NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

ALBANY, NEW YORK

April 8, 2025

4:03 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

SENATOR JEREMY COONEY, Acting President

ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

P R O C E E D I N G S

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The Senate will come to order.

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

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Bishop Victor A. Brown, of Mt. Sinai United Christian Church, Inc., on Staten Island, New York, will deliver today's invocation.

Bishop.

BISHOP BROWN: Let us pray.

Gracious and loving God, Creator and Sustainer of this vast universe, from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

We pause in time and space to give You thanks for the precious gift of life. You purposed humanity to steward Your earth and to live harmoniously with one another. You set up governments as an arm of Your divine authority in the human order.

To that end, we give You thanks for every member of this legislative body. I especially give You thanks for my State Senator

of the 23rd District, the Honorable Jessica Scarcella-Spanton, and my friend of long standing, the Honorable Andrew Lanza.

We ask now, God, that You bless this legislative body with wisdom, integrity, insight, empathy and compassion, to give exemplary care and governance over the citizens of the Empire State.

We pray not only for our state but for our nation. Restore stability to our nation's political discourse. Restore commitment to patriotism over and against partisan politics. Bless us in our quest to preserve democracy and as we collectively work toward that day wherein we will truly be one nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.

Bless us today and in the days ahead, we pray. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Bishop.

Reading of the Journal.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Monday, April 7, 2025, the Senate met pursuant to adjournment. The Journal of Friday, April 4,

2025, was read and approved. On motion, the Senate adjourned.

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

Presentation of petitions.

Messages from the Assembly.

Messages from the Governor.

Reports of standing committees.

Reports of select committees.

Communications and reports from state officers.

Motions and resolutions.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Good afternoon, Mr. President.

I move at this time to adopt the Resolution Calendar, with the exception of Resolution 753.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: All those in favor of adopting the Resolution Calendar, with the exception of Resolution 753, please signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The Resolution Calendar is adopted.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Before we get to the resolutions, I have a motion here.

On behalf of Senator May, on page 31 I offer the following amendments to Calendar 622, Senate Print 4574A, and ask that said bill retain its place on the Third Reading Calendar.

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

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: At this time let's take up Resolution 753, by Senator Sepúlveda, read that resolution's title, and recognize Senator Sepúlveda.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 753, by Senator Sepúlveda, commemorating Dominicans in Albany, a celebratory event of empowerment, on April 9, 2025.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator

Sepúlveda on the resolution.

SENATOR SEPÚLVEDA: Thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to speak on this resolution.

Today I came here to speak about a resolution celebrating Dominicans in Albany, but last night there was a terrible tragedy in the capital of the country, where at last count 44 lives have been lost and about 140 people have been injured. So rather than speaking about the resolution, I'm going to speak about paying tribute to the victims of the tragedy that occurred at the Jet Set nightclub in Santo Domingo, in the Dominican Republic.

This unfortunate incident has left a deep wound in our community, and my heart is with each and every one of the victims, their families, and all those affected by this devastating occurrence. From the bottom of my heart, my solidarity and my prayers are with those that have been affected.

This tragedy has deeply struck here in New York and our beloved Dominican Republic. What happened at Jet Set nightclub has resulted in a devastating toll of at least

44 individuals and its indescribable pain to many families.

I want to extend my deepest condolences to the victims, their families and all those affected by this tragedy. And as a citizen of the Dominican Republic, I understand the pain caused by the loss of loved ones, especially under these tragic circumstances.

Our nation mourns the departure of a leading woman, an exemplary woman who was committed to her community, who always worked tirelessly for the well-being of other people, the governor of Montecristi, my good friend Nelsy Cruz, with whom I had the privilege of sharing time in our delegation trip in August.

I know that such losses are a tremendous blow not only to the people directly involved, but to an entire nation, which today feels united in pain but also in the hopes of finding comfort and strength to move forward.

Lastly, I want to recognize and acknowledge the distinguished members of the Dominican community who have joined us.

