NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

ALBANY, NEW YORK

April 4, 2024

12:11 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

SENATOR SHELLEY B. MAYER, Acting President

ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

P R O C E E D I N G S

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senate will come to order.

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

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: 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 MAYER: Reading of the Journal.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Wednesday, April 3, 2024, the Senate met pursuant to adjournment. The Journal of Tuesday, April 2, 2024, was read and approved. On motion, the Senate adjourned.

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

Presentation of petitions.

Messages from the Assembly.

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: Good afternoon, Madam President.

On behalf of Senator Persaud, I wish to call up Senate Print 932C, recalled from the Assembly, which is now at the desk.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 111, Senate Print 932C, by Senator Persaud, an act to amend the General Business Law.

SENATOR GIANARIS: I now move to reconsider the vote by which this bill was passed.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will call the roll on reconsideration.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 53.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill -- yes, Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: I think you were

right.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is restored to its place on the Third Reading Calendar.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you. I now offer the following amendments.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The amendments are received.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Okay. At this time, Madam President, we're attempting to pass the extender to keep government funded as soon as possible in today's session. So we will call an immediate meeting of the Rules Committee and stand at ease.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: There will be an immediate meeting of the Rules Committee in Room 332.

The Senate will stand at ease.

(Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease at 12:13 p.m.)

(Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at 12:16 p.m.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Senate will return to order.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President, I believe there's a report of the Rules Committee at the desk. Can we take that up, please.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Stewart-Cousins, from the Committee on Rules, reports the following bill:

Senate Print 8970, by Senator Krueger, an act making appropriations for the support of government.

The bill reports direct to third reading.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to accept the report of the Rules Committee.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: All those in favor of accepting the report of the Rules Committee signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The report of the Rules Committee is accepted.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up the supplemental calendar at this time.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: There is a substitution at the desk.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Krueger moves to discharge, from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill Number 9762 and substitute it for the identical Senate Bill 8970, Third Reading Calendar 770.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Substitution so ordered.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 770, Assembly Print Number 9762, by Assemblymember Weinstein, an act making appropriations for the support of government.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,

I believe there's a message of necessity and appropriation at the desk.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: There is a message of necessity and appropriation at the desk.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to accept the message.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: All those in favor of accepting the message please signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The message is accepted, and the bill is before the house.

Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Ashby to explain his vote.

SENATOR ASHBY: Thank you, Madam President.

While I'm proud to support this resolution and extender, and I note that there is a piece of funding in here that extends for our Homeless Veterans Pilot Program, I would also like to point out that right now we have tax checkoffs for veterans' programs -- to include veterans remembrance and cemetery maintenance and operation, homeless veterans assistance, Veterans Home Assistance Fund, and military family relief -- that haven't been paid out in six years. That's $3.4 million that haven't moved.

And while I applaud this body and our state for helping to fund this Homeless Veterans Pilot Program, I think we should all agree that six years is a little too long. It's a little too long to start funding these programs that are already funded. Excuse me, the money is already there. We don't have to ask for it. It's sitting there. And what are we doing about it? We should be doing more.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator

Ashby to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 58.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you, Madam President.

Returning to motions and resolutions, Madam President, can we take up previously adopted Resolution 2057, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton, read that resolution's title, and recognize Senator Scarcella-Spanton.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senate Resolution 2057, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton, celebrating the courage and bravery of New York State's Korean War Veterans and recognizing the men and women who served with dignity and honor during this historic time period, at the Senate's Korean War Veteran Celebration on April 4, 2024.

ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Senator Scarcella-Spanton on the resolution.

SENATOR SCARCELLA-SPANTON: Thank

you, Madam President.

And thank you to our amazing Korean War veterans who are here with us today, in passing this resolution honoring their courage, bravery, to the State of New York and this country overall.

Today we recognize the men and women who served with dignity and honor during that historic time at the Senate's Korean War Veterans Celebration. As we honor our Korean War vets today, let us remember those who lost their lives in this war and the many others who were called home in the years that followed.

Despite being referred to as "the forgotten war," the Korean War had a profound impact on the lives of every veteran here today and to every American who gets to enjoy their freedoms because of veterans like you.

This year marks the 71st anniversary of the Korean Armistice Agreement that brought an end to the hostilities in Korea, and every one of you played a part in making that happen.

We stand here to honor your sacrifices and those of every Korean War veteran -- those who courageously defended our

freedoms and protected our nation. We owe you a debt of gratitude that can never truly be repaid.

It was truly an honor to spend the morning with you here today and now to honor you on the floor of the Senate.

Thank you so much, and I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Harckham on the resolution.

SENATOR HARCKHAM: Thank you very much, Madam President.

