NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

ALBANY, NEW YORK

February 25, 2026

3:40 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ANTONIO DELGADO, President

ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

P R O C E E D I N G S

THE PRESIDENT: The Senate will come to order.

Everyone please rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Rabbi Joshua Rabin, of the Astoria Center of Israel in Queens, New York, will deliver today's invocation.

RABBI RABIN: With the community's permission, let us pray.

Picture a child and a parent on a dangerous journey. The parent carries the child on their shoulders, shielding them from harm, but the child, unaware of who is holding them up, asks: Where is my parent?

In response, the parent sets the child down, and the child is bitten by a dog.

This ancient midrash, a Jewish word for parable or legend, accompanies the story in Exodus of the Israelites being attacked by a nation known as Amalek, just after their liberation from Egypt, which Jews around the world will read this week on what is known as

Shabbat Zachor, or the Shabbat of Memory.

It is a story of vulnerability, but it is also a story about awareness, about what happens when we fail to recognize what sustains us. The Torah's command regarding Amalek begins with a single word: Yizaharta {ph}, "and you shall remember."

Today we have no idea who this nation is. The command does not become a literal directive but a moral warning. Amalek represents what emerges when memory and gratitude recede and when we forget how deeply interdependent we truly are.

No one thrives alone. Each of us is carried, often invisibly, by others -- the people who prepare our food, maintain our roads, plow our streets, teach our children, care for our sick, keep our communities functioning day after day. They carry us on their shoulders, whether we see them or not.

What happens when we forget? I am a rabbi who teaches about the lifesaving power of organ donation. When I speak, I ask people to imagine someone who, at first glance, appears to have nothing in common with them. And then I ask

them to imagine that years later they find that that person's final act of generosity saved the life of someone you love.

In that moment, distance collapses. We discover what was always true: We need each other, even when we choose not to see it.

My blessing for you today is this. May you remember. May you remember those whose labor makes the state function. May you remember those who are unseen in the drafting of policy but deeply affected by it. May you remember that power, too, rests on shoulders not always visible.

I offer this prayer in the name of my God, and with the deepest respect to whomever you pray.

And let us say amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Rabbi.

Reading of the Journal.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Tuesday, February 24, 2026, the Senate met pursuant to adjournment. The Journal of Monday, February 23, 2026, was read and approved. On motion, the Senate adjourned.

THE PRESIDENT: 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.

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon.

SENATOR GIANARIS: On behalf of Senator Myrie, I wish to call up Senate Print 438, recalled from the Assembly, which is now at the desk.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 296, Senate Print 438, by Senator Myrie, an act to amend the Insurance Law.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to reconsider the vote by which the bill was passed.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will call the roll on reconsideration.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 57.

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

SENATOR GIANARIS: I offer the following amendments.

THE PRESIDENT: The amendments are received.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Amendments are also offered to the following Third Reading Calendar bills:

By Senator Myrie, page 13, Calendar Number 205, Senate Print 8609;

By Senator Salazar, page 18, Calendar Number 287, Senate Print 156.

THE PRESIDENT: The amendments are received, and the bills will retain their place on the Third Reading Calendar.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: I now move to adopt the Resolution Calendar, with the exception of Resolutions 1630 and 1633.

THE PRESIDENT: All those in favor of adopting the Resolution Calendar, with the exception of Resolutions 1630 and 1633, please signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

THE PRESIDENT: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

THE PRESIDENT: The Resolution Calendar is adopted.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Now let's take up Resolution 1633, by Senator Webb, read its title, and recognize Senator Webb.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1633, by Senator Webb, memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim February 23, 2026, as Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Day in the State of New York.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Webb.

SENATOR WEBB: Thank you, Mr. President.

I rise and I first want to thank our Senate Majority Leader for allowing this

resolution to come forward that essentially would direct the Governor to proclaim February 23rd as Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Day in the State of New York.

Every minute, 24 people in the United States become victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. That is more than 12 million people every year. These are our neighbors, our friends, our coworkers, and our loved ones.

Domestic violence is a public health crisis, and it knows no boundaries. It impacts individuals regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status.

According to an annual survey conducted by the National Network to End Domestic Violence, New York State consistently has the greatest demand for domestic violence services in the country, with more than 10,609 survivors requesting services on just one day in the year of 2024, and more than 1700 unfulfilled service requests on that same day because of insufficient resource or staff.