We are joined by Ignacio Aracena, an assemblyman and chair of the Committee on

Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic Congress; Ángel Alberto Encarnación, deputy director of operations of the General Directorate of Customs; and Raquel Elías Soriano Abreu, head of the management department of the General Directorate of Customs.

We welcome you, and we pray that we all get together during this tragedy.

I want to say a speech in Spanish (delivering previous comments in Spanish).

I ask that we welcome our guests to the chamber. Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator.

Before we welcome our guests, Senator Weber on the resolution.

SENATOR WEBER: Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to thank Senator Sepúlveda for bringing this very important Dominicans in Albany resolution to the floor. But I do want to pause and offer my prayers and condolences to all of those families that are affected by the Jet Set nightclub tragedy that happened last night.

As I've said here before, we have a very big and vibrant Dominican community in Haverstraw. I know people like Councilman Johnny Ortiz, the first Dominican-born councilman in the Town of Haverstraw, was looking forward to coming to Albany tomorrow, as well as many other elected officials from throughout the state.

But we know they all have heavy hearts. They are all concerned about, you know, their loved ones that may have been affected at that nightclub.

So again, we want to just offer our prayers and condolences to all the families, and we look forward to seeing them at a future date.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Bailey on the resolution.

SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

Thank you, Senator Sepúlveda, for introducing this important resolution.

As has been said on this floor many times, the Dominican community, the largest-growing community in my home borough of

the Bronx, is an incredibly important part of the fabric not just of the borough, but of America. And in days like today, we have to be one with the Dominican community and take a moment to pause for those in the Dominican Republic who are affected by the Jet Set nightclub tragedy.

But those here who have family members that they may not have spoken to, may not be able to get in contact with, keep them in your thoughts and in your prayers.

And we appreciate all that the Dominican community does in our community. And we were looking forward to it being a more celebratory week here, but we appreciate and celebrate the Dominican community all days at all times.

And certainly at a later date I'm sure we will have the festivities that are deserving of this time, but in this time we make sure we warn -- I do see my brothers from the Assembly, Assemblymember Alvarez and Assemblymember De Los Santos, so I just want to thank them for being always presenté.

And I just want to say I vote aye on the resolution, Mr. President. Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator Bailey.

Senator Serrano on the resolution.

SENATOR SERRANO: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

And I rise to echo the sentiments of my colleagues who have all expressed sorrow for the tragedy that has occurred in Santo Domingo. Very grateful to my colleague Senator Sepúlveda for bringing this resolution forth, and my colleagues from the Assembly who are here with us and our honored guests.

It truly is a tragedy -- a tragedy not only for those affected directly on the island, but for the Dominican community all across America. And in New York and in our districts and in the Bronx, an extremely difficult time. I can imagine it is important that all of us rally around and support those grieving and in sorrow at this time.

So again, very grateful to Senator Sepúlveda for his strong words. And again, my condolences to all affected.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator Serrano.

Senator Myrie on the resolution.

SENATOR MYRIE: Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to thank Senator Sepúlveda for bringing this resolution, and my colleagues in the Assembly that have joined us, and our honored guests.

There is not much that you can say to give comfort after a tragedy like this. There's not a lot that can be done, sometimes, after a tragedy like this. But there can be comfort found in knowing that you are not alone, and that we stand with you and that we are with you.

New York City would not be New York City without the Dominican community. It is part of what gives us our sazón, our flavor. And in this time of great tragedy, we will be with you. We will stand with you.

So we are sorry. You are in our prayers. And we will remain close in a time of great tragedy.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator Myrie.

Senator Mayer on the resolution.

Senator Fernandez on the resolution.

SENATOR FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. President.

And thank you to Senator Sepúlveda.

It is truly an awfully ironic moment that when we were supposed to be celebrating the Dominican culture, our Dominican neighbors, now we are in sorrow and hurting with our Dominican family about the tragedy that did happen.

I want to extend my deepest condolences, because this is a time that you really don't know what will happen in the next minute, in the next hour. In just the last three hours, the number continued to climb about how many casualties there were. And I can only imagine the fear that those that have friends, family, anybody that was there, near or far from the location, is feeling right now.

