharing his witticism,
2 his wisdom, and the hard truth, frankly, that he
3 learned from being a Black man in historic
4 positions so much of his life.

5 I was talking to someone who was
6 close to him today, Tajian, who had been the
7 executive assistant working with Reginald for
8 about 18 years, and I was saying, What did he
9 teach you? And one of the things she said is
10 that -- and these are things we all know in these
11 positions, but she said: "He taught me that
12 you're just never going to make everyone happy,
13 so you do the best you can, you take a position,
14 you stand by the position, and you just make sure
15 that you give it your heart and soul. Whether
16 they like you or not, you are going to be able to
17 live with yourself and rest in peace if you just
18 follow your heart and your mind and you work hard
19 to get things done."

20 That's who my friend Reginald
21 LaFayette was, and that is what he's left for us.

22 We will be paying tribute
23 throughout, I'm sure, the weeks to come. But on
24 this day, in this chamber, we really wanted to
25 pause because he had such a tremendous impact,

1 not only on our county but on the state, with his
2 leadership and the role model that he was for us.

3 So again, my condolences to his
4 children, his family, and all who will feel a
5 void because Reggie is gone. But again, in the
6 spirit of Dr. King, we know what's important and
7 we know we must continue to struggle. We're just
8 so happy that we had examples like Reginald to
9 follow.

10 Thank you, Madam President.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank
12 you, Senator.

13 Senator Harckham on the resolution.

14 SENATOR HARCKHAM: Thank you,
15 Madam President.

16 It's good to be back in the chamber
17 for a new session, although it's sad to be
18 speaking on this occasion on the passing of my
19 friend Reginald LaFayette.

20 I would like to thank our Majority
21 Leader, Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, for
22 bringing this resolution to the floor.

23 The Majority Leader really covered a
24 lot about Reggie's life. I called him Reggie,
25 but I also called him "the chair," "Mr. Chair,"

1 for 20 years. I worked with Reggie for 20 years
2 both in his capacity as board of elections
3 commissioner -- you know, as the leader mentioned
4 how important voter integrity is. We worked
5 together on HAVA issues and voting machines a
6 decade ago. I worked with him in his role as the
7 chair of the party.

8 And he had a stature about him. And
9 that's why I referred to him always as "the
10 chair," even though we knew each other for
11 20 years, because he had a presence about him.
12 Whether it was testifying before the board of
13 legislators, whether it was in his conference
14 room at the board of elections, or whether he was
15 holding court at Mulino's, he always had command
16 of the room.

17 And his emphasis on politics was
18 because politics were the pathway to policy. And
19 I remember his emphasis so clearly. When I first
20 got involved with the Democratic Party at the
21 county level in Westchester, he was a leading
22 voice for diversifying judicial appointments and
23 judicial nominations. And he always said that
24 with opportunity will come greatness. And we
25 just saw that as our body last week proudly voted

1 for Judge Troutman to the state's highest court.

2 So, you know, I will miss Reggie. I
3 think we will all miss his influence. You know,
4 he could be viewed as stubborn on occasion. And
5 I don't think it's that he did not want to help;
6 it's that any fight that you were going to have
7 and you wanted Reggie with you, he had already
8 had, and so he wanted to spare you the agita of
9 getting your clock cleaned if there was a better
10 way to achieve the goal that you were going to
11 do.

12 And that was Reggie's purpose. And
13 in the end, Reggie was always there with you when
14 you needed an ally and when you needed a friend.

15 And so like everyone else, I will
16 miss Reggie greatly, and my condolences go out to
17 his family.

18 Thank you, Madam President.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank
20 you, Senator.

21 Senator Mayer on the resolution.

22 SENATOR MAYER: Thank you,
23 Madam President.

24 And thank you to our Majority
25 Leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, for ensuring that

1 we get to speak about Reggie sooner rather than
2 later, because his death was a shock to all of
3 us.

4 But Reggie -- or, as my colleague
5 said, we called him "Mr. Chairman" or
6 "Commissioner" always in his presence -- was a
7 major player in the political and election life
8 of our county. And for those of us in elected
9 office, he was a leader, a colleague, and a
10 fierce advocate for our party. He was chairman
11 of the Westchester Democratic Committee for over
12 15 years, and he led, as my colleagues have said,
13 with principle, a strong sense of decorum,
14 profound faith in our institutions, and a
15 commitment to fairness and justice.

16 From the time I first met him, more
17 than 20 years ago, like my colleagues, he was
18 determined to ensure our leaders -- and
19 particularly our judges -- more fairly
20 represented the diversity of our county. He
21 supported a wide group of diverse candidates with
22 strong legal qualifications, commitment to our
23 sense of justice but, most important, the ability
24 to empathize, relate to and respect the litigants
25 who appeared before them, particularly in our

1 city and town courts and in family court.

2 He was not deterred by those who
3 resisted change in the makeup of the judiciary,
4 and they were powerful, nor by the adage "We
5 always did it this way." He was determined to
6 make our elected leaders and courts reflect a
7 changing and diverse county, and he did it. He
8 had a tough job, but he did it exceptionally
9 well, satisfying ambitious political egos while
10 keeping a steady hand focused on principle,
11 ethical standards, and opportunity.