Domestic violence also knows no age limitation, as youth are most certainly impacted

by this issue, with a recent survey reporting that in the past year nearly 21 percent of high school females and 10.4 percent of high school males experienced some form of teen dating violence.

Researchers estimate that between 3.3 million and 10 million children are exposed to adult intimate partner violence each year, which increases the risk of later violence by men.

I am proud of the work that we continue to do in this chamber on this very important issue, especially in the area of strengthening funding for this important public health issue. We are doing things to expand access to safe housing and ensuring that survivors can receive trauma-informed counseling services, legal advocacy, and court navigation supports as they work to not only heal their lives but also to rebuild their lives and those of their family members with dignity.

But we know there's more work to do to meet this great need in our communities for these lifesaving services. And so I'm honored to be voting in favor of this resolution. I hope

my colleagues will join me by voting aye.

Additionally, Mr. President, I rise on the occasion of this resolution to welcome distinguished guests to our chamber.

I am honored that domestic violence advocates have joined us today. Members may have seen a number of people walking throughout the Capitol today wearing purple; that is most certainly a cause for the occasion.

And I want to take a moment to lift up all of the work that they do to provide training, technical assistance for local domestic violence programs across our state, working with communities to change our culture into one that doesn't condone violence, that advocates for policies to make sure that survivors across our state are provided with the support they need to be safe and to ultimately heal.

And with that, Mr. President, I ask that you welcome these amazing advocates to our chamber. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Webb.

To our guests, I welcome you on behalf of the Senate. We extend to you the

privileges and courtesies of the house.

Please rise and be recognized.

(Standing ovation.)

THE PRESIDENT: The question is on the resolution. All those in favor please signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

THE PRESIDENT: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is adopted.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please recognize Senator Bailey for an introduction.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Bailey.

SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

The rabbi who gave the opening invocation was very inspirational, and he spoke about organ donations. And organ donations are done by physicians, by doctors, people who take the Hippocratic oath and decide that they -- regardless of race, creed, gender, color, identity, whoever comes before them, they will serve them. They will serve them admirably.

But sometimes people, if you don't see what looks like you in the medical field, you may not want to go to the doctor. And the artist formerly known as diversity in medicine, because of certain things that are happening, now is the Associated Medical Schools of New York Scholars in Medicine and Science.

But it does not lessen the necessity for diversity any more. People in our families do not go to the doctor because they do not trust the medical profession. These scholars are here to make sure that we not only trust the medical profession now, but we entrust you to do it into the future. The world we leave you is in better -- we leave you to put the world in greater hands than it is now.

So I have the honor of introducing you all to a number of scholars. And I'm going to say your name, and I apologize in advance if and when I mess it up. But you are not messing things up, you are making things better.

Alexandra Habibi, from NYU Grossman.

Sophia -- in the Senate we're going to hold the applause like we do at the reunion until everybody's okay.

Sophia Manduca, from NYU. You may stand, absolutely.

Gabriella Gomez, from Stony Brook University.

John Helm, from Stony Brook University.

Jhessica Chauca, from Touro Middletown.

Herman Low, from Stony Brook University. Somewhere Speaker Heastie is very happy.

Stephanie Cano Amaya, from Upstate Medical University.

Ashley Mooring, from SUNY Upstate.

Martha Wojtowycz -- I'm sorry -- from SUNY Upstate Medical University.

Kayode Medugbon, SUNY Upstate.

Mustafa Abdalla, SUNY Upstate.

Emma Covillon, Upstate Medical University.

Saba Solomon, Upstate Medical University.

Leah Solomon, SUNY Upstate.

Nayeem Hussain, SUNY Upstate Medical University.

Stevens Bontemps, Chima Ezeh, and Brooke D. Jones, all from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry.

Yara Abdelrahman, from CUNY City College of New York.

Lelosa Imasuen, from CCNY.

Melissa Rojas, from CCNY.

Amidala Figueroa, Angelica Vargas, and Levi Vazquez, all from Lehman College in the Boogie-Down Bronx. You know, God's country.

Sebastian Cota, from Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health.

Daphne Buitron, from Fordham University.

And the program directors: Sarah Khalil, Inefta Reid, and Victor Garcia, from NYU, Stony Brook and New York Medical College. And Aaron Glass, program director at SUNY Upstate Medical.

Please stand up.

