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NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

ALBANY, NEW YORK

February 5, 2025

12:36 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

SENATOR JEREMY COONEY, Acting President

ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

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

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

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

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

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: We are
9 joined by Rabbi Mordechai Rubin, of the
10 Colonie Chabad Jewish Center in Loudonville, who
11 will deliver today's invocation.

12 Rabbi.

13 RABBI RUBIN: I would first like to
14 thank Senator Ashby.

15 I'm here with my wife, and together
16 we co-direct locally in this region
17 Colonie Chabad and Jewish Life at Siena College.

18 I'm going to begin with an act of
19 charity. (Inserting money into tzedakah box.)

20 Almighty God, Master of the
21 Universe, the members of this esteemed body, the
22 New York State Senate, convene here today to
23 fulfill one of the seven commandments which you
24 issued to Noah and his family after the
25 Great Flood: The commandment that all society be

1 governed by just laws.

2 As stated in the Book of Genesis and
3 its sacred commentaries, You issued at that time
4 the following seven laws: To worship You and You
5 alone; never to blasphemy Your holy name; not to
6 commit murder, respect human life; not to commit
7 adultery, incest or any sexual misdeeds; not to
8 steal, lie or cheat; not to be cruel to any
9 living creature; and that every society be
10 governed by just laws, based on the recognition
11 and acknowledgement of You, O God, as the
12 sovereign ruler of all humankind and all nations.

13 Grant, Almighty God, that the
14 members of the New York State Senate confidently
15 realize that by enacting just laws, they're doing
16 Your will.

17 Almighty God, I beseech You today to
18 bless the Senate and entire state and nation in
19 the merit of two spiritual giants of our time,
20 and of our country and state: Rabbi Yosef
21 Yitzchak Schneerson, of saintly memory, the sixth
22 Chabad and Lubavitcher Rebbe, and his successor,
23 our Rebbe and inspiration, Rabbi Menachem
24 Schneerson, as we soon approach the 10th day of
25 the Hebrew month of Shevat.

1 This Saturday, this Shabbat will
2 mark 75 years, the 75th anniversary of the
3 transition of their leadership. It is a day of
4 reflection and action, and one which should
5 energize us to be God-conscious beings. Their
6 holy mission continues through our acts of
7 goodness and kindness, hastening the harmonious
8 era of messianic redemption.

9 Ultimately we ask of You, O God, to
10 usher in the era of redemption, where there will
11 be no more war and strife, and all humankind will
12 know You. As the Prophet Isaiah states: The
13 earth shall be full of the knowledge of God, as
14 the water covers the sea.

15 And let us say amen.

16 (Response of "Amen.")

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Reading
18 of the Journal.

19 THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Tuesday,
20 February 4, 2025, the Senate met pursuant to
21 adjournment. The Journal of Monday, February 3,
22 2025, was read and approved. On motion, the
23 Senate adjourned.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Without
25 objection, the Journal stands approved as read.

1 Presentation of petitions.

2 Messages from the Assembly.

3 The Secretary will read.

4 THE SECRETARY: Senator Rivera
5 moves to discharge, from the Committee on Rules,
6 Assembly Bill Number 926 and substitute it for
7 the identical Senate Bill 769, Third Reading
8 Calendar 43.

9 Senator Mayer moves to discharge,
10 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
11 Number 425 and substitute it for the identical
12 Senate Bill 771, Third Reading Calendar 45.

13 Senator Cleare moves to discharge,
14 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
15 Number 924 and substitute it for the identical
16 Senate Bill 772, Third Reading Calendar 46.

17 Senator Harckham moves to discharge,
18 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
19 Number 1476 and substitute it for the identical
20 Senate Bill 776, Third Reading Calendar 50.

21 Senator Persaud moves to discharge,
22 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
23 Number 920 and substitute it for the identical
24 Senate Bill 785, Third Reading Calendar 59.

25 Senator Scarcella-Spanton moves to

1 discharge, from the Committee on Rules,
2 Assembly Bill Number 2058 and substitute it for
3 the identical Senate Bill 790, Third Reading
4 Calendar 64.

5 Senator Fernandez moves to
6 discharge, from the Committee on Rules,
7 Assembly Bill Number 2435 and substitute it for
8 the identical Senate Bill 791, Third Reading
9 Calendar 65.

10 Senator Cleare moves to discharge,
11 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
12 Number 1099 and substitute it for the identical
13 Senate Bill 796, Third Reading Calendar 70.

14 Senator Hinchey moves to discharge,
15 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
16 Number 1016 and substitute it for the identical
17 Senate Bill 800, Third Reading Calendar 74.

18 Senator Brouk moves to discharge,
19 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
20 Number 1025 and substitute it for the identical
21 Senate Bill 802, Third Reading Calendar 76.

22 Senator Ramos moves to discharge,
23 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
24 Number 2432 and substitute it for the identical
25 Senate Bill 808, Third Reading Calendar 82.

1 Senator Persaud moves to discharge,
2 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
3 Number 1026 and substitute it for the identical
4 Senate Bill 809, Third Reading Calendar 83.

5 Senator Sanders moves to discharge,
6 from the Committee on Rules, Assembly Bill
7 Number 421 and substitute it for the identical
8 Senate Bill 812, Third Reading Calendar 86.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: So
10 ordered.

11 Messages from the Governor.
12 Reports of standing committees.
13 Reports of select committees.
14 Communications and reports from
15 state officers.

16 Motions and resolutions.

17 Senator Gianaris.

18 SENATOR GIANARIS: Good afternoon,
19 Mr. President.

20 There's a privileged resolution at
21 the desk. Please take that up, read it in its
22 entirety, and recognize Leader Stewart-Cousins on
23 the resolution.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There is
25 a privileged resolution at the desk.

1 The Secretary will read.

2 THE SECRETARY: Resolution 312, by
3 Senator Stewart-Cousins, memorializing
4 Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim February 2025
5 as Black History Month in the State of New York.

6 "WHEREAS, Black History Month serves
7 as an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the
8 achievements, contributions, and resilience of
9 African-Americans throughout history; and

10 "WHEREAS, It is essential to
11 recognize some of the most integral parts of
12 Black history, including the struggles; and

13 "WHEREAS, The Civil War was a
14 defining moment in American history, fought over
15 the issue of slavery, leading to the eventual
16 liberation of millions of African-Americans; and

17 "WHEREAS, The Emancipation
18 Proclamation, signed by President Abraham Lincoln
19 on January 1, 1863, declared that all enslaved
20 individuals in Confederate-held territories were
21 to be freed, marking a critical step toward the
22 abolition of slavery; and

23 "WHEREAS, The passage of the
24 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution
25 on December 6, 1865, formally abolished slavery

1 in the United States, securing the freedom of
2 African-Americans and paving the way for future
3 civil rights advancements; and

4 "WHEREAS, Black History Month was
5 originally established as Negro History Week in
6 1926 by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a historian and
7 educator committed to ensuring that the
8 achievements and contributions of
9 African-Americans were acknowledged and
10 preserved; and

11 "WHEREAS, In 1976, the celebration
12 was expanded to a month-long observance,
13 recognized nationally each February to honor the
14 profound impact of African-Americans on the
15 history, culture, and progress of the
16 United States, from their contributions in
17 science, literature, politics, business, and the
18 arts to their pivotal role in the fight for
19 civil rights and social justice; and

20 "WHEREAS, Black History Month seeks
21 to emphasize that Black history is American
22 history; and

23 "WHEREAS, The month of February
24 observes the rich and diverse heritage of our
25 great state and nation and encourages the

1 celebration of Black History Month to provide a
2 continuing opportunity for all people in the
3 United States to learn from the past, and
4 understand the factors that have shaped and
5 guided the course of our present-day experiences;
6 and

7 "WHEREAS, The achievements of
8 African-Americans have been instrumental in
9 shaping the nation's progress, and it is
10 essential to highlight some key moments,
11 accomplishments, and historical firsts that have
12 left a lasting impact on American history; and

13 "WHEREAS, From the legal field to
14 public office, John S. Rock became the first
15 African-American admitted to the bar of the U.S.
16 Supreme Court in 1865, followed by Oscar J. Dunn
17 as the first African-American lieutenant governor
18 in Louisiana in 1868; Hiram Revels made history
19 as the first African-American U.S. Senator in
20 1870, and Charlotte E. Ray became the first
21 African-American female lawyer in the
22 United States in 1872; in education, Booker T.
23 Washington founded Tuskegee Institute in 1881,
24 helping pave the way for future Black scholars;
25 in athletics, George Poage won an Olympic medal

1 in 1904, and Jesse Owens defied racial prejudices
2 with four gold medals at the 1936 Berlin
3 Olympics; in innovation, Bessie Coleman became
4 the first African-American woman to earn a
5 pilot's license in 1921, Garrett Morgan invented
6 the modern traffic signal and received a patent
7 in 1923; in the arts, Hattie McDaniel became the
8 first African-American to win an Academy Award in
9 1940, while Gwendolyn Brooks became the first
10 African-American writer to win a Pulitzer Prize
11 in 1950; and

12 "WHEREAS, Breaking barriers in civil
13 rights, law, and politics, Brown v. Board of
14 Education led to desegregation in schools in
15 1954, and Ruby Bridges, at six years old, became
16 the first African-American child to integrate an
17 all-white elementary school in the South in 1960;
18 Thurgood Marshall became the first
19 African-American Supreme Court Justice in 1967;
20 Shirley Chisholm was the first African-American
21 woman elected to Congress in 1968; Douglas Wilder
22 became the first African-American governor in
23 U.S. history in 1989; in science and space,
24 Guion Bluford became the first African-American
25 astronaut in space in 1983, while Mae Jemison

1 followed as the first African-American woman in
2 space in 1992; Toni Morrison made literary
3 history as the first African-American woman to
4 win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993; and