12 And in addition, as commissioner of
13 the county board of elections during a time of
14 major change in our election laws, as well as
15 COVID-related changes, it was no secret he
16 regarded many these changes as challenging, even
17 as we here, his colleagues, adopted them.

18 But he made it his business to make
19 them work. And as a result, voting turnout
20 increased throughout Westchester in the past two
21 years, with remarkably fewer glitches. I recall
22 pushing him, and my colleagues may remember, on
23 early voting to ensure that we had more people to
24 help the long lines that were there in the highly
25 charged elections. Reggie heard us, he worked

1 with us, and he made it possible for hundreds if
2 not thousands of people to participate in early
3 voting.

4 In addition, to his credit, he was
5 an excellent colleague and fair-minded partner
6 with his Republican co-commissioner, and they had
7 a relationship built on mutual trust and
8 commitment to the fair execution of voting. What
9 a welcome thing.

10 At the heart of Commissioner
11 LaFayette was a profound belief that our
12 democratic system could lead to more equal
13 justice and opportunity for all, but only if we
14 pushed it to do so. And he was willing to do
15 unpopular things, as was said, to make it happen.
16 He knew from his own experience it was imperative
17 to have qualified people of color and women in
18 positions of authority -- not just for the
19 symbolism, not for the personal success, not
20 taking away from that, but Reggie knew it was
21 important for everyone in our community to
22 actually view and experience diverse leadership
23 in positions of power.

24 Through his work, we began to
25 achieve that, as my colleagues have attested.

1 His life ended too soon, but his impact in the
2 world of those on the ground in politics in our
3 county, as well as those deeply influenced by
4 him, will remain strong.

5 To his family, his son and daughter,
6 friends and colleagues, our deepest condolences.
7 And his memory and his influence will stay with
8 us forever.

9 Thank you.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank
11 you, Senator.

12 Senator Bailey on the resolution.

13 SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you,
14 Madam President.

15 Thank you, Madam Leader, for
16 introducing this resolution, as Senator Mayer
17 said.

18 Quickly, I can tell you on Saturday
19 there was a nonstop influx of calls and text
20 messages from people not just in Mount Vernon,
21 not just in Westchester, throughout the city,
22 through upstate, who revered Reggie LaFayette.
23 He was one of these one-name people. If you said
24 "Reggie" in Westchester County, we knew who you
25 were talking about. There was just one.

1 He was a very fair, very
2 conscientious, and just a solid overall guy. As
3 a Bronxite, when I first ran for -- for this
4 seat, it had been held by my predecessor, Ruth
5 Hassell-Thompson, who was from the City of
6 Mount Vernon. And it was the first time in quite
7 some time that a Bronxite had held it, as opposed
8 to a Mount Vernonite.

9 Not only did Reggie not hold that
10 against me, he embraced me. He told me the ins
11 and outs of the city. He told me some history in
12 the city. He explained to me what he had seen.
13 And as Senator Harckham said, you know, he did
14 not want history to repeat itself if it could all
15 be avoided.

16 Generous with his time, generous
17 with his advice, but he was very generous in
18 opening up a pathway for people of color, for
19 younger black folks to run for office. And I
20 remember one particular time when Reggie got an
21 award and he started rattling off an oral history
22 of the county in -- from the days of David Ford
23 on down. And for someone who was not from
24 Westchester County, but who proudly represents
25 it, it was a master class. It was hearing about

1 the history that -- the soil that had been
2 tilled, so to speak, so that someone like me can
3 bloom.

4 So I'm eternally grateful for
5 Mr. Chairman. And in my other capacity, he gave
6 me some advice about being a county chair as
7 well.

8 It was again, to what Madam Leader
9 said, you're not going to make everyone happy.
10 But when you make a decision, make decisions with
11 integrity and fairness and let the chips fall
12 where they may.

13 He was a great man, and he --
14 this -- this loss sent shock waves throughout the
15 City of Mount Vernon. My deepest condolences go
16 out to his son and his daughter and his family,
17 his loved ones, and to the four square miles of
18 the city of Mount Vernon. He loomed large in
19 that city. He was a legendary figure. He will
20 be missed incredibly.

21 May God bless the memory of
22 Reggie LaFayette.

23 Thank you, Madam President.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank
25 you, Senator.

1 The question is on the resolution.

2 All in favor signify by saying aye.

3 (Response of "Aye.")

4 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Opposed?

5 (No response.)

6 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The
7 resolution is adopted.

8 Senator Gianaris.

9 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
10 Madam President.

11 At the request of the leader, these
12 resolutions are open for cosponsorship.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The
14 resolutions are open for cosponsorship. Should
15 you choose not to be a cosponsor of the
16 resolutions, please notify the desk.

17 Senator Gianaris.

18 SENATOR GIANARIS: Is there any
19 further business at the desk?

20 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: There is
21 no further business at the desk.

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: Before we
23 adjourn, let me ask you to call a reconvening of
24 the Health Committee, virtually, immediately upon
25 the adjournment of session.

1 And I now move to adjourn until
2 tomorrow, Thursday, January 20th, at 11:00 a.m.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: The
4 Health Committee meeting will reconvene virtually
5 immediately following session.

6 On motion, the Senate stands
7 adjourned until Thursday, January 20th, at
8 11:00 a.m.

9 (Whereupon, at 4:11 p.m., the Senate
10 adjourned.)