And I just want to -- as I close and we get on to the rest of business in the session, I just want you to know that this trip that you've made is really important. In the face of

people losing healthcare all around this country, you are that stopgap. You not only can but will provide diversity in medicine and real medicine -- and those necessary organ donations, as we led, opened up our session today.

Everything happens for a reason. There was a reason why that was mentioned in there.

You should be inspired and steady in the work that you do. I thank you. I salute you. Hopefully I won't have to see you anytime soon for any reasons other than to say hello. But whoever you see will be under incredible care.

Mr. President, please, I would like you to extend all of the cordialities and the courtesies of this house for these amazing scholars.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: To our guests, I welcome you on behalf of the Senate. We extend to you the privileges and courtesies of the house.

You've already risen; you'll now be recognized.

(Standing ovation.)

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please recognize Senator Hinchey for another introduction.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Hinchey.

SENATOR HINCHEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

Today I am incredibly proud to welcome students from the Advocacy Club at the Mount Academy in Esopus for their annual Lobby Day.

They've spent the day meeting with elected officials, learning about the legislative process, and asking thoughtful questions and advocating on the issues that matter most to them.

These meetings are incredibly important because we deal with a lot of very heavy, very serious topics in this chamber. But we do it, and especially in this chamber, in the Senate -- usually -- with deep respect and understanding for one another. But learning that can take a long time, and it may not come naturally when you care so deeply and passionately about something.

So being in the room early, having conversations, learning about respectful dialogue and meeting people where they are is an incredibly important gift that the Bruderhof offers to their young students in the Advocacy Club.

These students exemplify the values of public service and volunteerism. They've helped build homes with Habitat for Humanity across our Hudson Valley communities, they've used their agriscience skills to care for local athletic fields, they've sewn pillows for patients at Vassar Hospital in Dutchess County.

And last summer, several members of the Advocacy Club traveled to Ukraine to help lead a summer camp, organizing baseball and soccer clinics, teaching English, and bringing a sense of normalcy to kids who have fled the frontlines of war. If that doesn't teach you how to be a good, well-rounded human, I don't know what will.

Their compassion speaks volumes about their character and the service-driven leaders that they are becoming, exemplified in their meetings today.

With that, I would like to recognize several students who have joined us today in this chamber. You can also stand as I read your name.

Alfred Wright, Donna Winter, Aliza Wipf, Roderick Huleatt, and Sean Huleatt, as well as leadership from the Bruderhof Community: Johann Huleatt and Christine Mason.

Thank you all so much for being here, for your participation and being involved in our state legislative process.

Mr. President, please give them all of the courtesies of the chamber and welcome them to the Senate. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Hinchey.

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

Please rise and be recognized. Thank you.

(Standing ovation.)

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Let's move on, Mr. President, to previously adopted Resolution 1558, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton,

read its title, and call on Senator Scarcella-Spanton.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1558, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton, mourning the death of Margaret D. Williams, legendary vocalist and community leader.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Scarcella-Spanton.

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

It is my honor to stand here as we memorialize an outstanding member of our community, my constituent, Ms. Margaret D. Williams.

Ms. Williams, of Coney Island, was a beloved, dedicated community member who has made an immeasurable impact on not just her neighbors, but on people miles and decades apart. Although she left this world in January of 2026, her legacy will be felt for years to come.

Born in North Carolina, Ms. Williams moved to Brooklyn as a teenager, becoming actively involved in music programs, nurturing a

passion and talent that would define her life.

As a young adult in the late 1950s, Ms. Williams joined the renowned girl group The Cookies, becoming an integral part of one of the most influential vocal groups of the doo-wop and Brill Building eras.

As some of you may remember, The Cookies achieved national and international success recording and performing songs written by legendary songwriters such as Carole King and Gerry Goffin, and collaborating with iconic artists including Neil Sedaka, Mel Torme, Little Eva, and many others.

Some of their hits, including "Chains" and "Don't Say Nothin'," reached the Billboard Top 40 charts in the 1960s, with "Chains" later recorded by The Beatles on their 1963 debut album, further cementing the group's enduring influence on popular music.

In recognition of their significant contributions to American music, The Cookies were inducted into the Roll & Roll Hall of Fame in 2002.