First I wanted to thank Senator Scarcella-Spanton for bringing this resolution forward. I want to thank the Majority Leader, and Senator Mayer for helping to arrange the wonderful reception we had for our brave heroes this morning and for all members who attended.

I rise in support of this resolution because we can never say thank you enough.

You know, my father served in combat in World War II, was called back up in Korea, was not sent over to Korea -- he actually trained soldiers who went to Korea. I don't know if any

of you were at Indiantown Gap, but that's where he was stationed, so you may have run into him during the Korean conflict.

But when I spoke to him about his experiences in World War II, he said the heroes were the ones who never came back. And that always stuck with me.

But I've learned over the years to have a little different spin, because many heroes came back. And, you know, when you talk to a veteran, they don't think of themselves as heroes. But those of us who did not serve in the military do think of you as heroes.

And what we want you to know -- particularly as some of us get on in years, you know: Did my life have meaning? Did what I do matter? And what you did mattered. It mattered then. It matters now. It matters to world history. It matters to American history. And it matters to our children today.

So to all of you who are here, both on the floor and in the gallery -- we have a couple of veterans from my district, Donald King and Dimitri Swick -- thank you for coming, and to all the veterans for coming. But most

importantly, thank you for your service. God bless you. You've made a difference.

I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Mayer on the resolution.

SENATOR MAYER: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm so proud to speak on behalf of this resolution and thank my colleague Senator Scarcella-Spanton for bringing it to the floor, and the Majority Leader.

And I want to give credit to the veterans, both Vietnam and Korean War veterans, of my Veterans Advisory Group that brought to my attention the fact that in this chamber we had not paid homage and recognition to Korean War veterans, and their time was now. And that happened about two years ago. Last year we started for the first time.

It's extremely important to all of us in this chamber, on both sides of the aisle, that we acknowledge and honor your service and ensure that you have a day, much as so many of our other veterans do, that you are acknowledged

and recognized by my colleagues.

So today it's our honor to have you. I want to especially thank Chet Edwards, a Vietnam-era veteran of my group that helped make this happen. There's a number of veterans from my district here. All of you have changed the face of this Senate by making sure that your service is spoken about and that your service, once you came home, was spoken about.

So many of you have paid an incredible amount of attention to the communities where you live. You've engaged, you've been fully present. And it's truly an honor and a pleasure to stand here in support of this resolution and to honor you for all you have done.

Thank you, Korean War veterans. Thank you, Vietnam-era veterans, for making sure that these folks are not forgotten. And we are committed to this annually, to make sure that the Korean War veterans stand at the top of the list of those we recognize in this chamber.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT PERSAUD: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Hinchey on the resolution.

SENATOR HINCHEY: Thank you, Madam President.

I rise in strong support of this resolution, and to say a heartfelt thank you to our Korean War veterans who are here today.

But I rise specifically to acknowledge and thank Charles Boughton, who was a Korean War veteran who was here with us last year and tragically passed away just three weeks ago, on Saturday, March 9th. I know he would have tried to be here today if he was still with us.

But I had the incredible opportunity to spend time with him on that Saturday night before he passed at the East Kingston Fire Department Banquet, where he was surrounded by friends and family and had an incredible evening.

He shared with me that night his remembrance of being here last year for this day, and shared that it was one of the best days of his life. And how hearing his name in this chamber, recognizing him and his fellow veterans for their service, was something that he would treasure forever.

And I am so happy, I'm so honored, I feel so proud that I was able to spend that time with him on Saturday to hear that and to share again our support for him and everything that he had done.

And so I thank the sponsor for this resolution. I thank my colleagues for continuing this now for the second year. And I want to thank Charlie and his family for their sacrifice. And he will be forever remembered in this chamber.

Thank you very much.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Hinchey.

Senator Ashby on the resolution.

SENATOR ASHBY: Thank you, Madam President.

I want to thank our chairwoman for her efforts today and every day in this committee.

And I want to thank our Korean War veterans for being with us today.

And, you know, it's a great way to demonstrate our remembrance and our commitment to have these veterans come in and share their

stories and their experiences. Because right now, in our country and our state, I sometimes get the sense that public service has kind of lost its shine.

And when you hear about some of these experiences that these veterans went through, like Paul O'Keefe -- and Anthony Rabasco, who was at the Battle of Inchon, 40,000 infantry. And you hear the stories of the -- we think it's cold outside today. We wish that spring would come a little sooner. To hear what these veterans went through -- and then they came home and they continued to give back.

These hardships last a lifetime inside their memories, and yet they continue to sacrifice on our behalf. And they come here today to share these stories with us. And it's something that I feel our younger generation should hear every single day. Because despite the polarization, despite the divide that we have, we continue to have men and women who are willing to step forward and potentially lay down their lives for our country, just for the opportunity for us to come together, not tear ourselves apart.