5 "WHEREAS, African-Americans have
6 also made great strides in leadership, with
7 Carol Moseley Braun becoming the first
8 African-American woman to serve in the U.S.
9 Senate in 1995, Colin Powell serving as the first
10 African-American U.S. Secretary of State in 2001,
11 and Condoleezza Rice becoming the first
12 African-American woman in that role in 2005; and

13 "WHEREAS, The impact of
14 African-American contributions to the moral
15 fabric and history of this great nation are
16 ever-growing and unprecedented; more recently, on
17 January 20, 2009, Barack Obama became the first
18 Black President of the United States, earning his
19 wife, Michelle Obama, the same distinction in her
20 role as First Lady; and

21 "WHEREAS, More notable
22 African-American trailblazers who serve as a
23 testament to the success, growth, and strength of
24 our nation are: Cheryl Boone Isaacs, who became
25 the first Black president of the Academy of

1 Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 2013;
2 Paulette Brown, the first Black woman to become
3 the American Bar Association president in 2015;
4 Dr. Carla Hayden, the first Black Librarian of
5 Congress in 2016; Jennifer King, the first
6 full-time Black woman NFL coach, heading the
7 Washington Commanders in 2020; Kamala Harris
8 became the first female and first Black and
9 Asian American Vice President of the
10 United States in January 2021; Lloyd J. Austin
11 has the unique distinction of being the first
12 Black United States Secretary of Defense, sworn
13 in on January 22, 2021; Maya Angelou, the first
14 Black woman to appear on U.S. currency in 2022;
15 Ketanji Brown Jackson made history in her
16 becoming the first Black woman to serve on the
17 United States Supreme Court on June 30, 2022;
18 Karine Jean-Pierre became the first Black and
19 LGBTQ White House press secretary in 2022; and
20 Sika Henry, the first Black woman to be
21 recognized as a professional triathlete in the
22 United States, was inducted into the National
23 Black Distance Running Hall of Fame in 2022; and
24 all of whom encompass the many more powerful
25 Black individuals who pushed through countless

1 obstacles to earn the respect of their peers and
2 this great state and nation; and

3 "WHEREAS, Furthermore, Fred Perpall
4 was elected to serve as the 67th president of
5 the United States Golf Association in 2023; also
6 in 2023, Kirsten Neuschwanger made history as the
7 first Black woman to graduate from the
8 U.S. Air Force Academy's pilot training;
9 Victor Glover was selected as the first Black
10 astronaut to orbit the moon as part of NASA's
11 Artemis II mission in 2024; Simone Biles became
12 the most decorated American Olympic gymnast in
13 history on July, 30, 2024; and on February 2,
14 2025, Beyoncé became the first Black woman to win
15 a Grammy for Best Country Album with 'Cowboy
16 Carter'; and

17 "WHEREAS, In recognition of the vast
18 contributions of African-Americans, a joyful
19 month-long celebration is held across New York
20 State and across the United States, with many
21 commemorative events to honor and display the
22 cultural heritage of African-Americans; and

23 "WHEREAS, This Legislative Body
24 commends the African-American community for
25 preserving, for future generations, its

1 centuries-old traditions that benefit us all and
2 add to the color and beauty of the tapestry which
3 is our American society; now, therefore, be it

4 "RESOLVED, That this Legislative
5 Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize
6 Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim February 2025
7 as Black History Month in the State of New York;
8 and be it further

9 "RESOLVED, That copies of this
10 resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to
11 The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State
12 of New York, and to the events commemorating
13 Black History Month throughout New York State."

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Leader
15 Stewart-Cousins on the resolution.

16 SENATOR STEWART-COUSINS: Thank you
17 so much, Mr. President.

18 I don't usually speak on Black
19 History Month resolutions because they're usually
20 a recitation of what happened in the past --
21 which I know is important to the body. And
22 because we are a body that is diverse and
23 erudite, I have so many colleagues who are able
24 to speak eloquently on the contributions of
25 African-Americans to our country, to the world.

1 And I generally step aside, having spoken on
2 King Day, and allow my colleagues to express so
3 much of what remembering Black History Month
4 means to them.

5 But because of where we are, because
6 of the time that we're in, because of the moments
7 that really require all of us to say something
8 about something, I needed to say something about
9 why we celebrate Black history. I needed to make
10 sure that in this chamber and in this state we do
11 not pretend that history is unimportant or easily
12 erased.

13 I stand here because of the
14 ancestors whose shoulders I stand upon. And when
15 we do our resolution, we talk about what happened
16 in the 1800s and what happened in the 1900s, and
17 it's easy for us to pretend that that was so long
18 ago and that the accomplishments that we see
19 today, so many firsts that we see today, are just
20 a normal and natural thing.

21 And I wanted staff to update the
22 resolution, and that's why we talked about
23 Beyoncé and Justice Ketanji Brown -- and oh, by
24 the way, this weekend two Black quarterbacks will
25 meet at the Super Bowl.

1 But I don't want anybody to assume
2 that all of that was just an organic thing that
3 happened. I don't want anybody to pretend that
4 it was always about merit and never about race.
5 Because too many people missed an opportunity to
6 achieve the highest heights because the system
7 said that based on the color of their skin, they
8 could not possibly do any of those things.

9 They could not possibly be able to
10 walk on the moon. They could not possibly be
11 able to quarterback. They could not possibly be
12 able to be wise enough to sit on the
13 Supreme Court bench. They could not possibly, in
14 the case of my father, who served in a segregated
15 Army, be capable of defending the country.

16 I understand that for a moment they
17 took down the information about the
18 Tuskegee Airmen, the Black pilots who, because
19 Franklin Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor said,
20 Let's take a chance, because we need defense,
21 allowed these Black pilots to reach not only
22 great heights, but be so effective in what they
23 did. They allowed them, as pilots, to pilot.

24 Because it was assumed that they
25 could not do it. It was assumed that

1 Black people should be enslaved. And even though
2 the Civil War was fought, the fact that the
3 Emancipation Proclamation happened -- and we all
4 know the story of Juneteenth, so it took a couple
5 of years for people to actually know. Even then,
6 they were -- said, Okay, you're free. With
7 nothing. Nothing.

8 So when we read the scores of people
9 who, despite that, show up, stand up, sacrifice,
10 risk death, risk lynching, risk incarceration,
11 risk -- no, not even risk, know that they will
12 continue to be marginalized unless and until
13 people who sit in places like this created
14 legislation to say: Oh, by the way, you're no
15 longer three-fifths of a person, you're a whole
16 person.

17 Until those things happened, nothing
18 changed. And it happened because people
19 outside -- Black, white, people of good
20 conscience -- decided that it was not okay to
21 demonize and marginalize and suppress an
22 oppressed people because of the color of their
23 skin.

24 Some of these dates I was alive for.
25 I was alive when schools were desegregated. This

1 is not something someone -- that's why we fight
2 so hard to give resources to schools, because
3 people depend on that. Why? So that they have
4 the education so that they will not repeat the
5 same mistakes.

6 And here we are pretending that
7 we're not looking at things that are being rolled
8 back as though somehow people are getting ahead
9 of folks because we celebrate history or we
10 celebrate our culture or we celebrate the fact
11 that we've achieved something.

12 We've achieved something because the
13 American dream is big enough to allow us to
14 achieve it. We've achieved something because
15 people's minds were pure enough to know that you
16 can't continue to leave people behind and think
17 it's perfectly fine. Not when, as the rabbi
18 said, we're supposed to be making just laws.

19 We can't pretend that if we roll
20 these laws back, or if now somebody of color,
21 some woman, somebody who's got a disability is
22 hired, it's DEI. No. It's right to allow people
23 to do the best they can on behalf of each one of
24 us.

25 I stand here not because of DEI, but

1 because I have an opportunity to serve this
2 chamber and this state. And I hope, as we watch
3 what's unfolding, we remember that many of us
4 would not be sitting in our seats if not for the
5 fighting of people to allow the dream to
6 encompass us all.

7 Thank you so much, Mr. President.

8 (Standing ovation.)

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
10 you, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins.

11 Senator Parker on the resolution.

12 SENATOR PARKER: Thank you,
13 Mr. President.

14 And I'm not sure I'm happy to be
15 following the leader on this particular day.

16 (Laughter.)

17 SENATOR PARKER: But it's always a
18 pleasure to be in the company of our leader, who
19 is, you know, history in the making every single
20 day that she leads this great office. And so
21 thank you very much for not just your intrepid
22 leadership, but for continuing to be the
23 conscience of this state government here in
24 New York.

25 We are here today again to celebrate

1 Black History Month, a month that was created out
2 of Negro History Week, out of the zeitgeist, if
3 you will, of Carter G. Woodson. Now, a lot of
4 times people don't remember Carter G. Woodson
5 because he was the second Brother to graduate
6 from Harvard University. Right? Everybody knows
7 W.E.B. Du Bois, right, who was the first.

8 You know, Du Bois, creator of
9 sociology, right? His study The Philadelphia
10 Negro was the first sociological work ever
11 recorded. So he's literally the father of
12 sociology. One of the creators, at the
13 Niagara Movement, of the NAACP, what emerged into
14 what we now know as the NAACP. But the first
15 African-American to be graduated with a Ph.D.
16 from Harvard. Carter G. Woodson was the second.

17 And Carter G. Woodson was a teacher.
18 Right? Jabari, like -- you know, a teacher. And
19 like he wasn't -- he wasn't like the head of
20 teachers in this -- right? He had a Ph.D. from
21 Harvard back in the early 1900s, and he wasn't
22 like the head of teachers in the country. He
23 wasn't like even the head of Black teachers
24 anywhere. He was just like -- literally like a
25 teacher. Right? Like Miss Murphy was for me in

1 third grade at P.S. 193. Right? We're going to
2 have to fix our education system as we go forward
3 with all our credentials.