So for this time, while we can't celebrate, we are comforting. And I thank our guests here, our Assemblymembers that are here, for always wanting to make sure that we uplift our Dominican community, that we recognize and see them, and above all, especially today, that

we love them and stand with them.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Cleare on the resolution.

SENATOR CLEARE: Thank you, Mr. President.

I too rise to express my profound sadness and condolences to all the families, friends that are suffering right now. There are many Dominican families in my district, and I can't imagine what it is to be wondering right now if their family is okay.

But as everyone else has stated, they are in my prayers, both those who are in my district, in New York City, in New York State, in this country, and also definitely on the island.

And we are with you. And especially to my colleagues who I work with all the time, whatever we can do. You know, my office is there, and I personally am there.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator Cleare.

To our Assembly colleagues and to

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

Please rise and be recognized.

(Standing ovation.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The question is on the resolution. All in favor signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The resolution is adopted.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, let's move on to previously adopted Resolution 595, by Senator Salazar, read that resolution's title and recognize Senator Salazar.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 595, by Senator Salazar, memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 6-12, 2025, as Crime Victims' Rights Week in the State of

New York.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator Salazar on the resolution.

SENATOR SALAZAR: Thank you, Mr. President.

Crime victims and survivors do not fit a single demographic or stereotype. Victims and survivors are not a monolith but look like any one of us in the chamber today and are New Yorkers from all walks of life.

This resolution recognizes Crime Victims' Rights Week in the State of New York, together with the observance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Recognizing this week is an opportunity to emphasize a holistic approach to achieving justice and healing in our communities and, in turn, preventing further harm from happening in the first place.

Every single person who is victimized by crime in this country deserves to be treated with dignity and compassion. As advocates for victims of violent crime and gender-based violence will rightly remind us, there is no such thing as a perfect victim.

I myself have personally survived violent crime in my life on more than one occasion, and my experience is not unique. Every year an estimated 22 million Americans are directly impacted by crime, and each one of those incidents further affects victims' families, their friends, and their communities.

These experiences often leave a lasting physical, psychological, emotional, even financial impact on New Yorkers of all ages and abilities, of all economic, racial and social backgrounds. In 1984 the federal Victims of Crime Act established the Crime Victims Fund to seek to provide a permanent source of support for crime victims' services and compensation.

Today thousands of victim assistance programs provide help and support to child victims of violence and sexual abuse, to stalking victims, survivors of family -- of homicide victims, victims of drunk driving crashes, victims of domestic violence and sexual violence and other forms of harm.

However, these services for crime victims have been jeopardized by recent federal cuts and funding freezes under the current

administration which are being litigated. For a victim or survivor of domestic violence, for example, this funding could mean the difference between having a roof over their head or getting evicted, the difference between a crime victim receiving support in a language they understand or not having access to that help.

Those who do the critical work of victim assistance constantly face new challenges in our efforts to serve all victims and survivors. Due to systemic inequality, some victims are provided more attention and support than others are. Many survivors have valid reasons for not always trusting the criminal legal system to help them, especially those whose identities are marginalized in our society.

This includes a victim's immigration status, individuals who have been involved in the sex industry, individuals who are LGBTQ or gender-nonconforming, and New Yorkers who have survived violence at the hands of law enforcement or public officers who have abused the public's trust.

It is critical that we consider how frequently those who have committed crimes were

in fact previously victimized by crime themselves. Harm frequently begets further harm. If we are serious about supporting crime victims and protecting our communities, we must act to break these cycles of violence and harm.

New frameworks have been developed to ensure availability of culturally relevant, trauma-informed restorative services and treatment to empower victims and survivors and to assist communities in achieving safety for everyone.

I'm grateful to all of my colleagues in this chamber who are committed to these innovative ways of ensuring that all crime victims and survivors can be supported and empowered to live freely and without fear.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator Salazar.

Senator Murray on the resolution.

SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. President.

First let me start by thanking the sponsor for bringing this forward, bringing this resolution forward. While I agree with the

resolution, I may disagree with some of the language in the resolution. I do appreciate the fact that you've brought this forward. And I also want to say that I'm sincerely sorry for what you've gone through in being a victim yourself.