So I want to thank our veterans and their families, in particular our Vietnam and our Korean War veterans, especially today, for coming here and reminding us what we stand for.

Thank you, Madam President.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Ashby.

Senator May on the resolution.

SENATOR MAY: Thank you, Madam President.

I also want to thank the sponsor of this resolution. And as the proud daughter of a Korean War veteran, I just thank you all for your service and for being here today.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Kennedy on the resolution.

SENATOR KENNEDY: Thank you, Madam President.

First let me start by thanking our Majority Leader for bringing this resolution to the floor, for our resolution sponsor, Senator Scarcella-Spanton, for Senator Harckham and Senator Mayer for their efforts in bringing these heroes here with us today, these veterans of the Korean War, what we've all been taught in

my generation was referred to as "the forgotten war."

I want you all to know I think what we are demonstrating here today is the sacrifice that you made, the sacrifice your families made, and the sacrifice of over 36,000 United States military men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice. The sacrifice they made will never be forgotten.

Our generation, our country, our world is better off today -- and it always was -- because of the sacrifice you made to put on that military uniform for our great country and go to serve in a far-off, distant land that many of you at that time -- if any of you at the time knew much about.

And you did it because our country called on you to do so, and you did it with pride and you did it with dignity and you did it with great honor.

And we honor you all here today. I want to take this moment also to join my colleagues in thanking you for your service.

I also want to recognize a great friend of ours who's no longer with us. His soul

is looking over us. He was a dear friend of not just mine, but I know Senator Gallivan and my colleagues out in Buffalo, Western New York. Former Erie County Sheriff Tom Higgins, who spent his entire adult life after returning from Korea making sure that the world knew about the heroes that he served with during that difficult time in global history.

And while he's not with us any longer, his legacy lives on. He championed the Korean War Memorial in downtown Buffalo at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park. And I was proud to know him. I was proud to learn about the sacrifices of so many of you and so many others on behalf of this great nation.

So once again, thank you. Madam President, I'm proud to support this resolution. God bless you all.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Kennedy.

Senator Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick on the resolution.

SENATOR CANZONERI-FITZPATRICK: Thank you, Madam President.

Thank you to the sponsor for

bringing this to the floor. It's a great day anytime we're thinking of our veterans who have given so much and sacrificed so much, and their families, to protect our rights, our freedoms, our liberties that we hold so dear.

And I want to thank all of the veterans who are here today and give a shout out to my favorite Korean veteran, my dad, 90 years young, Joseph Canzoneri, who served in the Coast Guard and was part of Operation Deep Freeze. And I'm so proud of him. He continues to be my role model and shows us about service to community.

So thank you, Madam President, for that opportunity to speak.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you.

Senator Tedisco on the resolution.

SENATOR TEDISCO: Thank you, Madam President.

Like my colleagues, I want to thank our Korean veterans for their sacrifice, for their service, for their contributions to this great nation. And, by extension, thank all veterans -- past, present and future.

You know, we have a saying sometimes

when people do us a favor, our neighbor brings us over a pie, we say "Thank you for everything." Takes our kids to school or gives them a ride, "Thank you for everything."

When we say that to the veterans, our Korean veterans and all of our veterans, and the sacrifice they make, it truly rings through. We truly thank you for everything we hold dear. Because you took an oath of office to sacrifice everything you hold dear so we could have that as a nation.

You know, we had some great founding fathers. They created this document. It's the Constitution of the United States of America. I carry it with me every day. And it's a wonderful document. Unprecedented, I think. But they don't maintain and this document doesn't maintain and keep us as the greatest nation in the world. We were born into this world with inalienable rights. Not only us, every citizen from every part of the world. But you know what? Those inalienable rights that we were given when we were born don't make us and don't keep us the greatest nation in the world.

We're the greatest nation in the

world for one reason. Thank you for everything. Because the men and women who did, have, sacrifice everything keep us the greatest nation in terms of liberty and freedom. We get to live those liberties and freedoms at the highest level of any group of citizens around the world.

If you look at the citizenship, children, adults, families, any part of the world -- they don't have what we have here in this nation. And we maintain it because there are men and women who are willing to wear the uniforms that our Korean veterans have in the past, that all our veterans have in the past.

So today I say to you: Thank you for your supreme willingness to sacrifice everything for us, along with your families. And thank you for making us and keeping us the one group in the whole world -- past, present and I know in the future -- will keep us the greatest nation in the world.

And that's because we get to live those freedoms and liberties at the highest level of any group around this world of citizens.

