NEW YORK STATE SENATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

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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.

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

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

THE PRESIDENT: His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, will deliver today's invocation.

ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS: May we bow our heads in prayer:

In the Name of God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, and of all that is contained therein. Amen.

We offer thanks and praise, O God, for gathering us together today in the Senate of the great State of New York, that we may appeal to Your righteousness and goodness, to bless all the representatives of the people with Your mercy and Your grace.

Grant unto them to fulfill their duties, responsibilities, and obligations to the people of New York with honor, integrity, and

unalloyed allegiance to the Constitution.

Bless them to love liberty -- the freedom that we commemorate today recognizing March 25th, the day of Greek Independence, and the freedom enshrined in these United States of America, now in our 250th year since our Declaration of Independence.

Hold all these lawmakers fast in Your loving care, that they may ever serve with the dignity of their high office, and thus render glory, reverence and honor to You, the Fountainhead of all Law and Justice.

Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

THE PRESIDENT: Reading of the Journal.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Tuesday, March 10, 2026, the Senate met pursuant to adjournment. The Journal of Monday, March 9, 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: I wish to call up, on behalf of Senator Sanders, Senate Print 3179A, recalled from the Assembly, which is now at the desk.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

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

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

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

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

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: On behalf of Senator Hinchey, on page 21 I offer the following amendments to Calendar Number 400, Senate Print 8491, and ask that said bill retain its place on the Third Reading Calendar.

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

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: At this time please take up previously adopted Resolution 1716, by Senator Gianaris, read its title, and call on me, please.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1716, by Senator Gianaris, memorializing Governor

Kathy Hochul to proclaim March 2026 as Greek History Month in the State of New York.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris on the resolution.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you, Mr. President.

My colleagues, soak it up. This is the --

(Laughter.)

SENATOR GIANARIS: This is the last time you're going to hear me speak about this Greek Independence resolution.

(Response of "Awww"; laughter.)

SENATOR GIANARIS: I get up every year and I tell you how everything you have you owe to the Greeks. Your science, your mathematics, your arts, and indeed the very democracy that we practice in this chamber.

Those of us who are of Greek descent hold that very dear. And while we are of course proud New Yorkers and proud Americans, we never forget where we came from and what those who have preceded us have given us in this chamber.

This year we're very fortunate that we are joined by the Archbishop of the Americas,

who you just heard give the opening prayer, Archbishop Elpidophoros. Your Eminence, thank you for joining us and for blessing us.

We also have the Consul Generals of both Greece and Cyprus here today, who were a part of our program at the luncheon that we had that so many of you also attended.

You know, when I was first elected to office to the Assembly, 26 years ago, I was the first Greek-American ever elected to an office from New York City, any office. And at the time I said to my community, "I'm the first. I won't be the last." And lo and behold, we have three in this chamber right now: Senator Gounardes, Senator Skoufis. There are others in the Assembly. Some have even come and gone, like our former colleague Senator Jordan.

But it is a classic New York story -- and American story, I would say -- that people come to this country, they're seeking a better life, immigrants -- some documented, some not -- who have worked incredibly hard to give their children, their grandchildren, a chance.

And then, lo and behold, eventually they take their places in government,

representing this state, this country, and do their best to pave the way for others.

And so the fact that we were able to open that door, able to get others coming in behind, is something I'm incredibly proud of as I spend my last few months here in this chamber. And I know that that legacy is in good hands with the people we have here, and for certain people that will be coming in the future.

And so as we pause to recognize Greek Independence today, I want to thank all my colleagues for indulging me in these remarks, these condescending remarks I've given you year after year.

UNIDENTIFIED SENATOR: More!

SENATOR GIANARIS: There will be more to come before I leave in June, don't worry.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR GIANARIS: But as it relates to what you owe the Greeks, this will be -- this will be the last time you hear that.

But I know you're all grateful for that. And I certainly appreciate working with all of you over the years and certainly spending some time every March to pause and recognize the

contribution of Greeks and those of Greek descent here in New York.

So thank you, Mr. President. And obviously I'm supporting this resolution.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gounardes.

SENATOR GOUNARDES: Thank you, Mr. President.

And thank you, Senator Gianaris, for this resolution.

Before I begin, I do want to acknowledge that we are joined here not only by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, but by the Consul General of Greece, Mrs. Iphigenia Kanara, and the Consul General of Cyprus, Mr. Kyriakos Pogiatzis, because the history and destiny of the Greek and Cypriot people are shared and linked together. And we thank them all for joining us today.