So I looked up the most important word in this, and that is "victim." It says "someone or something that has been hurt, damaged or killed or has suffered either because of the actions of someone or something else." In other words, someone who did nothing wrong. They started their day not knowing that maybe later that day they would be a victim, possibly of a violent crime, or a loved one who may lose a loved one because they've become a victim and they lose their life.

You know, we're passing this resolution and it's full of great words and, as I said, I appreciate the fact that we're recognizing that it's National Crime Victims' Rights Week. It's great to hear that. I just wish we could see more help for the victims in our actions.

They say actions speak louder than

words. Well I'm not going to get into great detail, because this is about the resolution, not about particular bills. But today in one of our committees we had a few bills that, I have to tell you, frankly didn't seem very friendly to crime victims. And I heard from some crime victims who were hurt by it. They said, It feels like we're being victimized again. Do you people even care what we go through?

And that stuck with me. Do we? Do we really listen to them?

So this past Sunday, as part of National Crime Victims Week, all across the state -- possibly all across the country -- they hold vigils. And they had a vigil again this year, and I go each year. But they had a vigil this year in Port Jefferson, and I was there. And it was for the parents and loved ones of murdered crime victims.

And I've got to tell you: Sitting there, it almost broke me a couple of times. Both times happened while they were reading the hundreds of names of the victims that were lost. And what they would do is they'd break up the list, so they had about 10 or 12 speakers. And

each one of the speakers, when they would get up on that list, was their family member or their loved one.

And there was one particular husband and wife that got up, and the husband was standing silently beside her as she is reading the names. And he wasn't saying a word, just offering support for her. Right until they got to his son's name, and he couldn't help himself. He dove into the microphone to read off his son's name and said "That was my son."

I believe his son died a decade or two ago. It doesn't leave you. It doesn't -- the hurt, the pain, it doesn't leave them. See, they got a life sentence. We talk about second chances and things like this. Where's their second chance? They don't get one. It's not just the person that lost their life, it's their loved ones, their family members, their spouses, their children, grandchildren.

The second time it almost broke me was during the name reading again. In 2014, 21-year-old Sarah Goode -- she was a constituent of mine -- she had a 4-year-old daughter. And she had just gone out that night, it was the

first time in weeks that she'd had a chance to actually go out with her friends and enjoy themselves.

Well, later that night the enjoyment ended because Dante Taylor decided he wanted to attack her, rape her, beat her, leave her body dead in the woods where her family members found her about a week and a half, two weeks later.

And her daughter lost her mother that night, but her daughter was there Sunday. Her daughter's 15 years old now, and this is the second time it almost broke me. She stood up there as the names were read, and she leaned in. And when she said her mother's name, she lost it. She burst into tears. All of Sarah's sisters were there too, the whole family.

To listen to these people and to hear their stories and to feel the pain -- this is about that we should be doing. So when we're introducing this legislation for -- you know, to help the criminals get their second chance, can we please, please also think about the victims? Can we make the victims' rights be more than one week? Can we please do that?

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Webb on the resolution.

SENATOR WEBB: Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to extend my appreciation to Senator Salazar for continuing to bring forward this important resolution.

One of the things I wanted to lift up as the chair of Women's Issues in the Senate is that we get a number of bills that look at crime through the lens of domestic violence and ways that as a Senate body we can continue to make investments in ensuring that victims of domestic violence are most certainly supported, but most certainly can become survivors.

And with this resolution, while it is calling to our attention -- and it is important to have resolutions like this because it helps to center us in the policy work that we have a responsibility to do in this chamber. And one of the many things that we have done and continue to do is not only push for more accountability but also ensure that there's equity in our criminal justice system.

But even more largely -- and this is why I appreciate in resolution -- is that it centers victims and their healing journey for themselves and their families. And you are right that when you are a victim of a crime or any traumatic event, it just doesn't just simply happen and then you move on. It is something that stays with you.