I thank the leadership for that, the sponsor of this. Our ranker, Senator Ashby. All

the committee people on that. And all my colleagues for being willing to take this day -- something we should wake up every morning, and before we put our feet outside of the bed we're in, say a nice prayer of thanks for everything you've done and sacrificed. So we can say to you, in the true way, thank you for everything we hold dear.

Thank you, Madam President.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Tedisco.

Senator Mattera on the resolution.

SENATOR MATTERA: Thank you, Madam President.

This is a very, very special day. And I just want to thank Senator Scarcella-Spanton for this special resolution for Korean War Veterans Day.

I just want to thank all of our Korean War veterans that are here today, that actually made it up here today, and to thank you for keeping us from harm's way and protecting us.

We even had our Vietnam veterans also too that was down at the breakfast this morning. And it was just a beautiful, beautiful

breakfast. And Senator, thank you so much for taking your time and making it very, very special for everybody to come up here today.

They are true heroes, true Americans, all of our veterans. I'm from the Second Senate district, and we have somebody here today also too, Paul Fitzsimmons that is attending here today, that I met, from Northport and East Northport. And, you know, we had a special conversation today.

And one thing that I've been proud of is that any time -- especially being a union leader, and we got calls that the VFW halls and all of our American Legion halls needed help. This chamber, we need to help. The money should be there so we can go and fix up their buildings and make sure that they have a beautiful home to go to to tell their stories.

And that's one thing that I'm so proud of with the trades, with the union trades, that we went, we donated money, especially over in the Smithtown area at the VFW Hall and to go fix a roof, a roof that was leaking for years. And you know what? We all got together and we did this.

And one thing that's special to me is that when I go to a store, when I go even to my 7/11 and I see -- we see those hats and we see the veteran hats, no matter what war it is, I always say: Thank you so much for your service. Thank you for protecting us from harm's way. And can I please buy you that cup of coffee and that roll.

And so to my special -- like I said this last year also, to my Uncle Louie, I have an Uncle Louie Maters. Right now he's at the Vets Home at Stony Brook. And he's the mayor, I will tell you. He's the mayor there, and he's still -- he's 92 years old, feisty like you wouldn't believe, goes around, he has an electric chair that he goes -- but I that's -- I think the electric chair is actually ran on green hydrogen. But --

(Laughter.)

SENATOR MATTERA: To my Senator Krueger.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR MATTERA: So there's my Uncle Louie, he goes with that electric chair all over the place. And he's the mayor, he just

makes everybody feel good. Yeah, he did have a little fight with one of his roommates, but we won't get --

(Laughter.)

SENATOR MATTERA: We won't discuss that today. You know, him being the Marine.

But him being a somebody that I looked up to, a mentor to me, that I looked up to. And you know what, when Uncle Louie spoke, you listened. And I'm very, very proud.

But, you know, there's a gentleman named Fred Sganga that's the director at the state's home over at Stony Brook that does an amazing job. It should be the model to all state homes and to all homes for anybody.

The VA Home at Northport, with Joe Sledge doing a great job, and how proud I am that we go there Thanksgiving, giving out turkeys and how proud, you know, with all of our veterans.

But today, this is about our Korean War veterans that protected us, that were there, true Americans. And I just want to say God bless every single one of you. God bless every veteran. God bless our military. And especially God bless the United States of

America.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Mattera.

Senator Krueger on the resolution.

SENATOR KRUEGER: Thank you very much, Madam President.

I'm so appreciative of this day because it's reminding me of my deceased uncle Stuart Krueger, who was a Korean War veteran. And I know that he would have loved the opportunity to come here with you if we had started this a few years earlier. But unfortunately that was not to be.

And since he lived on Long Island, he would tell my dear friend Senator Mattera he's very worried about climate change --

(Laughter.)

SENATOR KRUEGER: -- and the destruction to Long Island, because we're not doing enough fast enough. So a green hydrogen electric chair might be a start, but it isn't the end.

So thank you very much. And thank you all for your service to this country.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Krueger.

Senator Rolison on the resolution.

SENATOR ROLISON: Thank you, Madam President.

And thank you to the sponsor for bringing this forward.

Last year I was honored to rise to thank this body for honoring our Korean War veterans, and it gave me, you know, the opportunity to remember my dad, who served during the Korean War. My uncle Bill Sherry, my godfather, my dad's best friend -- they went to Providence College and were roommates together, they served together, and lifelong friends.

And during our time together, which was many, many years, we -- I didn't ask anything about the Korean War. I only knew that my dad had some unit medals or insignias that I would play with as a kid. And I also said last year that my Uncle Bill and my dad were the best of friends who spent so much time together. Every Friday night they'd be over at the house or they'd be at Uncle Bill's playing bridge. I never heard them talk about it either.