4 But he was well-learned man. And in
5 that experience, he was determined in the 1920s
6 to say we need to know more, that there needs to
7 be more of a conversation about who we are as
8 African-Americans. So he actually, through the
9 organization that he ran at that time, started
10 Negro History Week, which was chosen to be the
11 second week of February for two reasons.

12 One, it was the same week as the
13 birthday of President Lincoln, right, who was
14 very much admired because of his stances on
15 ending slavery. And the second was the birthday
16 of Frederick Douglass, whose birthday is also the
17 second week of February. And it is those two
18 luminaries which Carter G. Woodson thought that
19 we ought to use as a foundation to build this
20 edifice to African-American history.

21 But even when you read his works --
22 most notably, *The Miseducation of the Negro* --
23 Carter G. Woodson always knew that our history
24 was bigger than us landing on the shores of
25 Virginia in 1619. Right? 1619, an important

1 date because it was the time that the first ships
2 came from Africa with African people enslaved on
3 them.

4 But he knew that it started before
5 then. And what I like to refer to -- and I'm
6 going to use it again, because I like it so
7 much -- is that to understand that there is an
8 African in African-American, that we didn't pop
9 up like mushrooms on the shore of Virginia in
10 1619. That in fact that the first people on this
11 planet were people of African descent.

12 And we know that anthropologically.
13 Right? They call her Alice. I don't think that
14 was quite her name, but certainly the name that
15 the anthropologists called her. I believe she
16 was Homo sapien Anthropopithecus, right? Sorry,
17 Australopithecus. Right?

18 The important thing to know about
19 this anthropologically is that the first
20 humans are found on the continent of Africa. But
21 more importantly, the modern humans, the first
22 remnants of the modern humans are found on the
23 African continent: Homo sapien sapien. Right?

24 And so out of that history and the
25 anthropological evidence that we have, we get

1 Ayi Kwei Armah, who is a West African author who
2 wrote a book called Two Thousand Seasons. And in
3 it he begins to talk about the history of
4 African people, and he says that if you want to
5 understand how long African people have been on
6 this planet, he said you would have to go to the
7 ocean. And as you started to walk upon the sand,
8 you would have to count every grain of sand,
9 grain by grain. And when you finished counting
10 every grain of sand on the beach, you would only
11 begin to understand how many seasons
12 African people have been on the earth.

13 He said you then have to walk to the
14 waterline and you would have to start to count
15 the ocean, drop by drop. And then when you add
16 that number to the number of grains of sand, you
17 only have a fraction of the number of seasons
18 that african people have been walking the earth.
19 He said you would then have to look up to the sky
20 and see the sun and count every ray of sun, ray
21 by ray.

22 And even when you start to add that
23 up with the drops of water in the ocean and the
24 grains of sand on the beach, that you would then
25 only start to understand how long African people

1 have been walking on this earth.

2 They were the first to see the dawn,
3 the first to call the name of God, the first to
4 understand mathematics and science and politics
5 and sociology and anatomy. And not because they
6 were better, but simply they were first.

7 And these were the group of people
8 that were chosen to be enslaved in this place and
9 in this land.

10 And so when you see this history,
11 it's important to understand that history is a
12 record of culture and a development of culture.
13 And that's critical to understand because we're
14 in a moment now in which people are trying to
15 erase both that culture and that history. Where
16 there's an active attempt to act like, you know,
17 people of African descent have contributed
18 nothing to this planet.

19 And let me say this. If you think
20 that it's okay to allow that erasure to happen,
21 you're next. You will be next.

22 We also understand, Mr. President,
23 that history is the record of culture, but
24 culture is the product of history. Culture is a
25 dynamic thing that comes out of the history of

1 particular groups of people. Right? And the
2 history and the culture of African people in this
3 land has been one of struggle -- similarly, that
4 we find other groups that have come here. Right?

5 And so in that way, there's this
6 uniting force about what makes us America and
7 about what makes us New York. It's that we come
8 out of a culture and a history of struggle. And
9 just like we survived those previous times, we
10 will survive this time, exactly because we have
11 this history and this culture to lean on.

12 We had a culture that developed in a
13 hostile place where we were denied our history,
14 our dignity, our freedom, and our humanity. Not
15 just within the context of communities, but
16 within the context of even the law that told us
17 that we were -- that we were not even initially
18 3/4ths of a human, we were not citizens, that we
19 were not humans, period.

20 That in fact as I refer to
21 anthropology, literally -- a lot of people don't
22 know this -- literally the discipline of
23 anthropology was built as a scientific
24 explanation of the superiority of white people,
25 and to deny Black humanity. They began with

1 skulls -- cranial capacity tests. Right? And we
2 should look that up and delve into that. But
3 that's literally the foundations of anthropology.
4 We developed a whole course of study that was
5 really literally predicated on creating a
6 scientific justification on the enslavement and
7 the subjugation of African people.

8 And this history and this society
9 told us every single day that we were not worthy
10 of humanity, respect or dignity. But
11 African people fought back. And so when this
12 society told us that we were not entitled to
13 freedom, Black history created Denmark Vesey,
14 Gabriel Prosser, and Nat Turner. When this
15 society told us that we were not smart enough to
16 learn how to read and write, Black history gave
17 us Phillis Wheatley, gave us David Walker's
18 Appeal. It gave us The North Star newspaper
19 created by Frederick Douglass. It gave us the
20 newspaper Negro World, created by Marcus Garvey,
21 and the Amsterdam News, by Bill Tatum.

22 During the Revolutionary War and the
23 development of this country, they told us that we
24 couldn't fight, and Black history gave us
25 Crispus Attucks. They even told us that we

1 weren't good enough to practice Free Masonry,
2 and Black history gave us Prince Hall.

3 They told us that we had nothing to
4 contribute to the society, that we couldn't even
5 take care of ourselves once we were free. And
6 Black history gave us Booker T. Washington, who
7 created the Tuskegee Institute.

8 They told us that we couldn't
9 organize ourselves, that we couldn't produce our
10 own nation, that we had no history that we should
11 pay attention to, and Black history gave us
12 Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement
13 Association.

14 They told us that we didn't have the
15 capacity to go to war or to fight alongside of
16 white soldiers, and Black history gave us the
17 Buffalo Soldiers and the Tuskegee Airmen.

18 They told us that Jim Crow was our
19 way of life and that we were always going to be
20 separate and unequal, and Black history gave us
21 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, the
22 Southern Christian Leadership Conference, CORE,
23 the NAACP, the Deacons for Defense, the
24 Black Panther Party, and the Student Nonviolent
25 Coordinating Committee.

1 They told us that we weren't smart
2 enough to go to space, and Black history gave us
3 Mae Jemison.

4 They told us that we couldn't
5 perform in the arts, and Black history gave us
6 Hattie McDaniel and Leontyne Price.

7 They told us that we couldn't be
8 president, and Black history gave us
9 Shirley Chisholm, Barack Obama, and
10 Kamala Harris.

11 They told us that we could not serve
12 on the highest court of the land, that we didn't
13 have the capacity to do that. And Black history
14 gave us Thurgood Marshall and now Ketanji Brown.

15 They told us that we didn't have the
16 physical ability to keep up with whites in the
17 sphere of sports, and Black history gave us
18 Jesse Owens.

19 They told us, even here in the great
20 State of New York, that we could not run the
21 government and did not understand what was
22 happening with finance, and so Black history gave
23 us H. Carl McCall.

24 They told us that the justice in the
25 great State of New York could never be run by

1 anybody Black, and Black history gave us Tish
2 James.

3 They told us that if you were going
4 to have somebody be the second in command of the
5 government, that it had to be somebody white, but
6 Black history told us different and gave us David
7 Paterson and now Antonio Delgado.

8 They told us that how could a
9 legislature be run by African-Americans, and
10 Black history gave us Speaker Carl Heastie and
11 our eminent leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

12 That in the development of our
13 history, at every step they told us we could not
14 do it. They told us that we had to eat scraps --
15 and what did we do? We created soul food. They
16 gave people the ends of the cow to eat, and what
17 did we do? Created oxtail.

18 (Laughter.)

19 SENATOR PARKER: They told us that
20 our culture did not create enough viability to
21 understand arts, and what did we do? We created
22 the steelpan, soca, reggae, jazz, R&B, soul,
23 rhythm and blues, salsa, hip-hop and rap.

24 And so this has all become part of
25 what we are, not just as New Yorkers but as

1 Americans. And I stand here very proud of this
2 history, and understanding that this history is
3 still being made every day -- not just by us, but
4 by our constituents all over this great state.
5 And that this history is inextricably linked not
6 just to the history of our state but of our great
7 country, and inextricably linked to other groups.

8 And so we may have gotten here on
9 different ships, but we're all in the same boat
10 now. And it's only by the understanding and the
11 respect of each other's histories and culture
12 that we're going to find a way forward.

13 I want us to remember that
14 African-American history is not just
15 African-American stories, but it is the story of
16 New York. It is the story of America. And that
17 we must every single day in this chamber, and in
18 our communities, continue to bring good into the
19 world and let no good be lost.

20 Thank you, Mr. President.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
22 you, Senator Parker.

23 Senator Bailey on the resolution.

24 SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you,
25 Mr. President.

1 Moving words, to say the least, by
2 our herstory-, history-making Leader Andrea
3 Stewart-Cousins. Every time I've heard you speak
4 on the floor it has been magical, but there was
5 something about today that struck a chord deep in
6 my soul.

7 So I wrote a few things down, which
8 many of you know that I'm not necessarily wont to
9 do, but I've sort of changed that because
10 Brother Sam Cooke said a change is gonna come,
11 and the change came to me. So I thought about
12 this, and I spoke about this on the floor before,
13 but I wanted to frame it in historical context
14 for you.