And so I implore us that we continue as a legislative body to not only continue to explore policies that anchor us in accountability, most certainly equity and healing for victims of crime and their families.

And so in addition to that, that we continue to make budgetary investments that also center victims, survivors, and our communities at large.

I want to thank Senator Salazar for this resolution. I will be voting aye.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Bailey on the resolution.

SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

Senator Salazar, thank you very much for this important resolution.

I believe that if you have two candles and they're both burning, they can both burn brightly without attempting to extinguish the other.

I think that in this house, in this chamber specifically, we have shown that whether it be through legislation like the second bill on the active list, sponsored by me, or the number of other legislative matters sponsored by other members of this house, that we certainly center victims.

Senator Murray is 100 percent correct that of the candle burning, in that, we're not looking to extinguish the memory of anyone. As a matter of fact, these folks live on. Family members of mine have been the victims of crime, friends, constituents. I don't say it in a flippant way at all.

I think that we can live in a world where we can appreciate that we're trying to make the world a better place for everybody, and at the same time center victims. There doesn't have to be blame laid. There doesn't have to be

fingers pointed. We can live in a world that the majority of it is gray.

When we come down to binary conversations about it's either this or that, we do each other a disservice. We shouldn't be doing each other a disservice during an important week, a week that quite frankly -- again, you're right, Senator Murray, in that we need more than a week. People think about their lost loved ones every single day.

We can walk and chew gum at the same time, Mr. President. We can continue to fund record funding in budgets that we vote for, consistent for victims time and time again. And we can continue to go into communities and have vigils for people that we've lost. We can do both at the same time. Let's not make it an arbitrary choice.

Thank you, Senator Salazar, for this resolution.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator Bailey.

The resolution was adopted on April 2nd.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, now let's move on to previously adopted Resolution 547, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton, read that resolution's title and call on Senator Scarcella-Spanton.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 547, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton, memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 9, 2025, as Yellow Ribbon Day in the State of New York.

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

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

I rise today in recognition of National Yellow Ribbon Day here in New York State, a day for all Americans to honor and celebrate our active-duty service members and their families.

As part of a military family myself, I know firsthand the sacrifices made by our military families -- the holidays spent apart, the birthdays missed, and the constant worry. But I also know the pride that comes along with

serving this country, the sense of purpose, honor and duty that makes it all worth it.

This commemoration is not just about the historical significance of the yellow ribbon but what the yellow ribbon represents today: The strength, resilience, and commitment of our troops around the world, and the families waiting for their safe return. Let this day serve as a reminder of their service, and may we always honor their immense sacrifices made in defense of our liberties.

I'd like to especially acknowledge my husband Josh, who deployed when our daughter Emily was just 10 days old -- so I do know how important it is to recognize those families. Today over 1.3 million active-duty service members and more than 800,000 reservists stand ready to protect our nation. We owe them and their families a profound debt of gratitude.

Thank you, and I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator.

The resolution was adopted on March 25th.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Next up is previously adopted Resolution 149, by Senator May. Please read the title of that resolution and call on Senator May.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 149, by Senator May, commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 2025, and recognizing their impact on the history of New York State.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator May on the resolution.

SENATOR MAY: Thank you, Mr. President. I want to thank the Majority Leader and my colleagues for supporting this resolution.

And I want to take you back 250 years this month, to April 19, 1775. In the early hours of the night, a Boston silversmith named Paul Revere, joined by William Dawes and Samuel Prescott, rode out northwest from Boston to warn people of the countryside that the British army was on the march. At five in the morning the column of Redcoats arrived in

Lexington Center, and there was a skirmish on the town green that left nine people dead.

The British marched on to Concord, and at the bridge over the Concord River, they were met by some 400 armed minutemen who opened fire and drove the British into retreat. Poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson described the scene:

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,

"Its flag to April's breeze unfurled,

"Here once the embattled farmers stood,

"And fired the shot heard round the world."

It took about three days for news of these battles to reach New York City. But when it did, it had a seismic effect. New York had been the lone holdout among the 13 colonies when it came to opposing British rule. The New York General Assembly had not agreed to the conclusions of the First Continental Congress and did not want to send delegates to the second one.