Ms. Williams continued to preserve and celebrate The Cookies' legacy for decades

thereafter, performing in concerts throughout the United States, Europe, and Spain. And after years of touring, she returned to Coney Island, where she remained deeply engaged in the community, continuing to sing professionally and as a member of the Coney Island Gospel Assembly Church.

Ms. Williams was a dedicated public servant, retiring after 33 years of service with the New York City Department of Health, Prison Health Services, and she was also an active member of DC37, Local 1549.

She was a cherished participant and supporter of the Coney Island History Project, sharing her personal history and experiences in a 2004 interview and proudly cutting the ribbon to open the Boardwalk Memory Booth in 2005.

You could always count on seeing Ms. Williams at community events like our Annual Juneteenth Jubilee in Coney Island or whenever I stopped by Coney Island Gospel Assembly. And we will certainly miss hearing her sing.

Her life was marked by faith, service, music and love, and she will be

remembered as a trailblazing artist and a devoted public servant, a faithful church member, and a pillar of the Coney Island community.

My deepest condolences are with her family and all those who knew and loved her. And as we continue celebrating Black History Month, I cannot think of a more fitting time to celebrate her legacy and honor her.

Thank you. I proudly vote aye.

THE PRESIDENT: The resolution was adopted on February 10th.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: And now, lastly, Resolution 1630, by Senator Serrano. Please take that up, read its title, and recognize Senator Serrano.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1630, by Senator Serrano, commemorating the 20th Anniversary of Park and Public Lands Advocacy Day on February 25, 2026.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Serrano.

SENATOR SERRANO: Thank you, Mr. President.

It's an honor to rise here today to talk about Parks Advocacy Day here in Albany. This is the 20th Annual Parks Day. And it really is one of the best days of the entire year, because we have so many parks advocates from throughout the state coming to Albany to talk about why parks are so important.

Now, one of the things that is so amazing about parks is that they sort of transcend all types of barriers. They are loved by everyone because they are so meaningful in everyone's life.

During the pandemic, our parks became our solace, they became our oasis away from the danger that we were facing. And they really showed how important they are.

And since then we've seen year-over-year growth in visitorship, record-breaking visitorship at our state parks throughout the State of New York, as well as our public lands, like the Adirondacks and the Catskills, DEC lands. All of these are very important.

There is also another component that's so necessary to talk about, is that

exposure to nature and green spaces has a profound impact on our physical health and mental health. It is really the good medicine that we need right now. In a really crazy world, engaging in nature and parks is something we should all be doing more of.

So, I'm so grateful for all of the advocates and folks from throughout the state and the commissioners who were with us this morning at our Parks Advocacy Briefing, and all of the great things that were done today to help bring awareness to the fact that we should be supporting our wonderful parks and green spaces throughout the State of New York.

And I'm so thankful for my colleagues supporting this resolution today.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

The question is on the resolution. All those in favor please signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

THE PRESIDENT: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is adopted.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please open today's resolutions for cosponsorship.

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

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please recognize Senator Lanza for an announcement.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Lanza.

SENATOR LANZA: There will be an immediate meeting of the Republican Conference in the Republican Conference Room.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, we will stand at ease until 4:20. I believe this will be a brief conference, and we'll be right back in 15 minutes.

THE PRESIDENT: The Senate will stand at ease.

(Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease at 4:04 p.m.)

(Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at 4:21 p.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: The Senate will

come to order.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: At this time, Mr. President, let's take up the reading of the calendar.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 57, Senate Print 659, by Senator Gianaris, an act to amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 57, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Chan, Gallivan, Helming, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec, Tedisco and Walczyk.

Ayes, 46. Nays, 11.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 101, Senate Print 3179A, by Senator Sanders, an act to amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This act shall take effect two years after it shall have become a law.

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 101, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Chan, Gallivan, Lanza, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk and Weber.

Ayes, 45. Nays, 12.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 193, Senate Print 4424A, by Senator Ramos, an act to amend the Labor Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 5. This

act shall take effect immediately.

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Ramos to explain her vote.

SENATOR RAMOS: Thank you, Mr. President.

You know, there's some really bad bosses out there who have been hiding clauses in job applications and on-boarding paperwork that forces workers to give up their legal rights without the worker actually even realizing it.

Workers have been facing discrimination, harassment, and even wage theft, thinking that when they're told that they've waited too long to sue because of deadlines that are buried in the paperwork that they never knowingly agreed to.