15 On November 8, 1837, a young woman
16 by the name of Sylvia Richardson Holder was born
17 in Johnson County, North Carolina. My
18 great-great grandmother -- great-great-great
19 grandmother. She was theoretically born
20 three-fifths of a human being. She was born into
21 slavery.

22 So when people say, get over it,
23 it's equal, it's merit-based, I want you to
24 realize less than 200 years ago, my own
25 great-great-great grandmother was born into

1 slavery. But as I was reminded one time in the
2 this chamber by Kevin Parker, she was not a
3 slave. That may have been the restrictions that
4 were placed on her by society, but she certainly
5 was not a slave. Because she fought. She
6 eventually was freed. And I would not be here
7 today if not for her.

8 So let's contextualize that when
9 they say "get over it," when they throw out
10 this -- you know, I'm going to use DEI in such a
11 different way. And I can tell you everybody in
12 here is some version of DEI -- duly elected
13 incumbent. Shout out to Brandon Scott, the mayor
14 of our Baltimore, Maryland: When they tried to
15 call him a DEI mayor, that's what he told them.

16 When they're trying to roll back
17 Black History Month in the military and they're
18 saying you can't have these special months
19 anymore, I remind you, I want to remind you that
20 diversity is what makes our country actually
21 great. Contrary to the views of some.

22 I love being Black. Like, it just
23 fills my soul with joy. Growing up Black, like I
24 just -- I just -- I thank God every day. We
25 should all thank God for who we are, but I thank

1 God that I was raised, that I was born Black in
2 America. Because it's taught me what J. Cole
3 said in Love Yourz: "There's beauty in the
4 struggle, ugliness in the success."

5 There's a beautiful struggle about
6 what happens. It feels better when you work for
7 something. You like it more. You respect it
8 more. You appreciate it more when you work for
9 something. And our folks have worked damn hard
10 over the years to make sure that we approach
11 equality.

12 Listen, Mr. President, when I say
13 "approach equality." Because I don't know what
14 glasses people are wearing or the notion of this
15 post-racial society that happened when
16 President Obama was elected, but we ain't there
17 yet. And my hope is that we can get there. My
18 hope is that my children are able to live out
19 Dr. King's dream.

20 We're not there yet, when they're
21 cutting programs and they say that it's to
22 increase efficiency, but it's to reduce other
23 things.

24 But, see, the story of being Black
25 is what I told you about. It's not all -- you

1 know, the worrying about what they're not doing,
2 let's worry about what we are doing and what we
3 have done. The leader mentioned it. Two Black
4 quarterbacks in the Super Bowl for the second
5 time in history. There was a time in history
6 that they said Black folks were inferior, that
7 you couldn't play quarterback. And if you played
8 high school quarterback, they tried to convert
9 you into a receiver. And if they let you play
10 quarterback in college, they tried to convert you
11 to something else, because you didn't have the
12 mental capacity or aptitude to do that.

13 We were within a stone's throw of
14 having, for the first time, all four quarterbacks
15 in the division around -- being Black
16 quarterbacks. They said that we couldn't do it,
17 but Sunday you'll watch them do it.

18 There is a certain beauty in the
19 culture of hip-hop that I come from. "Walk like
20 warriors, we were never told to run" is something
21 that Common said. It encapsulates the
22 Black struggle. We have certain songs that we
23 have -- we "Lift Every Voice and Sing," the
24 unofficial Black national anthem. And the second
25 unofficial Black national anthem, "Before I Let

1 Go," by Frankie Beverly and Maze. Because if
2 you've ever been to a Black function, that's got
3 to be on.

4 But sometimes, like, growing up
5 Black you live your life through like the
6 soul music on Sundays -- Hal Jackson, 107.5,
7 Sunday Classics -- growing up listening to our
8 folks, our voices, our struggle.

9 You can't be what you can't see.
10 And I grew up realizing it's a different world
11 where you come from. My favorite all-time
12 television show, "A Different World," showed that
13 not only could Black people succeed, not only
14 could they go to college, that they did go to
15 college.

16 And quite frankly, growing up, I
17 thought I was going to go to Hillman. It broke
18 my heart that Hillman wasn't a real college.

19 (Laughter.)

20 SENATOR BAILEY: I thought I was
21 going to pledge Kappa Lambda Nu.

22 (Laughter.)

23 SENATOR BAILEY: It broke my heart
24 to realize that that was not a real fraternity.

25 Did you know, Mr. President, that

1 within the years of 1987 to 1994 --
2 coincidentally, around the years that "A
3 Different World" was on -- that at HBCUs,
4 historically Black colleges and universities,
5 attendance rates and applications went up
6 25 percent?

7 You can't be what you can't see.
8 People saw that, you know what, if Dwayne Wayne
9 and Ron Johnson and Whitley Gilbert can do it,
10 dammit, I can too. That is the importance of
11 being able to have positive Black voices and
12 positive Black people on TV that you can see.

13 Again, I -- you couldn't tell me
14 that I wasn't going to go to Hillman, man. But
15 it is a different world where we come from
16 sometimes.

17 That different world is often
18 fraught with strife, fraught with struggle. But
19 it's the positivity. It's the memes that are
20 shared on social media about growing up Black and
21 the things that you know that your mama said that
22 you can't do in your house, and the things that
23 you know what we couldn't do -- there's a shared
24 struggle that we have.

25 As we lift, as we climb, we continue

1 to live out the ideals of our ancestors. I live
2 out the ideals of my great-great-great
3 grandmother every day. At least I hope I do.

4 But I want to leave you with a
5 couple of things, and I want to say this. I talk
6 about my kids all the time: Giada, Carina, and
7 now Julian, the young king. You know, Nas in his
8 song "Ultra Black" said, "We goin' ultra black,
9 we don't fold or crack." "I hope you be better
10 than I, life's precious."

11 So I'm going to give you Black
12 history in A to Z. Black folks have been
13 Amazingly Beneficial for the Collective, Dynamic
14 and Eager, Fantastic, Genuine and Honest.
15 Intelligent while being Jubilant, Kind and true
16 Leaders. Motivated through our struggle, Never
17 Nervous, Optimistic and Powerful. Quick-witted,
18 Reliable and Sensational, Talented, Understanding
19 our Vibrancy and being Welcoming. Now, there is
20 no Xeroxing our Xeniality as we have Yet, as a
21 people, to reach our Zenith.

22 That's Black People from A to Z, by
23 Jay-B. But you will never know what it's like to
24 be me. That is the struggle of the Black man in
25 America, the Black woman in America, the

1 Black child in America.

2 And I encourage us that we extend
3 the privileges and cordialities of this house,
4 not just in this house but to everyone's house --
5 to the residence that you live in, to the places
6 that you represent, please make sure that the
7 virtues of Black History Month extend well beyond
8 February.

9 Thank you, Mr. President.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
11 you, Senator Bailey.

12 Senator Sanders on the resolution.

13 SENATOR SANDERS: Thank you,
14 Mr. President.

15 Thank you for the resolution to
16 Madam Leader. I've been in the business for
17 30 years, I've seen a bunch of people come and
18 go. I've seen leaders, male, female, Black,
19 white. She is the best, you know. She is the
20 best.

21 But I would go a step further, even
22 as I'm having trouble -- haven't worn this one in
23 400 years, so give me a little time. If there
24 were a program, a DEI or whatever program, that
25 was able to find leaders with as much quality as

1 Andrea Stewart-Cousins, not only would that be a
2 great program, but that would be great for
3 America to bring such talent to the fore, not to
4 have it hidden somewhere or forgotten somewhere.

5 The history month this year, of
6 course, is a bittersweet thing. Bittersweet.
7 Sweet because there are many victories that we
8 can speak of, but bitter because there are
9 efforts afoot at the federal government and other
10 places to muffle and silence this type of
11 history, to imagine that we can take this away.

12 And I contend that you cannot have
13 American history without Black history. And in
14 that sense, you can't have Black history without
15 American history. And attempts to muffle and
16 silence this are doing such great disservice to
17 the American people. It is hurting these
18 students, Black and white. It is hurting these
19 people. You're not going to have a whole history
20 here.

21 Let me give you one small example of
22 it. Everybody looks and they've seen the picture
23 of Rosa Parks on the bus -- bold, brave, sitting
24 in the front. Sitting there, bold. There's like
25 a little bit of fear in her eyes, but steely

1 determination. Look carefully, America. There's
2 a white guy sitting behind her, a New Yorker who
3 just happened to be on the bus at that time. He
4 stayed there to make sure she wouldn't get hurt
5 and brutalized.

6 You can't separate Black history
7 from white history or American history. Your
8 attempts to do so, for those who are, are doing
9 such damage to your own children and to
10 generations of Americans. There will be a day
11 when people come to their senses and say, Oh, my
12 God, we were trying to do such horrible things.

13 Every incident of American history
14 moving forward has had all of us involved. We
15 only say Black history because we want to make
16 sure it is not forgotten. You can't separate
17 these things.

18 We live in a strange day. We live
19 in a day where it seems that the Civil War is not
20 over, that we're still fighting this stupid
21 battle, a battle which -- to all Confederates,
22 news flash -- the Union won. Anybody who needs
23 to -- let me be the first to tell you, the Union
24 won. You can crawl back under whatever hole you
25 want to and believe whatever you wish -- but that

1 battle, we are not going back.

2 New York lost more than
3 50,000 troops in that battle, most of them white.
4 We should say that we are not going to go back on
5 this battle. For those folk. Even if you don't
6 believe in it yourself, you should say, for these
7 folk, we're not going to go back.

8 We are the Empire State, we claim.
9 We are the best that America's got. (Sighing.)
10 That may be a scary thought. But under those
11 conditions, we should commit ourselves and
12 recommit ourselves to the idea of the union.
13 It's imperfect. Heck, who knows of it better
14 than I, how imperfect the union is.