But when word of the rout of the

British soldiers arrived, it galvanized opposition to British rule in New York. Many in the city rushed to join militias themselves, including students from Kings College, one Alexander Hamilton among them, who joined a militia called the Hearts of Oak.

Within a few weeks, there was a new body, the New York Provincial Congress, that was pro-independence, and it formed to replace the New York General Assembly. And a hundred prominent New Yorkers signed a document seeking, quote, the salvation of the rights and liberties of America.

Within weeks of these battles, New York was at the center of a full-blown war for American independence. And the map of our state is inscribed with the names of those who signed that document or fought bravely in that war, like Sackett, DeLancey, Van Cortlandt, Tappen, Hamilton, Herkimer and van Rensselaer.

I grew up in Lexington, Massachusetts, just a stone's throw from what is now known as the Battle Green. We had to memorize Emerson's poem in school, and every year on April 19th we celebrated a school holiday

known as Patriots Day.

We called those early rebels against the British patriots -- not because they stood up to a global superpower, not even because they opposed an aging, addled despot propped up by fabulous wealth who believed God had anointed him to rule over a third of the globe. The real reason we celebrated them as patriots was because of what they were fighting for. They were fighting to stop being subjects and become citizens of a citizen-led country governed by the rule of law.

The framers of the Constitution never mentioned the word "patriot" or "patriotism" in that document, but they made clear that a citizen-led democracy required citizen patriots to make, improve and uphold the law. They provided in the Constitution for citizens to vote, to serve on juries, to run for office, and hold elected officials accountable.

But there are also unwritten expectations of citizen patriots in a democracy. We are expected to accept the verdict of a jury or judge or the outcome of an election, even if it doesn't go our way. We are expected to

tolerate freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of the press even if we strongly disagree with what is being said or professed.

It is this kind of patriotism that is most under threat in America today. We keep hearing from the very highest levels of our government that following a judge's order or accepting an election defeat is somehow a sign of weakness, when in fact these are signs of respect for the democratic process and for our country. They are the keystones that allow the soaring edifice of our democracy to stay standing.

As we mark the 250th anniversary of the first Patriots Day and honor those first American patriots, I hope we can recommit ourselves to the kind of patriotism that makes it possible for us to remain citizens and not become subjects once again.

I vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator May.

The resolution was adopted on April 2nd.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Next up is

previously adopted Resolution 573, by Senator Palumbo. Please read that resolution's title and call on Senator Palumbo.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 573, by Senator Palumbo, honoring New York State first responders for their valiant efforts in combating the brush fires in Suffolk County, Long Island.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator Murray on the resolution.

SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. President. Yes, me again.

I'm not going to go back 250 years, but I'll go back 30. It was the afternoon of August 21st of 1995 when the first fire broke out. It was in the North Shore community of Rocky Point in Suffolk County. That eventually spread into multiple fires that stretched down to Middle Island and took a couple of days to extinguish.

Then Governor Pataki had come down to Long Island because at the time Long Island was in the midst of a drought that had been going on for weeks. Everyone breathed a sigh of

relief; the fire was out, they thought the worst was over. But little did they know that the nightmare had just begun.

In the early afternoon of August 24th, an alarm went out for a fire adjacent to the grounds of Suffolk Community College in Eastport -- a fire that would be known as the 1995 Sunrise Wildfire and would burn thousands of acres all across the east end of Long Island. And a fire that took thousands of firefighters to battle. It was the largest mutual aid call in New York State history, sending nearly 180 fire departments from Suffolk and Nassau. And for the first time in history, the New York City Fire Department sent 10 engines and two battalion chiefs and a field communications unit out.

Eventually, over the four-day-long battle, there were firefighters and equipment from the New York State Forest Rangers, the National Guard. They came from Ohio, from Maryland, New Jersey, Maine and the U.S. Forest Service. And eventually even five 20-member crews of the famed Hotshots were flown in from the West Coast.