And these clauses have historically discouraged workers from coming forward and have allowed stolen wages to go unrecovered and given bad actors an unfair advantage over honest employers. We want to keep the good guys in business.

So this is the fix. This is the

Anti Waiver of Employment Rights Act. And it makes clear that employers cannot force workers to sign away their protections under New York labor and the Human Rights Law. Rights cannot be waived in applications, rights can't be waived in on-boarding forms, rights cannot be waived in hidden contract language.

This law does not create new rights, to be clear, but it does protect the rights that workers already have. It's going to restore balance in the workplace. It ensures accountability. And it supports employers who play by the rules.

It's my hope that the Assembly also passes this bill so that we can put it on the Governor's desk for her signature, so that we can make New York an even better place for workers to stay here. I vote aye.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Ramos to be recorded in the affirmative.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 193, voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Chan, Helming, Lanza,

Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Stec, Tedisco and Walczyk.

Ayes, 46. Nays, 11.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 207, Senate Print 6227, by Senator Martinez, an act to amend the Education Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 57.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 233, Senate Print 1461, by Senator Kavanagh, an act to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 233, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan, Gallivan, Helming, Martins, Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Rhoads, Rolison, Skoufis, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk and Weber.

Ayes, 37. Nays, 20.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 234, Senate Print 3406, by Senator Comrie, an act to amend the Executive Law.

SENATOR LANZA: Lay it aside.

THE PRESIDENT: Lay it aside.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 261, Senate Print 4408, by Senator May, an act to amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Lay it aside for the day.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill will be laid aside for the day.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 307, Senate Print 78, by Senator Liu, an act to amend the Education Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 57.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 318, Senate Print 6273A, by Senator Bailey, an act authorizing and directing the Commissioner of Education to conduct a study on the number of children who are caregivers.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 57.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 331, Senate Print 2611, by Senator Addabbo, an act to amend the General Municipal Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 331, voting in the negative are Senators Bynoe, Krueger, Martinez and May.

Ayes, 53. Nays, 4.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 337, Senate Print 1130, by Senator May, an act to amend the Executive Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 337, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan, Gallivan, Lanza, Mattera, Murray, Palumbo, Rhoads, Ryan, Stec, Tedisco and Walczyk.

Ayes, 43. Nays, 14.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 342, Senate Print 2447, by Senator Mayer, an act to amend the Executive Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to

Calendar 342, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Helming, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec and Walczyk.

Ayes, 49. Nays, 8.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 344, Senate Print 3261, by Senator Cooney, an act to amend the Tax Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 344, voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan, Lanza, Martinez, Martins, Mattera, Bynoe, Murray, O'Mara, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk and Weber.

Ayes, 43. Nays, 14.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 346, Senate Print 6181, by Senator Parker, an act

to amend the Cannabis Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 346, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Gallivan, Lanza, Martinez, Martins, Mattera, Murray, O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Rhoads, Stec, Tedisco and Walczyk.

Ayes, 41. Nays, 16.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

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

SENATOR GIANARIS: Can we move on to the controversial calendar, please.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will ring the bell.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number

234, Senate Print 3406, by Senator Comrie, an act to amend the Executive Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Lanza, why do you rise?

SENATOR LANZA: Mr. President, I believe I believe there's an amendment at the desk. I waive the reading of that amendment and ask that you recognize Senator Walczyk.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Lanza.

Upon review of the amendment, in accordance with Rule 6, Section 4B, I rule it nongermane and out of order.

SENATOR LANZA: Accordingly, Mr. President, I appeal the ruling of the chair and ask that Senator Walczyk be heard on that appeal.

THE PRESIDENT: The appeal has been made and recognized.

Senator Walczyk may be heard.

SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you for the opportunity, Mr. President. And maybe I can convince some colleagues to overrule the chair here.

This amendment is indeed germane to

the bill-in-chief, because the bill-in-chief deals with the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the amendment deals with the State Energy Code, both affecting the price of building in New York State.

This amendment, modeled from legislation sponsored by Senator Mario Mattera, would repeal the costly All-Electric Buildings mandate and would allow building developers to use the 2020 Energy Code instead of the more costly and newly enacted 2025 Energy Code.

As everyone knows, the All-Electric Building mandate is currently tied up in the courts. The Governor agreed to pause implementation of the costly mandate temporarily while the case plays out in court, no doubt because this is 2026 and it's an election year.