15 But I also know that a bunch of
16 people gave their lives to this union, to make
17 sure that we would go on, whether we are in
18 Afghanistan, Iraq or wherever we find ourselves,
19 or Gettysburg or Antietam or wherever we find
20 ourselves.

21 A bunch of people fought and said,
22 You know what, we're going to hold the line.
23 We're going to make sure that this great American
24 experiment, as flawed as it is, does not perish.
25 Some of us took that oath. I remind all of us of

1 it. We said we would fight against enemies,
2 foreign and domestic, that challenge the union.
3 I encourage you to look to the papers again to
4 look to see what you said.

5 So we are the union -- the union,
6 yes, we are. Thank God. If I was in the
7 Confederacy, I would have a different
8 conversation perhaps. We are here, we're in
9 New York, we're the Empire State. American
10 history is Black history. Black history is
11 American history. This is a great place to begin
12 it. I encourage all of us to celebrate this
13 history. You made it. Let's accept it, let's
14 celebrate it, let's build on it.

15 Thank you very much.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
17 you, Senator.

18 Senator Comrie on the resolution.

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

21 I rise to echo the sentiments of my
22 colleagues as we commemorate Black History Month.
23 I want to thank our Majority Leader, Andrea
24 Stewart-Cousins. As Senator Sanders said, she's
25 the best of us. We want to thank her for her

1 continued leadership.

2 Chronicling and giving voice,
3 resonance and significance to the immense
4 pioneering and worthy contributions of all
5 African-Americans over the past four centuries is
6 not only necessary from the standpoint of
7 understanding the past, but even more critical
8 for inspiring the future.

9 Black history is not confined to the
10 history books. Black history encompasses the
11 virtues and values we bring to spaces like this.
12 Black history informs and animates our advocacy
13 and our activism today.

14 There are many, many
15 important avenues advocacy and activism can take.
16 I want to explore one, economic inclusion,
17 especially as it relates to minority- and
18 women-owned businesses. There's a consumer side
19 to thinking through shopping locally and how many
20 times a dollar circulates in a neighborhood.
21 There's also a government procurement side. As
22 the saying goes, your budget reflects your
23 values. That is true for you as an individual
24 and in your household.

25 Our budget as a state also reflects

1 our values. With the recently released Executive
2 Budget our job as legislators is to ensure that
3 it is crafted in a way to ensure equity, access
4 and inclusion. The actions of the federal
5 government and the U.S. Supreme Court to stifle
6 long-term gains, to do away with DEI and
7 affirmative action, to end the celebration of
8 Black History Month in spaces that we have fought
9 hard to make gains, speaks to the sense of
10 urgency we should all have to promote tolerance,
11 pride and agency for all people.

12 When we build upon a legacy of
13 upholding human dignity, when we work towards
14 ending structural racism, when we advance health
15 and economic equity, and when we defend and
16 expand voting rights -- things that we have done
17 here in this legislative body -- we are building
18 on that vision and the values that Black History
19 Month represents. We, colleagues, are pioneers,
20 creators, innovators and change agents, doing the
21 things that our constituents want to see us do to
22 improve this state.

23 Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis
24 famously observed: The most important political
25 office is that of the private citizen. I proudly

1 represent Queens County, home to trailblazing
2 figures who have shaped history across
3 journalism, music and culture. We celebrate the
4 legacy of Gwen Ifill, a groundbreaking
5 journalist, television and news anchor. In 1999,
6 she made history as the first African-American
7 woman to host a nationally televised U.S. public
8 affairs program, Washington Week in Review.

9 Queens is home to many jazz legends,
10 from James Brown, who made a home there, many
11 other folk that made a home there. Satchmo was
12 there and still has a house in Elmhurst, which I
13 would invite you to go see.

14 It's home also to musical icons like
15 Nas, Nas Jones, a Grammy Award winner, rapper,
16 songwriter, record producer and actor, who last
17 year we welcomed him to this chamber to celebrate
18 the 30th anniversary of his debut album Illmatic,
19 a project that remains one of the most
20 influential in hip-hop history.

21 Queens continues to produce leaders,
22 innovators and cultural icons who inspire
23 generations. Their contributions remind us of
24 the legacy of our borough and the importance of
25 uplifting those who paved the way for the future.

1 We also have everyday heroes,
2 including the first African-American Speaker of
3 the New York City Council, Adrienne Adams,
4 straight out of South Jamaica, Queens.

5 These are the voices of our new
6 generation who stand on the shoulders of early
7 Queens leaders like Roy Wilkins, Guy Brewer, and
8 my predecessor in the City Council,
9 Archie Spigner.

10 We have to remember, though, that
11 our history needs to be maintained and that our
12 dignity and respect to others need to be
13 maintained also.

14 And I bring that up to say that the
15 tragedy that happened to Robert Brooks in
16 Marcy Correctional Facility should not be
17 anything that our state should do anything but
18 push to make sure those people that violently
19 attacked and murdered him while he was in the
20 custody of the state -- shown by the disturbing
21 footage released by the Attorney General that
22 reveals the horrific circumstances in which he
23 lost his life.

24 This is a stark reminder of the
25 deep-rooted issues of brutality and racial

1 injustice that still persist in our country. We
2 must be clear: No human should ever be treated
3 in such a dehumanizing manner. The justice
4 system must operate with fairness and
5 transparency, ensuring that this case is
6 investigated and that these people be put in
7 jail.

8 We cannot continue to allow our
9 prison system to be a place where violence and
10 disregard for life are tolerated. And we want to
11 give our deepest condolences to the family.

12 We also need to make sure that our
13 voice is critical to the kind of politics that we
14 need to have -- the politics of public policy,
15 the politics of making sure that our government
16 pursues justice, that the kind of communities
17 that we all live in come through these challenges
18 and come out stronger and better.

19 We need to make sure that we do more
20 to ensure that our budget reflects our values,
21 that our budget reflects fairness and equity
22 throughout this state, that we create
23 opportunities for people in this budget that we
24 bring to our folk that are in need, that we
25 protect folk that are in trouble.

1 And especially now with ICE going to
2 homes all over this state, we need to make sure
3 that we're doing things to help those that are
4 most in danger.

5 If we don't do that, we're not
6 fulfilling our commitment as legislators, we're
7 not fulfilling our commitment as New Yorkers, and
8 we're not fulfilling our commitment as Americans.

9 Again, Mr. President, I want to
10 thank Andrea Stewart-Cousins for bringing this
11 resolution every year. This year it's more
12 important than ever that we talk about our
13 Black history, that we talk about how, as
14 Senator Sanders said, this is one history.
15 Black, white, we're all in this together. As
16 Senator Parker said, we're in the same boat now.
17 We can't it parse it out for any other specific
18 reasons. We have to understand that the only way
19 we move forward in a positive way is to move
20 forward together.

21 If we allow people to separate us
22 and parse us out into great stories that are not
23 true, we're going to fall apart. But I know that
24 in this body we're better than that. We can rise
25 above the partisanship that other people are

1 trying to do, and focus on making sure that this
2 state rises above anything that's not for real.
3 Anything that can be easily disseminated, we can
4 overcome.

5 And I hope that we all remember our
6 charge, which is to make sure that our
7 communities are better than we left them.

8 Thank you, Mr. President.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
10 you, Senator Comrie.

11 Senator Baskin on the resolution.

12 SENATOR BASKIN: Thank you,
13 Mr. President.

14 I rise today with urgency, pride and
15 gratitude as my colleagues and I in the New York
16 State Legislature celebrate Black History Month.

17 Mr. President, my urgency reflects
18 the frantic efforts -- not new, but ever so
19 present -- of those occupying the White House to
20 reverse initiatives designed to uplift Black
21 people after centuries of oppression.

22 My pride reflects the joys, the
23 gifts and the sovereignty bestowed upon me by my
24 ancestors. I am a Black American of African
25 descent and proud of it.

1 And my gratitude, my gratitude, dear
2 colleagues, is rooted in assurance that I am
3 elected to a governing body in this country whose
4 members have not conformed to the vile and overt
5 efforts to erase the monumental contributions of
6 Black Americans, or to obscure the unfiltered
7 truth of the systemic and vicious targeting of
8 Black Americans since our nation's birth.

9 It is my belief that governing
10 bodies who still hold true to basic humanity must
11 revere Black History Month now more than ever.
12 Because we all know that there are governing
13 bodies in this country that at this very moment
14 are gutting policies designed to increase
15 inclusivity for marginalized communities,
16 including Black Americans.

17 These government leaders support
18 billion-dollar corporations and dismantling
19 practices that help Black people rise above
20 oppressive history in our country. Because we
21 all know there are governing bodies in this
22 country who have voted to overturn policies aimed
23 at creating equity in college admissions,
24 policies that sought to address historical
25 realities that Black Americans have never had

1 equal opportunities to education.

2 We know that there are courts in
3 this country rejecting the John Lewis Voting
4 Rights Act. Because we all know that there are
5 governing bodies in this country who have voted
6 to ban books and educational materials that teach
7 Black history to children.

8 Because each and every one of us
9 know of the harmful governmental policies of
10 yesteryear in the very city that I represent:
11 Buffalo, New York. Redlining, for instance, a
12 discriminatory practice of denying or limiting
13 financial services to certain neighborhoods based
14 on race, was intentionally designed in Buffalo to
15 create Black neighborhoods entrenched with
16 poor housing stock, which is why so many
17 Black children in Buffalo suffer from
18 lead poisoning.