Why do I bring this up? Roughly one month ago today we thought we might have a repeat of that nightmare as four small fires broke out and eventually became one massive fire being fed by hundreds and thousands of downed trees throughout the Pine Barrens. Winds at the time were gusting up to 40 and 50 miles per hour. Mutual aid calls went out again, and as many as 80 fire departments and 10 EMS units responded from Suffolk and Nassau counties.

But this time it was different. Local elected officials stepped up, and help was sent by Governor Hochul. But it was the response of our volunteers that prevented what could have easily turned into a deadly disaster.

Today I'd like to recognize, along with my colleague Senator Palumbo -- it happened in both of our districts, actually -- and we want to sincerely, sincerely thank all of those first responders who dropped everything, responded immediately, and no doubt saved life and limb.

We were honored and blessed to have such incredible men and women who were ready, willing and able to help at a moment's notice. I ask you all to please join me in honoring and

recognizing these outstanding heroes.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator Murray.

Senator Palumbo on the resolution.

SENATOR PALUMBO: Thank you, Mr. President.

And I deferred to my colleague, the cosponsor of this resolution, because he did all that legwork on the history of the prior fire that was also in Senate District 1.

This is something that unfortunately is relatively common when you see two fires within 30 years, because we have the Central Pine Barrens out on Eastern Long Island. That area, those pine barrens, are crucial to our way of life. We have a sole-source aquifer that we drink from, and that's the filter that filters the water that we drink every day.

So it is critical that we maintain the Central Pine Barrens in its pristine form, so these fires can be so devastating to us on many, many levels. And on that fateful day on March 8th, at the end of the fire, all told, it was over 700 acres that were devastated by this

fire. It was two miles by two and-a-half miles.

And I was walking in a St. Patrick's Day parade about eight to 10 miles away, a mile from my house. So when these folks responded -- and that included, for over two days, the combined efforts of the New York National Guard at the 106 Rescue Wing in Westhampton, New York State Police, the Suffolk County Police, various other state agencies, and all the volunteer fire departments and EMS from across Nassau and Suffolk County -- they ultimately were able to diminish this blaze with only a handful of homes being destroyed. That could have completely been as devastating as the fire from 30 years ago, or even worse.

So we do want to just express that our volunteers -- and they are just that. They protect life and property, which is in my opinion the ultimate community service. They leave their families -- and it was a Saturday. They gave up a weekend to protect us all, for those of us who can put our heads on the pillow at night knowing that they're going to roll out of bed, walk toward the danger, and keep us safe.

So, Mr. President, I was going to

read all of the departments --

(Laughter.)

SENATOR PALUMBO: -- but my colleagues advised against it, because we have a very busy day and a lot of work to do. So I just want to say thank you to our volunteers, all of them, who serve the greater good and do what they do every day for us for totally selfless purposes.

Thank you, Mr. President. And I proudly vote aye.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank you, Senator Palumbo.

The resolution was adopted on April 2nd.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, today's resolutions are open for cosponsorship.

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

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up the calendar.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 179, Senate Print 1285A, by Senator Persaud, an act to amend the Criminal Procedure Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This act shall take effect on the 120th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 180, Senate Print 1652, by Senator Bailey, an act to amend the Criminal Procedure Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This act shall take effect on the first of October.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 231, Senate Print 364, by Senator Gianaris, an act to amend the Insurance Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 231, voting in the negative:

Senator Walczyk.

Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 276, Senate Print 115A, by Senator Cleare, an act to amend the Arts and Cultural Affairs Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 276, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Rhoads, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk and Weik.

Ayes, 46. Nays, 16.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 311, Senate Print 3735, by Senator Mayer, an act

to amend the Education Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 320, Senate Print 4153, by Senator Sanders, an act to amend the General Business Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the 120th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator

Sanders to explain his vote.

SENATOR SANDERS: Thank you, Mr. President.

I stand in favor of a very simple proposition, that American currency should be accepted in America. Sounds strange. This is the same country that is telling other countries that if you do not accept our currency, we're going to have trade sanctions on you.