Developers have estimated that the All-Electric Building mandate will increase the cost of a typical single-family home in New York by $20,000 at the low end; some say much higher than that.

On top of the additional $20,000 in cost to comply with the All-Electric Building mandate, the 2025 Energy Code will increase the

cost of construction for a single-family home in New York by $7400. And that's NYSERDA's cost analysis -- again, on the low end.

I think everyone in this chamber would agree that New York State is in the middle of a housing affordability crisis. I've heard it from both sides of the aisle. Builders can't sell overpriced houses that people don't want to buy in the first place.

It already costs between $200 and $350 per square foot to build a new home in this state, way above the national average. The 2025 Energy Code, which includes the All-Electric Buildings mandate, would only increase the cost of building homes, further putting the dream of homeownership out of reach for so many New Yorkers.

This amendment that I offer up today allows this chamber to take a real and meaningful step towards lowering the cost of homes in this state.

Builders need to know that we're providing regulatory certainty and cost-effective solutions. The average first-time homebuyer is now over 40 years old. A CNY builder recently

told me at a roundtable that new homes in New York are a luxury item.

If that's true, you've made too many mistakes in this chamber and I ask that you join me in fixing just a couple of those egregious mistakes that have been made recently. Vote to overrule the chair, pass this amendment, and please allow New Yorkers to have the dream of owning an affordable home in New York State in the future.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator.

I want to remind the house that the vote is on the procedures of the house and the ruling of the chair.

Those in favor of overruling the chair, signify by saying aye.

(Response of "Aye.")

SENATOR LANZA: Show of hands.

THE PRESIDENT: A show of hands has been requested and so ordered.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 20.

THE PRESIDENT: The ruling of the chair stands, and the bill-in-chief is before the

house.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: We've agreed to restore this bill to the noncontroversial calendar.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 234, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Chan, Gallivan, Lanza, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec, Tedisco and Walczyk.

Ayes, 46. Nays, 11.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

Senator Gianaris, that completes the reading of the controversial calendar.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, at this time there's a privileged resolution at the desk. Let's take that up, please, read its

title, and recognize first Senator Mayer on that resolution.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1637, by Senator Mayer, Concurrent Resolution of the Senate and Assembly providing for the election of two Regents of the University of the State of New York.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Mayer on the resolution.

SENATOR MAYER: Thank you, Mr. President.

It's my honor again to rise in support of this Concurrent Resolution of the Senate and Assembly to appoint and reappoint members to the Board of Regents.

For everyone's edification -- not those here, because I think they know about the Board of Regents, but people frequently confuse the Regents exam with the Board of Regents. And that's a very understandable confusion.

But people should understand that the Board of Regents are people appointed by the Senate and Assembly jointly to help drive

educational policy in New York State, not only through kindergarten through 12th grade, but for higher ed, for the professions, and for many other aspects of regulated life dealing with educational issues.

The Board of Regents meets regularly. They consider issues of highest importance to those of us who care about education. And today we are lucky and very fortunate to be appointing and reappointing two distinguished members.

First I want to say, from the Fifth Judicial District, Patrick Mannion, to be reappointed to the Board of Regents.

And I would just say, as someone who heard his testimony and listened in the interviews the first time and then as he came back for reappointment, what was striking is that Mr. Mannion, who is not someone who came from sort of the educational world, made a commitment at that time that he was going to visit schools, learn about education in his community, and become a true advocate for the schools and the students of the Fifth Judicial District.

And he has actually done so. It was

extremely impressive to hear in the interviews that Senator Stavisky and I sat through with many of our colleagues, to hear how much interest he took in the schools and the issues that were before the Board of Regents.

He did everything one could ask of someone who was not entirely versed in education to do, and I'm very pleased to have him reappointed to the Fifth Judicial District seat.

And then for the at-large seat, we are appointing today Janice Weinman Shorenstein, who is joining us today in the gallery.

And Ms. Shorenstein has been a transformational leader in the educational space, currently running a program called Education Through Music, which brings music and art to students in the New York City public schools.

But she has a longtime history of participation in schools in the New York City community. She has been -- was the president of what's called Kids, a global not-for-profit organization that distributed new product to children and families in need throughout the United States and throughout the world.

She's worked in corporate affairs

for Mount Sinai and for other major not-for-profit institutions in New York. And she truly will bring her wealth of experience and her perspective and her intimate knowledge of the New York City public school community to the Board of Regents where, as the largest school district in the country, we need her expertise, her enthusiasm, and her willingness to participate.