19 Environmental hazards have plagued
20 these neighborhoods, which is why so many
21 Black communities in Buffalo are labeled a cancer
22 cluster. And food deserts persist, leaving
23 Black communities without access to healthy and
24 affordable food. Which is why the tragedy
25 unfolded in my community where a grocery store in

1 a Black neighborhood was targeted by a barbaric
2 white nationalist who drove hours simply to
3 murder 10 Black residents, and seriously wounded
4 three, just because they were Black.

5 There are government bodies in this
6 country that are doing everything right now in
7 their power to erase Black history and, by
8 extension, erase Black people.

9 So again, colleagues, today I rise
10 with gratitude, gratitude to the New York State
11 Legislature for your continued support of this
12 great tradition. May we, as New Yorkers, be
13 brave enough and remain brave enough to celebrate
14 Black history today, celebrate Black history six
15 months from now, celebrate Black history four
16 years from now, celebrate Black history always,
17 and, Mr. President, celebrate Black history
18 forever.

19 Thank you.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
21 you, Senator.

22 Senator Webb on the resolution.

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

25 I want to again echo my complete

1 gratitude to all my colleagues who have spoken
2 today. Of course, the Senate Majority Leader --
3 no surprise -- always sets the bar very, very
4 high. And we need leadership like hers not just
5 today, but every day as we as legislators, but
6 first of all as public servants, navigate this
7 treacherous time. That we know the power and the
8 significance of policy, good public policy that
9 can build and not destroy.

10 I wanted to share a poem by one of
11 our ancestors, who became an ancestor last year,
12 a great leader and poet, also a soror of mine,
13 and that is Nikki Giovanni. And in this
14 particular poem she talks about the importance of
15 Black History Month and what it means to
16 everyone. And she says:

17 "If Black History Month is not
18 viable then wind does not
19 carry the seeds and drop them
20 on fertile ground
21 rain does not
22 dampen the land
23 and encourage the seeds
24 to root
25 sun does not

1 warm the earth
2 and kiss the seedlings
3 and tell them plain:
4 You're As Good As Anybody Else
5 And You've Got A Place Here, Too."
6 And so when I think about my own
7 trajectory of being here and that we all stand on
8 the shoulders of our ancestors, whether it's
9 within our own families, I think about my parents
10 and grandparents and great-grandparent, those
11 folks who made countless sacrifices for us all to
12 be here in this chamber, that it is important
13 that we call their names but, more importantly,
14 we honor their legacies by the work that we do.
15 As I often say, the good work.

16 Black History Month is an
17 opportunity to not only remember contributions of
18 Black leaders here in America, but it is a call
19 to action. It is a reminder of our shared
20 humanity, that the work we must do not only as
21 public servants but as good human beings, that
22 when we take the time to honor and lift up the
23 contributions of Black Americans, of all of the
24 ways in which diversity is our strength, it is us
25 centering our shared humanity. It allows us to

1 not only coexist, but to thrive.

2 I think about not only the
3 sacrifices that our ancestors have made in their
4 willingness, even in the sight of adversity, and
5 no way of knowing if they would be successful,
6 but yet they still stood up and encouraged others
7 to do the same, to push us towards our shared
8 humanity.

9 For this moment, in this time, I
10 encourage all of us in this chamber to not only
11 acknowledge and support this resolution by voting
12 aye, but I encourage all of us to not only think
13 about but more proactively think about the legacy
14 we are leaving for not only our communities, our
15 children, and those coming after us, to reflect
16 on this moment in time and ask ourselves, how are
17 we as not only legislators, as public servants,
18 as good human beings, working to ensure that the
19 legacy of our shared humanity lives on in the
20 good deeds that we do? Because we all benefit
21 from it.

22 Again, I want to thank our
23 Majority Leader, the Governor, and of course,
24 Mr. President, I proudly vote aye in favor of
25 this resolution. And I hope that as a body that

1 we make a collective stand and say that the
2 erasure of Black culture in any shape, form or
3 fashion is not an option. That education we know
4 is the key to our shared success and progress --
5 not only as New Yorkers, not only as Americans,
6 but as human beings.

7 Thank you, Mr. President.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
9 you, Senator.

10 Senator May on the resolution.

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

13 And I rise also to thank the
14 Majority Leader and my colleagues for their
15 passionate teaching about Black History Month
16 today and every day, honestly.

17 It was Memorial Day 1921 when a
18 altercation in Tulsa, Oklahoma, turned into a
19 riot and a massacre that left an untold number of
20 people dead and destroyed what was known as
21 Black Wall Street, the most wealthy Black
22 community in the country. Ten thousand people
23 were displaced, and that all the wealth of that
24 community was effectively destroyed.

25 It was not until 2001, 80 years

1 later, that the official report of that massacre
2 was published. And a year later, it was -- it
3 began to be included in the curriculum for
4 schoolchildren in the state of Oklahoma.

5 As we've heard today, the telling of
6 Black history -- Black history itself has been a
7 history of struggle, but even the telling of
8 Black history has been a constant struggle just
9 to get the word out there. And what has happened
10 in the last couple of years in Oklahoma, the
11 state legislature passed a law that has caused
12 most teachers to take the telling about that
13 massacre out of their own curriculum because the
14 state legislature is concerned that white
15 children are not able to cope with the idea of
16 racism as something -- that it's too painful,
17 it's too shameful, that they shouldn't have to
18 deal with that concept.

19 I'm familiar with this problem
20 because my grandparents collaborated back in 1965
21 on a textbook that attempted to broaden the
22 teaching of American history in the eighth grade.
23 And they received death threats once that
24 textbook was adopted in the California schools.
25 People started pulling their kids out of

1 eighth-grade history classes because they didn't
2 want them to learn about Harriet Tubman and
3 Frederick Douglass and Martin Luther King, Jr.

4 And it is deeply saddening to me
5 that 60 years later, we are in the same
6 situation, where the telling of Black history is
7 something that is being expunged from our
8 schools, from our government buildings, from the
9 record. And that we have a president who
10 decided, in the midst of a terrible tragedy, to
11 give a press conference where he, with zero
12 basis, blamed DEI for the tragedy instead of
13 committing to take responsibility for finding out
14 what really happened and making sure it didn't
15 happen again.

16 I'm proud that here in New York we
17 take Black history and Black History Month
18 seriously, and I'm deeply grateful to my
19 colleagues for teaching me about Black history
20 every day.

21 I vote aye.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
23 you, Senator.

24 Senator Harckham on the resolution.

25 SENATOR HARCKHAM: Thank you very

1 much, Mr. President.

2 I want to thank our Majority Leader
3 for bringing this resolution forward. I want to
4 thank her for her remarkable remarks on the
5 floor.

6 I want to thank my colleagues for
7 speaking your truth and telling your stories.

8 I rise today because I have
9 constituents who want to know that I have their
10 back and that we in this chamber have their back
11 as their stories are diminished, their history
12 and their truth is under threat, as has been told
13 by my colleague about the diminishment of
14 Black History Month in the U.S. military, threats
15 to textbooks, threats to public school funding,
16 and the end of efforts to encourage diversity,
17 both in government, in our academia, in the
18 workplace.

19 This is deeply troubling to many of
20 my constituents because it diminishes people. It
21 says that you do not -- you are not worthy to
22 have a seat at the table. And that is just
23 unfair, and it's unjust. And it flies in the
24 face of the institutional barriers that are there
25 in so many areas, in terms of the private sector

1 and in terms of education, in terms of housing,
2 in terms of healthcare, in terms of criminal
3 justice. The data is still there to indicate
4 that there are systemic barriers there.

5 I thank my colleague from Buffalo
6 for talking about redlining. You look at the
7 Regional Plan Association data, New York City
8 suburbs are the most segregated suburbs in the
9 country. Long Island, the Lower Hudson Valley,
10 where I live, the most segregated suburbs in the
11 country. And that is because of the legacy of
12 housing policy that you described, the redlining
13 and other housing policies that prohibited folks
14 of color from having access to zip codes of
15 opportunity.

16 And it's not long ago that -- when
17 we came into this body in 2019 and we began
18 working on fully funding Foundation Aid for our
19 schools, we saw that primarily Black and brown
20 schools in districts like mine, Peekskill and
21 Ossining, were at half the funding they should
22 have been, while neighboring communities with
23 high property wealth were getting twice the
24 Foundation Aid. And that is another inequity for
25 those students.

1 And so it's important that that
2 struggle that educates us about the need to
3 rectify these barriers in this chamber, those
4 stories need to be told that many of my
5 colleagues told today of their own families and
6 of the history.

7 And so, you know, when a president
8 puts pressure and signs executive orders that we
9 want to erase this history, we have to stand with
10 our constituents and say, No, your history
11 matters, your story matters, your truth matters,
12 and your struggle matters.

13 I vote aye.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
15 you, Senator Harckham.

16 Senator Gonzalez on the resolution.

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

19 And thank you to the leader for
20 bringing forward this Black History Month
21 resolution. Thank you for setting the tone for
22 New York State.

23 While the federal government is busy
24 banning the celebration and study of
25 Black history and so much more, here in the State

1 Legislature we know better. We know that Black
2 history is our history. We know that we are who
3 we are because of the contributions Black
4 Americans and Black New Yorkers have made in our
5 state and in our country.

6 And we know that the erasure of
7 Black history leaves us not only ignorant of the
8 past but less able to imagine a better future for
9 all New Yorkers.

10 I've experienced this impact in my
11 own life. I would not be here as the youngest
12 woman ever elected to the New York State Senate
13 if it was not for Black history.

14 As many of you know, I studied race
15 and ethnicity studies, in addition to political
16 science, at Columbia University. The Center for
17 the Study of Ethnicity and Race, CSER, was
18 created in response to a student strike in 1996
19 when a coalition of Black and brown student
20 leaders, inspired by the Black Panthers and the
21 Young Lords, waged a month-long campaign to
22 demand an ethnic studies department.

23 Because of this organizing and
24 because of this major, I learned a lot about the
25 history of colonization and the history of the

1 civil rights movement.