So this morning I was at the Well, and I heard stories, stories that I never heard from my father or my godfather. And as Senator Ashby said, those are important stories. And we say, so often and importantly -- and I'm glad that we do, and I'm glad that I have the opportunity to do it too, thanking our veterans. But behind every veteran is a story. And these stories are not known as well as they should be to educate others, including ourselves, on how important your service was, the service is, and will be going forward.

Because as has been said many times in this room, without that service and without that sacrifice of our veterans and our men and women who are serving today, someplace in this world, we would not be standing here. We would not have those freedoms.

So again, thank you. Thank you to the sponsor for once again giving me the opportunity just to get up here and think about two individuals in my life, my dad and my Uncle Bill, but to every single veteran that has served.

Thank you, Madam President.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Rolison.

Senator Weber on the resolution.

SENATOR WEBER: Thank you, Madam President.

And I rise in support of this very important resolution as well. And I thank the sponsor. I thank the Majority Leader for allowing this to come to the floor today.

And I thank our Korean War veterans that are here today, that are at home in my district in Rockland County, for your bravery and for everything that you did for us, for our generation.

You know, as mentioned earlier, the Korean War was always referred to as "the forgotten war," but you're not forgotten. You're remembered every single day by not only everyone in this chamber but everyone, especially in my district and I know in all of my colleagues' districts.

You know, I'd like to -- and I'd be remiss not to mention and remember someone who was very important to this chamber, Lieutenant Colonel Bill Larkin -- World War II, Korean War

veteran, someone who spent many years in war and spent many years in distinguished service of this State Senate, someone who respected Haverstraw, a section of my district, North Rockland section of this district, someone who I looked up to as someone, you know, rising through and thinking about politics, someone who I think really led me to want to get into public service as well, and I know someone who worked well with everyone in this chamber on both sides of the aisle.

So I'd like to just remember him as well today on this day.

So thank you, Madam President. And I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Weber.

Senator Weik on the resolution.

SENATOR WEIK: Thank you, Madam President.

I just want to say welcome to all of our Korean War veterans who are here today. I thank you so much for making the trip up to share your stories with us and to be here with us.

I thank you for your service to our country. I thank you for your dedication to all

of our communities and to the veterans who followed after you. Thank you so much for everything.

May God bless you all.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Weik.

Senator Ortt, Minority Leader Ortt, on the resolution.

SENATOR ORTT: Thank you, Madam President.

I do want to thank and echo the comments of colleagues. I want to thank the Majority, I want to thank the sponsor for bringing this resolution to the floor.

As was mentioned, the Korean conflict often is -- is sometimes referred to as "the forgotten war." And maybe in some ways, you know, not surprising. It's sandwiched between World War II, which literally was fought for the preservation of liberty and freedom across the globe, and then the Vietnam War, which divided America as never before.

And just last week we recognized our Vietnam veterans and we talked a lot about how they were treated when they got home and how we

endeavor every day to make sure that never happens again, that veterans never are treated that way when they return. Because for that generation, that's their hallmark. That's the scar that they bore after the conflict.

But I think something even worse than being maybe treated poorly or maybe not fully recognized is to be forgotten. And especially when you put your life on the line, especially when you know people who died in that conflict, to be forgotten I think is something that all of us would never want, and certainly for our veterans.

I think it is important that we recognize all of our veterans, but obviously each individual conflict. But each individual conflict is unique. Each individual conflict has certain unique hallmarks for that generation, for those veterans, whether they were young men or women or whether they were battle-hardened veterans out of World War II who then also fought in Korea, where I know many did.

I remember taking a group of veterans to Washington, D.C., to see the monuments. And we went to World War II -- we

took the World War II veterans to the World War II Monument, we took Vietnam veterans of course to the Wall. The Korean Monument is a really ghostly and unforgettable monument in Washington, D.C. The sculptures of soldiers marching through -- you know, through what would be Korea in their gear from that time and their ponchos and their K-Pots.

It is a ghostly feeling. You almost feel like you're looking at real visages of human beings, of veterans, of soldiers right there in the Mall in Washington, D.C.

And I know the Korean War veterans who attended that, who laid a wreath at that monument, I think, I hope it brought them some measure of closure. And I hope that these kinds of recognitions bring them not only some closure, but the understanding that it is not forgotten.

And of course we know that the -- the echoes of that conflict are still with us today. There are still 38,000 U.S. servicemen and -women who are in Korea today at the DMZ, protecting our ally South Korea, but also protecting the hard-fought gains that American servicemen and -women died for back in 1951 to

'53. That's what they're there to do, to protect South Korea but to also protect what I would consider hallowed ground where American servicemembers spilled their blood.