And yet in the great State of New York there are places where an American citizen can take legal currency, go into a store, and be refused to -- for their purchase.

This is unacceptable. This policy discriminates against the less affluent and other Americans. We have a chance to do something about it in New York State. In fact, we should. We should say that, yes, stores have -- are trying to use credit cards and debit cards and other things to speed up the process, to do many different things. And those things are good; we're not against that.

But we should stand and say that the American people will accept American currency in America. That way we can hold it for the rest of

the world and say if you're going to accept the greenback all over the world, let's start in our own backyard.

Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you for all those who are in favor of Americans using American currency.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator Sanders to be recorded in the affirmative.

Senator Krueger to explain her vote.

SENATOR KRUEGER: Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to thank Senator Sanders for bringing this bill to us. I don't know about in your districts, but in my district there are stores that have big signs: You will be charged an additional 3 percent if you're using a credit card.

Now, I know why they're doing it, because they're getting hit with a 3 percent charge from the credit card company. But imagine, we're going to actually allow a situation where people won't be able to use cash and will be forced to pay an additional 3 percent to buy products? I think that's outrageous.

And we all talk about affordability

and we all talk about the increasing costs of everything. Come on, folks, let people buy products with money.

So thank you, Senator Sanders. I vote yes.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator Krueger to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 320, voting in the negative are Senators Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Gallivan, Helming, Oberacker, Scarcella-Spanton, Stec and Walczyk.

Ayes, 55. Nays, 7.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 340, Senate Print 2481, by Senator Parker, an act directing the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority to study the feasibility of creating, storing and transferring hydrogen energy to residential and commercial structures.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This

act shall take effect immediately.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 351, Senate Print 3807, by Senator Hoylman-Sigal, an act to amend the General Obligations Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 351, voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Mattera,

Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Rhoads, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk and Weik.

Ayes, 46. Nays, 16.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 358, Senate Print 630, by Senator Stavisky, an act to amend the Criminal Procedure Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 358, voting in the negative:
Senator Brisport.

Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 360, Senate Print 2273, by Senator Krueger, an

act to amend the Penal Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 360, voting in the negative:

Senator Brisport.

Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 393, Senate Print 252, by Senator Martinez, an act to amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 393, voting in the negative are Senators Lanza, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec and Walczyk.

Ayes, 56. Nays, 6.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 397, Senate Print 3629A, by Senator Fernandez, an act to amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect December 31, 2026.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 397, voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming,

Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec, Walczyk and Weik.

Ayes, 52. Nays, 10.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 400, Senate Print 5014, by Senator Sepúlveda, an act to amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This act shall take effect one year after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 400, voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Griffo, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec and Walczyk. Also Senator Gallivan.

Ayes, 54. Nays, 8.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number

571, Senate Print 197, by Senator Martinez, an act to amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This act shall take effect on the 180th day after it shall have become a law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 571, voting in the negative:

Senator Brisport.

Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 572, Senate Print 703, by Senator Krueger, an act to amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator Borrello to explain his vote.

SENATOR BORRELLO: Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to thank the sponsor for this bill and all of the bills that are relating to animal cruelty.

According to the FBI, those that torture animals, abuse animals, have a high correlation to also human-on-human violence. This is a proven statistic. And you can see the long list of serial killers and mass murderers that started their evil careers by torturing animals.

So this is hopefully a way not just to protect our furry friends, but also to ensure that evil people don't go further down the road. So strengthening this law and certainly making it more of a penalty is a good start.

Thank you.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator Borrello to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 576, Senate Print 1784, by Senator Hinchey, an act to amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 577, Senate Print 3026, by Senator Gianaris, an act to amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 615, Senate Print 3158, by Senator Skoufis, an act to amend the Penal Law.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the last section.

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 615, voting in the negative:

Senator Brisport.

Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill is passed.

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

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

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

SENATOR SERRANO: I move to adjourn until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 9th, at 11:00 a.m.

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: On motion, the Senate stands adjourned until Wednesday, April 9th, at 11:00 a.m.

(Whereupon, at 5:01 p.m., the Senate adjourned.)