2 It was Black women leaders like
3 Shirley Chisholm who inspired me to enter
4 politics, who taught me that we do not have to
5 accept the world as it is, but we have the
6 ability to fight for better. It was Black queer
7 feminist authors like Audre Lourde and bell hooks
8 who taught me that using my voice for good was an
9 act of resistance.

10 Black history gave me the tools to
11 understand capitalism and the tools to organize
12 in my own community. It's what led me on my path
13 to politics. And if it wasn't for another
14 Black leader, President Obama, I wouldn't have
15 gotten my start in politics.

16 As a democratic socialist, I'm also
17 inspired by Black leaders like MLK, who said
18 "Call it democracy or call it democratic
19 socialism, but there must be a better
20 distribution of wealth for all of God's
21 children," and reminded us that class struggle
22 and the struggle for racial justice are one and
23 the same, and that we must acknowledge our
24 collective responsibility to each other and to
25 our communities.

1 In a moment when oligarchs are
2 building wealth off the backs of the most
3 vulnerable in our state, we must not only
4 celebrate Black history, but we must use this
5 knowledge and tools of past movements combat
6 hatred.

7 As John Lewis said: "We cannot lose
8 ourselves in a sea of despair. We must speak up,
9 speak out and get in the way." As we celebrate
10 Black history in this moment, let us celebrate
11 this tradition of resistance and speak up and
12 speak out for equal rights and justice for all
13 New Yorkers.

14 I vote aye. Thank you.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
16 you, Senator.

17 Senator Brisport on the resolution.

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

20 And thank you to the leader for
21 introducing this resolution, to all my colleagues
22 for speaking on it and supporting it today. And
23 I especially want to thank all of my Black
24 colleagues. Today we are saying it loud: We are
25 Black, and we are proud -- despite the efforts in

1 D.C. to erase our history and try to erase us
2 from America.

3 I would be remiss if I did not also
4 bring up another group that the current federal
5 administration is trying to erase. On the
6 campaign trail, President Trump said, "We pledge
7 to you that we will root out the communists,
8 Marxists, fascists and the radical left thugs
9 that live like vermin within the confines of our
10 country."

11 And I'd like to say that
12 dehumanization is straight out of the playbook of
13 Hitler's Third Reich, and I reject that type of
14 language.

15 And as a proud Black socialist, I'm
16 happy to stand on the shoulders of incredible men
17 like Martin Luther King, Jr., who also said "The
18 problem is that we all too often have socialism
19 for the rich and rugged free-enterprise
20 capitalism for the poor. That's the problem."

21 And in our current moment, with the
22 appointment of co-president Elon Musk,
23 oligarchy's grip on the White House has been
24 turbocharged. And the attempts to erase Black
25 people and Black History Month are part of

1 a wider and broader assault on working-class
2 people.

3 Cuts to Medicaid funding will harm
4 Black people and working-class people. Gutting
5 environmental regulations will harm Black people
6 and working-class people. Tariffs will raise
7 prices and worsen the cost of living for
8 Black people and working-class people.

9 But despite those chaotic proposals
10 at the federal level, I'm inspired by another man
11 whose shoulders I stand on, Fred Hampton, of the
12 Black Panther Party. He said, "We don't think
13 you fight fire with fire best. We think you
14 fight fire with water best. We're going to fight
15 racism not with racism, but we're going to fight
16 it with solidarity. We say we're not going to
17 fight capitalism with Black capitalism, but we're
18 going to fight it with socialism."

19 So I'm looking forward to using our
20 budget process here in the State of New York to
21 fight against the chaos of Washington, D.C., by
22 fighting for universal healthcare, universal
23 childcare, social housing, free and fast transit
24 for Black New Yorkers and all New Yorkers.

25 Happy Black History Month.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
2 you, Senator.

3 Senator Cleare on the resolution.

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

6 I want to first thank our leader,
7 Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, for bringing this
8 resolution.

9 And I didn't think I would be saying
10 anything today, but her words were so moving.
11 And you all know the district I represent. So
12 proud of the Black history in that district, and
13 I felt that I needed to say something.

14 The first Black man in the
15 Legislature, the New York State Legislature, was
16 one of 11 children born into slavery. Got
17 hissself elected from Harlem in 1917, into the
18 State Assembly.

19 The first Black woman to get elected
20 in the State Senate, Constance Baker Motley, from
21 Harlem. I have to say that I have watched her
22 life long before I even thought I would be a
23 Senator. This is the person who wrote the legal
24 brief for Brown v. Board of Education, which
25 opened the doors for so many, all of us, to be

1 educated, Black and otherwise.

2 And there's a quote of hers that
3 just struck me today. When asked about her
4 achievements, which were many, far beyond the New
5 York State Senate, she said: "I rejected the
6 notion that my race or sex would bar my success
7 in life."

8 That's such an important quote. And
9 that is the very epitome of why we have to
10 preserve Black history. Black children,
11 Black boys, Black girls, Latina girls, boys, need
12 to know that for themselves. They need to see
13 someone who overcame some of the most difficult
14 circumstances.

15 Our Black history is not just about
16 the pain that some people say we're putting on
17 others. It's about the victories. It's about
18 the overcoming. It's about the surviving. And
19 it's about hope.

20 So when you hear the discouraging
21 and hurtful remarks and actions of some, just
22 know that you can overcome those things, and
23 those words don't make you. Those circumstances
24 don't define you.

25 I proudly represent a district that

1 includes Harlem, where the historic March on
2 Washington was planned on West 130th Street by
3 A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin.

4 I walk through history every single
5 day. Just this past weekend I was able to
6 celebrate the life of Langston Hughes, one of the
7 greatest, greatest writers in our history.
8 Through him, and through many others, is where
9 our young people see hope. They see themselves.
10 They see how they can achieve. They see how they
11 can contribute.

12 And it is criminal for anyone to
13 deny anyone's history. You have to know who you
14 are. You have to know what happened. We have to
15 know the things that occurred in history so that
16 we don't repeat them.

17 So today I'm really proud to stand
18 here with this body celebrating Black History
19 Month, all of us celebrating Black history. And
20 as my colleague said earlier, Black history is
21 American history. It is important to us and all
22 of our children to know what happened, to know
23 the role that we all played in it.

24 And as was said earlier, let the
25 history books reflect what we did in this moment.

1 When this was said by our so-called leader, what
2 did we do? Because the history will go on. The
3 books will be written.

4 I proudly vote aye on this
5 resolution today. And I align myself with the
6 remarks of my colleagues and once again thank our
7 leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and our Governor
8 for making sure that we recognize and celebrate
9 Black history.

10 Happy Black History Month to all.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
12 you, Senator.

13 Senator Scarcella-Spanton on the
14 resolution.

15 SENATOR SCARCELLA-SPANTON: Thank
16 you, Mr. President.

17 And thank you to Majority Leader
18 Stewart-Cousins for bringing this resolution to
19 the floor. And to all my amazing colleagues,
20 hearing your testimony today is incredibly
21 powerful. It helped me, inspired me to jot down
22 my own words, not anything prepared.

23 Staten Island and Southern Brooklyn
24 are home to countless Black legends, leaders,
25 artists, and so much more. Just last year we

1 honored Kamora Freeland on the floor of the
2 Senate, the youngest Black female pilot in the
3 entire country, who is now proudly at
4 Spelman University.

5 Staten Island is the birthplace of
6 the Wu-Tang Clan. I know we don't get the
7 reputation for being the home of hip-hop --

8 (Laughter.)

9 SENATOR SCARCELLA-SPANTON: -- but
10 you have to give us that. They revolutionized
11 hip-hop by combining poetic lyrics, martial arts,
12 and philosophy, completely changing the dynamic
13 as we know it.

14 My district is home to powerful
15 leaders, including Hakeem Jeffries, who is the
16 first African-American Congressman from
17 Southern Brooklyn and the first African-American
18 elected official to represent either party in the
19 United States Congress.

20 My district is home to the
21 Black Angels, who were a dedicated group of
22 African-American nurses from Staten Island who
23 played a crucial role in curing TB patients in
24 Sea View Hospital. Their role changed the course
25 of medical care and helped with integration.

1 New York State will always honor
2 Black history. And more importantly, we must
3 never, ever forget the history that they have
4 provided.

5 I proudly vote aye on this
6 resolution. And I want my constituents to know
7 that the contributions of our Black community are
8 celebrated this month and all the time, but I
9 will work with all of my colleagues to make sure
10 that that history is preserved every day of the
11 year.

12 Thank you.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
14 you, Senator.

15 Senator Jackson on the resolution.

16 SENATOR JACKSON: Well, thank you,
17 Mr. President and my colleagues, all of you who
18 have spoken to this Black history lesson for
19 about two hours. So whether you wanted to or
20 not, we all had a lesson of Black history told by
21 Black people.

22 And so as someone that is an
23 African-American -- and I grew up with
24 James Brown: Say it loud, I'm Black and I'm
25 proud! That's what it's about. And so when

1 James Brown said that going back then, so many
2 Black people were saying: "Say it loud, I'm
3 Black and I'm proud!" And that's good, because
4 we are proud of who we are. And we struggle
5 every single day like everybody else in order to
6 try to, you know, live the life of healthiness
7 and, you know, raising our children and getting a
8 good education.

9 Someone mentioned about the
10 Foundation Aid. Well, many of you know I was the
11 lead plaintiff in that lawsuit. I walked
12 150 miles twice in order to prove a point, that
13 everyone is entitled to a sound, basic education.
14 It doesn't matter who you are, whether you're
15 Black or white or Hispanic, Asian, whether you're
16 rich or you're poor, everyone deserves a good
17 education. And that's what we fight for today.