And again, we know the very real dangers posed by a regime like North Korea. And we hope and I think we work towards hopefully making sure that we never have to send hundreds of thousands of U.S. servicemembers back to Korea. And that would be the real reason to remember their service, is to make sure that their grandkids or their great-grandkids don't have to go back and die at Inchon or somewhere else over on the Korean peninsula.

So again, thank you to the sponsor. Thank you to all my colleagues for supporting this resolution.

Madam President, thank you for your indulgence.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Ortt.

Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins on the resolution.

SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Thank you so much, Madam President.

And of course I rise to pay tribute to our heroes, our Korean War heroes. And I know I have Vietnam veteran heroes as well.

We talk about this not being a forgotten war. And it can't be, not with 37,000 who were lost, paid the ultimate sacrifice. Not with over 90,000 wounded, 8,000 missing. It could not be forgotten.

But as always, actions speak louder than words. We say we didn't forget, but we did not have this moment to honor you in this chamber before two years ago. And so this action I hope permeates not only the Capitol, but allows you to know that, like you -- certainly not on the level that you took action -- but we are willing to back up our words with action.

I do want to thank Chet Edwards, who brought this to the attention of you, Madam President, Senator Mayer, who then brought everyone to our office. And the very, very moment that we realized that we could do something meaningful, we resolved to do it.

Last time we did our celebration, it was with West Point Day. And it was quite extraordinary, because the new soldiers had a

chance also to join us in honoring you. And they were inspired by you. And I know brand-new Senator Scarcella-Spanton, who took over the committee, was trying to figure out how this would be juggled. And it was juggled so beautifully, as it was this year, by honoring you in the morning and then all of you that afternoon. It is something we will never, ever forget.

You are also sitting next to State Troopers, who I'm sure are in awe of you as we begin to elevate a superintendent historically in this chamber.

So every time you're here, something extraordinary happens, and we all benefit from your presence. We all grow in our understanding of your sacrifice. And we all get a chance to spend as many, many moments, hours, as necessary to tell you you're not forgotten, we honor you, we honor your service, we will never forget.

And I am so proud to be in a house where, you know, we have a lot of different conversations, a lot of complexities, a lot of things we agree to disagree on. No one disagrees with the honor that you have brought to us and

the recognition that you deserve today and every day.

Thank you for honoring us. Thank you for coming up to spend the day with us. I'm sorry I didn't do better with the weather; I will not take responsibility for the snow. But despite that, you're here anyway, the way you would be any time you're called to be of service. You represent so many.

And again, God bless you. God bless America and our state. Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Leader Stewart-Cousins.

To our guests, our Korean War veterans, especially Anthony Rabasco, a Korean War veteran from my district who's over there. I welcome you on behalf of the Senate. We extend to you the privileges of the house. We're so very pleased to have you here today. Please rise and be recognized.

(Lengthy standing ovation.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The resolution was previously adopted on April 3rd.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President,

there's a report of the Finance Committee at the desk. Can we take that up, please.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Krueger, from the Committee on Finance, reports the following nomination:

As Superintendent of the Division of State Police, Steven G. James.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to accept the report of the Finance Committee and ask that you recognize Leader Stewart-Cousins on the nomination.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: All those in favor of accepting the report of the Finance Committee signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The report of the Finance Committee is accepted.

Leader Stewart-Cousins on the nomination.

SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Thank you

so much, Madam President.

I could not help but somehow weave the service into the conversation. I wanted our vets to know that they are here on a historic day. And I wanted them to also know that the reason why so many were here in uniform was because there is more service to be applauded, and certainly a day where we have the honor of elevating one of the New York State Troopers' finest to the position of superintendent.

I got a call from the Governor before the announcement was made, and the Governor said: "I have an announcement of the superintendent of the State Police tomorrow. And, you know, he's amazing, and you're going to be thrilled." And because I am who I am, I said, What's his name? Who is he? She told me the name. And I said okay, let's see.

During the next day, week, I spent my time doing my homework and finding out who Steven James is and who he was to the State Police.

Thirty-two years of service. And in the conversation I had with everyone, there was no one who had anything but glowing reviews about

his and your service. From courage to integrity to being willing to do everything possible to uphold the values of not only the state but the Troopers, everyone applauded the Governor's nominee.

It's so incredibly refreshing to know that you've come up through the ranks and somehow, in 32 years, you didn't make anybody angry.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: I don't know how you did that. And if you did, nobody's talking.

And then to have been retired for four years -- and we talked about that. I got a chance to spend some time with him, because he did come to the office -- and decompress, think about what you've done. I'm sure you thought you'd be spending life on the beach until you got that phone call and recognized that what he had to bring to this moment during this, again, complex time was something that not only was rare but very much needed.