Again, people who join the Board of Regents do so and put in not only their time and their energy but all of their intellect and energy into improving our educational system. We're very fortunate to have Patrick Mannion and Janice Weinman Shorenstein be elected to and joining the Board of Regents.

I vote aye and encourage all my colleagues to do the same.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Mayer.

Senator Stavisky on the resolution.

SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you, Mr. President. On the resolution.

As Senator Mayer indicated, the selection of the Regents, and their mission, is

unique and has a long tradition of service. In fact, the origins go back 242 years.

And if you understand that this body and the Assembly have met for 242 years, and each year, or almost every year, there's a vacancy and they go through this process of selecting Regents.

Regents in New York State have a unique mission. Their selection is very different. They set the education policy, and they also select the Commissioner of Education. In some states they -- the commissioner of education is elected in an election; in other states, the governor appoints the commissioner.

But New York State is unique. The Regents choose the commissioner.

And the other point I want to make is that they are joining a long, long list of people who have gone through this process and served as a Regent.

And in fact two of the first Regents -- one was Assemblymember Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, the first chief judge. And Teddy Roosevelt -- bipartisan -- he served as a Regent.

So I welcome the selection, and I congratulate Mr. Mannion and Ms. Shorenstein. And they should understand that they are joining a very select group. And I know that their service will be commendable and just fitting in with the tradition set by Alexander Hamilton. They're going to be in the room where it happens.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Stavisky.

Senator Borrello on the resolution.

SENATOR BORRELLO: Thank you, Mr. President.

I think Senator Stavisky outlined the importance of this role very well. Which is why, as an employer myself, someone who was a private-sector employee and a county executive, who has hired and fired literally hundreds of people in my career, I've never done so in 10 minutes or less. Which is what we've been asked to do here today.

Literally we got this resume -- and that's all we have, is a resume -- to make a decision on folks that are going to have an impact on every single child that is educated in

New York State.

I can't in good conscience do that with such little time. And I would encourage my colleagues, who -- other than, I'm sure, the very capable Senators who reviewed and interviewed them -- have not had the chance to vet these folks properly for one of the most important jobs in New York State.

So I'll be voting no. And those of you that weren't in the interviews I would suggest vote no as well. Nothing against the folks that are here, but due diligence is very important. So I'll be voting no.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Borrello.

Senator Murray on the resolution.

SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. President.

Yes, I know, a broken record. Here we go again. He's getting up and complaining about the system.

But think about it. We voted on multiple resolutions today individually. All on important, very important issues. We took up

14 individual bills. We didn't do them as a bunch. Why? Because each one is important on its own merits.

You heard the Senators explain why it's so important, the job that they do, the effect that they will have on this state, on our future, because they'll have an effect on literally millions of New York children.

And yet instead of voting on them each individually, it's up or down, both of them yes or no.

Well, what if we have a problem with one of them? What if we don't think one is stellar? Oh, well, let the kids suffer. Oh, well.

You're right, we're in the room where it happens. But it should be happening properly. We should be doing it the right way. If they're that good, let's vote on them individually on their own merit.

For that reason, I'll be a no.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

There's a substitution at the desk.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senators Mayer and Stavisky move to substitute Senate Concurrent Resolution 1637 for the identical Assembly Resolution, 978.

THE PRESIDENT: The substitution is so ordered.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Assembly Resolution 978, by Assemblymember Benedetto, Concurrent Resolution of the Senate and Assembly providing for the election of two Regents of the University of the State of New York.

THE PRESIDENT: The question is on the resolution.

The Secretary will call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to the resolution, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Brisport, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan, Gallivan, Gonzalez, Lanza, Murray, Ortt, Palumbo, Rhoads, Salazar, Stec and Walczyk.

Ayes, 42. Nays, 15.

THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is adopted.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, I would like to remind the members of the Majority Conference that we will be having a conference immediately after session.

And with that, is there any further business at the desk?

THE PRESIDENT: There is no further business at the desk.

SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to adjourn until tomorrow, Thursday, February 26th, at 11:00 a.m.

THE PRESIDENT: On motion, the Senate stands adjourned until Thursday, February 26th, at 11:00 a.m.

(Whereupon, at 4:48 p.m., the Senate adjourned.)