18 And so we had a lesson today. And I
19 thank Andrea Stewart-Cousins, our Majority
20 Leader -- as was said earlier, the first
21 African-American to lead this Senate chamber, and
22 a woman too.

23 So there's lessons to be learned
24 every single day. All we have to do is open up
25 our eyes, see it, hear it, and speak it.

1 God bless you all. Asalamu Alaikum
2 to everyone. And say it loud, I'm Black and I'm
3 proud!

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
5 you, Senator Jackson.

6 The question is on the resolution.
7 All in favor signify by saying aye.

8 (Response of "Aye.")

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed,
10 nay.

11 (No response.)

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
13 resolution is adopted.

14 Senator Gianaris.

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

17 Thank you again to all my colleagues
18 who spoke so powerfully today on that resolution.

19 Let us move on to previously adopted
20 Resolution 255, by Senator Weber, read that
21 resolution's title and recognize Senator Weber.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
23 Secretary will read.

24 THE SECRETARY: Resolution 255, by
25 Senator Weber, commending Brandon Gruttemeyer

1 upon the occasion of his designation as recipient
2 of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed
3 upon an individual by the New York State Senate.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
5 Weber.

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

8 It's my honor to rise to acknowledge
9 an extraordinary young man who joins us here in
10 the gallery today, accompanied by his parents and
11 grandparents, grandmother. I want to thank you
12 also for your patience; it's been a very long
13 session so far.

14 But Brandon Gruttemeyer lives in
15 Congers, New York, in Rockland County. He is
16 currently a sophomore at Siena College and works
17 a summer job as a sailing coach at the Lake
18 George Club.

19 Throughout his childhood he spent
20 nearly every spring and fall weekend, and almost
21 every summer day in between, sailing with his
22 family in Lake George.

23 On Thursday, August 1st of last
24 year, around 12:30 a.m., Brandon was sound asleep
25 after a long day at work at the Lake George Club.

1 He awoke to the screams of his coworker, who
2 barged into his room, hysterical and pleading for
3 help. In a daze, Brandon grabbed a flashlight
4 and ran into the darkness towards the water.
5 When Brandon got to the lake, he shined his
6 flashlight across the water and spotted a
7 lifeless body 10 to 12 feet down.

8 A coworker named James, who was
9 working the night shift, decided to take a dip
10 and cool off with friends. James, who stood at
11 six-foot-five, and over 250 pounds, was not a
12 strong swimmer. When he began to struggle, his
13 friends made several attempts to get him to
14 safety, all for naught.

15 When these attempts failed, they ran
16 for help to get Brandon, who was only six foot
17 and 140 pounds, and he dove right in and was able
18 to get the much larger, now waterlogged coworker
19 to the deck.

20 James had turned blue and had no
21 pulse. It was believed he had spent about
22 six minutes at the bottom of the lake. Brandon
23 and his friend Eric took turns performing CPR and
24 doing chest compressions. After about
25 two minutes, they got him to cough up the water,

1 but he remained unconscious. James was barely
2 alive when paramedics rushed him away, but he was
3 still alive.

4 He spent over a week in a coma, and
5 his prognosis was grim, but he did wake up. He
6 stunned doctors a month later when he was taken
7 off a heart-lung machine. Still, a full recovery
8 was thought to be unlikely. But that's exactly
9 what happened.

10 The decision to transfer James to
11 Albany Medical Center, right here, and get him on
12 the state-of-the-art equipment, was a factor in
13 his recovery. But if it were not for the heroic
14 actions of Eric VanAuken and Brandon Gruttemeyer,
15 James would not have survived.

16 The Liberty Medal is a symbol of
17 courage given to a few New Yorkers who
18 demonstrate acts of -- heroic or humanitarian
19 acts for others, and it is the highest honor
20 given to an individual by the New York State
21 Senate.

22 Brandon's quick thinking in the face
23 of crisis not only demonstrates his
24 resourcefulness, but also his courage during
25 those critical moments on the docks. His bravery

1 and perseverance serve as a strong representation
2 of how we should all strive to act.

3 I'm proud to call him a constituent,
4 and it is with great honor that I present the
5 New York State Senate resolution and
6 Liberty Medal to Brandon Gruttemeyer.

7 And Mr. Speaker, please extend
8 Brandon and his family with all of the courtesies
9 of this great body. Thank you.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
11 you, Senator Weber.

12 To our guests, I welcome you on
13 behalf of the Senate. We extend to you the
14 privileges and courtesies of this house.

15 Please rise and be recognized.

16 (Standing ovation.)

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
18 resolution was adopted on January 28th.

19 Senator Gianaris.

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: The resolutions
21 we took up today are open for cosponsorship.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
23 resolutions are open for cosponsorship. Should
24 you choose not to be a cosponsor on the
25 resolutions, please notify the desk.

1 Senator Gianaris.

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up
3 the calendar.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
5 Secretary will read.

6 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 43,
7 Assembly Bill 926, by Assemblymember McDonald, an
8 act to amend a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
10 last section.

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

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
14 roll.

15 (The Secretary called the roll.)

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
17 the results.

18 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
20 is passed.

21 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 45,
22 Assembly Bill 425, by Assemblymember Otis, an act
23 to amend the Insurance Law.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
25 last section.

1 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
2 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
3 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
5 roll.

6 (The Secretary called the roll.)

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
8 the results.

9 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
10 Calendar 45, voting in the negative:
11 Senator Walczyk.

12 Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
14 is passed.

15 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 46,
16 Assembly Bill 924, by Assemblymember Paulin, an
17 act to amend a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
19 last section.

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

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
23 roll.

24 (The Secretary called the roll.)

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce

1 the results.

2 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
4 is passed.

5 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 50,
6 Assembly Bill 1476, by Assemblymember Pretlow, an
7 act to amend the Public Health Law.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
9 last section.

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

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
13 roll.

14 (The Secretary called the roll.)

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
16 the results.

17 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
18 Calendar 50, voting in the negative:
19 Senator Walczyk.

20 Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
22 is passed.

23 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 59,
24 Assembly Bill 920, by Assemblymember Lavine, an
25 act to amend the Penal Law.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
2 last section.

3 THE SECRETARY: Section 9. This
4 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
5 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
7 roll.

8 (The Secretary called the roll.)

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
10 the results.

11 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
13 is passed.

14 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 64,
15 Assembly Bill 2058, by Assemblymember Cunningham,
16 an act to amend the Veterans' Services Law.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
18 last section.

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

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
22 roll.

23 (The Secretary called the roll.)

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
25 the results.

1 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
3 is passed.

4 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 65,
5 Assembly Bill 2435, by Assemblymember Cruz, an
6 act to amend the Veterans' Services Law.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
8 last section.

9 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
10 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
11 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
13 roll.

14 (The Secretary called the roll.)

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
16 the results.

17 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
18 Calendar 65, voting in the negative:
19 Senator Walczyk.

20 Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
22 is passed.

23 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 70,
24 Assembly Bill 1099, by Assemblymember McDonald,
25 an act to amend the Elder Law.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: 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 2024.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
7 roll.

8 (The Secretary called the roll.)

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
10 the results.

11 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
13 is passed.

14 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 73,
15 Senate Print 799, by Senator Mayer, an act to
16 amend the Election Law.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
18 last section.

19 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
20 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
21 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
23 roll.

24 (The Secretary called the roll.)

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce

1 the results.

2 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
3 Calendar 73, those Senators voting in the
4 negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello,
5 Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan, Griffo, Helming,
6 Lanza, Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, Ortt, Rhoads,
7 Scarcella-Spanton, Tedisco, Walczyk, Weber and
8 Weik.

9 Ayes, 45. Nays, 17.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
11 is passed.

12 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 74,
13 Assembly Bill 1016, by Assemblymember McDonald,
14 an act to amend the Public Health Law.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
16 last section.

17 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
18 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
19 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
21 roll.

22 (The Secretary called the roll.)

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
24 the results.

25 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
2 is passed.

3 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 76,
4 Assembly Bill 1025, by Assemblymember Solages, an
5 act to amend the Public Health Law.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
7 last section.

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

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
11 roll.

12 (The Secretary called the roll.)

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
14 the results.

15 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
17 is passed.

18 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 82,
19 Assembly Bill 2432, by Assemblymember Bronson, an
20 act to amend the Labor Law.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
22 last section.

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

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the

1 roll.

2 (The Secretary called the roll.)

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
4 the results.

5 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
6 Calendar 82, those Senators voting in the
7 negative are Senators Chan, Gallivan, Helming,
8 Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk, Weber and Weik.

9 Ayes, 54. Nays, 8.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
11 is passed.

12 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 83,
13 Assembly Bill 1026, by Assemblymember Solages, an
14 act to amend the Public Health Law.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
16 last section.

17 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
18 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
19 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
21 roll.

22 (The Secretary called the roll.)

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
24 the results.

25 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
2 is passed.

3 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 86,
4 Assembly Bill 421, by Assemblymember Anderson, an
5 act to amend the Banking Law.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
7 last section.

8 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
9 act shall take effect on the same date and in the
10 same manner as a chapter of the Laws of 2024.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
12 roll.

13 (The Secretary called the roll.)

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
15 the results.

16 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
17 Calendar 86, those Senators voting in the
18 negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Chan,
19 Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Mattera,
20 Palumbo, Rhoads, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk, Weber
21 and Weik.

22 Ayes, 47. Nays, 15.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
24 is passed.

25 Senator Gianaris, that completes the

1 reading of today's calendar.

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

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There is
5 no further business at the desk.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to
7 adjourn until Monday, February 10th, at
8 3:00 p.m., with the intervening days being
9 legislative days.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: On
11 motion, the Senate stands adjourned until Monday,
12 February 10th, at 3:00 p.m., with intervening
13 days being legislative days.

14 (Whereupon, at 2:20 p.m., the Senate
15 adjourned.)

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