And despite the fact that you have all the options that you should be afforded,

having invested so much time in service and the protection of your fellow citizens in the state, you've returned to take on the mantle of leadership of this very important and prestigious organization of Troopers. And you are making history as the first African-American superintendent.

I am so honored to be able to stand here and congratulate you, to thank you for not only your past service but the service that you continue to bring.

And I just want you to know that this body -- and I'm sure if the Assembly had the privilege of being able to vote on your elevation as well, they would join me in saying you have partners in these legislative bodies. We can work together to make sure that the safety and the integrity of the work that we all do inures to the benefit of all New Yorkers.

I want to congratulate you. I thank you again for your service. And again, I look forward to working with you.

Thank you so much, Madam President.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Majority Leader.

Senator Krueger on the nomination.

SENATOR KRUEGER: Thank you very much, Madam President.

And obviously the leader's words pretty much cover everything. I just wanted to go on the record that the new commissioner -- superintendent of State Police had a full meeting with the Finance Committee and the Codes Committee yesterday. Very well attended, endless questions. And I'm not sure we've ever seen a candidate go through so smoothly and with I believe unanimous support.

So I also want to thank the Governor for finding us such an excellent nominee to move through to the floor. And I want to thank him for his willingness to continue to serve. And I know he will do all New Yorkers extremely proud in his new position.

Thank you, Madam President.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Krueger.

Senator Gallivan on the nomination.

SENATOR GALLIVAN: Thank you, Madam President.

I rise to support the nomination of

Steven James as the next superintendent of State Police. I'm very proud to do so. Many know I was a State Trooper. My father was. My uncle was. And I of course have a special place in my heart for the State Police -- not because of my family or me personally, but because of what they do and what they mean to the 19 million New Yorkers that they serve.

It's very unique. A police agency like that is so many different things to the different people across the state. But they're as important to somebody in the most rural of areas as they are in the biggest city in New York State.

So the job of superintendent is very challenging. And despite all the challenges that the State Police has had over the years, they remain one of the most -- if not the most -- respected law enforcement agencies in the country.

Certainly they have challenges in modern times. And Steven James I believe is up to the challenge to lead this agency, having come up through the ranks. I applaud the Governor for recognizing the importance of nominating somebody

to lead the agency that knows the agency. He has served in every single position, from trooper up to deputy superintendent -- and now, of course, superintendent.

So I look forward to working with him -- I hope the rest of this body does as well -- as we work to make New York State safer and our communities safe throughout the state for all of the citizens, and we deal with the challenges of modern times.

So I congratulate the superintendent, the members of his new executive staff who are here today. They have challenges ahead of them, but no doubt they're in good hands.

So congratulations, and I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Gallivan.

The question is on the nomination.

Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 59.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: I'd like

to announce that our nominee, Superintendent Steven James, the new superintendent of the State Police, is confirmed.

Please rise and be recognized.

(Standing ovation.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you, Madam President.

Returning to resolutions, can we take up previously adopted Resolution 2067, by Senator Ramos, read that resolution's title, and recognize Senator Ramos.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 2067, by Senator Ramos, memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim March 31, 2024, as Cesar Chavez Day in the State of New York.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Ramos on the resolution.

SENATOR RAMOS: Thank you, Madam President.

You know, Cesar Chavez Day was March 31st, but it is meaningful that this

resolution should fall on April 4th, today, which is the anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. It provides this body, and our state as a whole, with an opportunity to reflect on how change exactly comes to be.

Dr. King and Cesar Chavez were both championing the rights of the essential working people our country many times took for granted. At the time of his assassination, Dr. King was in Memphis visiting striking sanitation workers, and Chavez was leading Mexican and Chicano farmworkers against the grape growers of California, inspired by Filipino strikers.

Though on opposite coasts, their voices were one. They would resist oppression, degradation, and disrespect through nonviolence. The boycott, the strike, the blocking of bridges and highways, and the push for fair and free elections were their tools.

Chavez famously said his organizing was never really about grapes. Similarly, for Dr. King, it was not about lunch counters or buses. They demanded that the country built by the blood and sweat of Black and brown people be recognized.

The American tradition of civil disobedience should not be dismissed. The same peaceful tactics of withholding your labor and your pocketbook, sitting in the way and disrupting the flow of commerce, were used to win the right to vote, the right to a day off, the rate to work safely, and the end of child labor.

In 1990 Cesar Chavez again invoked Dr. King when talking about the dangerous use of pesticides in the fields worked by his union members at UFW. He said the same inhumanity displayed at Selma, in Birmingham, and so many of Dr. King's battlegrounds is displayed every day in the vineyards of California.

Even today, efforts to roll back the rights of farmworkers have a home right here in the vineyards of New York State. And so as employers fight to take away hard-won rights from the workers who make their harvest possible, I'll share my favorite quote from Cesar Chavez:

"Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You cannot uneducate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.

We have seen the future, and the future is ours."

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you, Senator Ramos.

The resolution was previously adopted on April 3rd.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Madam President, the resolutions' sponsors would like to open them up for cosponsorship.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The resolutions are open for cosponsorship. Should you choose not to be a cosponsor, please notify the desk.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up the calendar.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 118, Senate Print 5724, by Senator Kennedy, an act to amend the Highway Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This

act shall take effect immediately.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 59.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 232, Senate Print 3052, by Senator Stavisky, an act to amend the Education Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the first of July.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 59.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number

240, Senate Print 5554, by Senator Comrie, an act to amend the General Municipal Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 240, those Senators voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Brisport, Gallivan, Griffo, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec and Tedisco. Also Senator Weber.

Ayes, 48. Nays, 11.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Forgive me. Also Senator Rolison as well.

Ayes, 47. Nays, 12.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number

331, Senate Print 5169, by Senator Mannion, an act to amend the State Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 59.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 398, Senate Print 3531A, by Senator Skoufis, an act to amend the Executive Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce

the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 398, those Senators voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Griffo, Helming, Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Rhoads, Rolison, Stec, Tedisco, Weber and Weik.

Ayes, 43. Nays, 16.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 438, Senate Print 6635, by Senator Ramos, an act to amend the Workers' Compensation Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the first of January.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 438, those Senators voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello,

Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Rhoads, Rolison, Stec, Tedisco, Weber and Weik.

Ayes, 40. Nays, 19.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 528, Senate Print 2924, by Senator Cleare, an act to establish the Marshall Plan for Moms Interagency Task Force.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Cleare to explain her vote.

SENATOR CLEARE: Thank you, Madam President.

We call this bill the Marshall Plan for Moms, and it recognizes a key principle. The COVID pandemic, which was declared in this state

over four years ago and which killed over 1.2 million people in the United States alone, had a disproportionate impact on mothers. Mothers were often the first who had to quit or leave their job, the first who had to deal with childcare, the first who had to tend to ailing friends or family.

And all these statements rang true in the time that preceded the pandemic. In fact, the unique needs that women and mothers face as caregivers was recently extensively researched by AARP, who concluded that the state needs to step up in a multidisciplinary way to empower these superwomen.

Mothers need thoughtful and targeted assistance. They have a real job to do -- oftentimes multiple jobs -- and they need our support.

I am grateful that the AFL-CIO has indicated support for this bill.

I urge an aye vote, and I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Cleare to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 528, those Senators voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec, Tedisco and Weber.

Ayes, 46. Nays, 13.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 712, Senate Print 3582, by Senator Hinchey, an act to amend the Tax Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 59.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 731, Senate Print 2376A, by Senator Persaud, an

act to amend the Penal Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 7. This act shall take effect on the 90th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Brisport to explain his vote.

SENATOR BRISPORT: Thank you, Madam President.

I rise to vote no on this legislation, respectfully, as I voted no in years past. But I feel compelled to speak on it today because today is yet another day and another year in which we have not passed the New York Health Act.

And while this bill addresses the crime of stealing of health insurance, it does not address the much greater crime of denying health insurance to over 1 million New Yorkers. And New York State, with our $2 trillion economy -- on par with Canada, which has universal health insurance -- our $2 trillion economy, larger than many industrialized nations which guarantee universal healthcare, we choose

not to make sure every single person in this state has health insurance.

And this bill now puts uninsured and underinsured New Yorkers in an impossible situation where, if you don't have health insurance, you can go into crippling medical debt if you're sick, or you can face jail time for stealing health insurance.

And it is our fault that they are uninsured. It is our fault they are underinsured. We have the money to guarantee health insurance to every single person in the state. We have the power to do it. We cannot blame the federal government. We have no one to blame but ourselves.

So I urge this body to pass the New York Health Act. I urge us to think differently about how we approach the uninsured and underinsured. And I respectfully vote no.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator Brisport to be recorded in the negative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 731, Senator Brisport in the negative.

Ayes, 58. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 738, Senate Print 252, by Senator Serrano, an act to amend the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the first of January.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 738, voting in the negative: Senator Helming.

Ayes, 58. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The bill is passed.

Senator Gianaris, that completes the reading of the calendar.

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

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

SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to adjourn until Monday, April 8th, at 11:00 a.m., with the intervening days being legislative days.

ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: On motion, the Senate stands adjourned until Monday, April 8th, at 11:00 a.m., with the intervening days being legislative days.

(Whereupon, at 1:18 p.m., the Senate adjourned.)