"Tell to the king that the carven hall is fallen in decay. Apollo has no chapel left, no prophesying bay, no talking spring. The stream is dry that had so much to say."

Those of you that studied Greek and

Roman history may recognize these words as the final oracle delivered by Pythia at Delphi.

The story goes that Roman Emperor Julian, who ruled right after Constantine the Great, sought to revive classical Greek culture across the empire, so he sent an emissary to Delphi for advice. The response from the oracle meant that the time of the ancient Greeks had passed and that Julian would need to look not to the past but to the future if he wanted to create a legacy for his new empire.

It may very well be that we think and feel differently because of what a little Greek town did during a century or two 2400 years ago, as Edith Hamilton once wrote.

But the truth of the matter is the richness of Greek history and culture is not just limited to the days of ancient Greece, it's across the vast span of history over the last 2500 years and the collective impact of that history on our world today that gives Greeks and Philhellenes a swell of pride and jubilee.

The rich glory of the Byzantine Empire that lasted for a thousand years, the tenacious resilience that survived 400 years of

Ottoman oppression, the fierce courageousness of the war for independence that sparked revolutionary change across Europe, the determined resistance that stymied Nazi occupiers and bought enough time for Allied forces to shift the balance of war along the Eastern Front during World War II, the soaring heights of success that Greeks in the diaspora have achieved throughout the world today -- these are all reasons why Greeks and people of Greek heritage have such enormous pride in who we are.

This year we're celebrating 205 years of Greece's independence. On March 25, 1821, revolutionary fighters gathered together with Metropolitan Germanos in the Monastery of Agia Lavra in the Village of Kalavryta, which is where Senator Gianaris's family is from, and declared independence against Ottoman occupation and oppression.

The war was hard-fought, resulting in countless acts of devastation and atrocities, as war so often brings, including the Massacre of Chíos, the island that my family is from, where nearly 100,000 people were either killed or forcibly expelled.

And much like our own Revolutionary War here in America, seven years after declaring independence, the people of Greece -- the farmers, the sailors, the merchants, the shepherds who lived in the towns and villages across the Greek countryside -- won their war and formed the Hellenic Republic.

Today we celebrate the history and reflect on the rich contributions that the Greek-American community has made to our own nation's history. We cheer the incredible success that Greek-Americans have achieved in law, media, business, science, medicine, politics and other fields.

But it should not be forgotten by us that at one time our forefathers were not wanted in this country. It was not uncommon to see crosses burning on the lawns of Greek houses or "No Greeks need apply" signs in store windows.

We cherish the personal stories of our own families who came to this country to seek their American dream and create a better life for themselves. But it should not be forgotten by us that there was a time in this country where we would not accept more than 100 immigrants a year

from Greece. And yet still our forebears smuggled themselves in by the thousands and tens of thousands.

We applaud at the remembrance of Archbishop Iakovos boldly standing beside Dr. King at the funeral of Reverend James Reeb and then crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Or even our own Archbishop Elpidophoros, who's here with us today, and who during the protests for racial justice after the murder of George Floyd, was marching in the streets, just as many of us were, to support the movement for Black lives.

But it should not be forgotten that there are many in our community who did not and do not see value in the struggle for civil rights and equality and condemned the actions of these fearless leaders.

As I reflect on today's commemoration of Greek heritage and think about the moment in time we are living through, I find wisdom and guidance in the totality of the Greek-American experience. I draw inspiration from the high points of our story as well as the trials that our community has faced.

And as a fourth-generation

Greek-American, I remain ever hopeful that we as a community will remember the struggles of our ancestors and we open our hands and we open our hearts to all those whose stories mirror our own and embrace our fellow human beings as true brothers and sisters.

So with that, Mr. President, and with great pride, I say Happy Greek Independence Day! Zhtw h Ellas!

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Skoufis.

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

And I'm delighted to round out the Greek-American Caucus's remarks on this resolution.

And to that end, I first want to thank Senator Gounardes and his office, who put a lot of work into organizing the events that took place today, and of course Senator Gianaris for introducing this resolution giving us this opportunity to remark on our heritage, our culture, and certainly his long-standing core

partnership to this small but mighty Greek-American Caucus that we have in this chamber.

And to that end, our ranks are dropping by a full one-third at the end of this year. We're taking applications. Senator Scarcella-Spanton I think is 1 or 2 percent Greek; she did a DNA test. And so please, come one, come all.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR SKOUFIS: I also want to share my gratitude to His Eminence for today's invocation, for being here with us to celebrate Greek Independence Day and, most importantly, his religious and spiritual leadership for the approximately 1.5 million Greek-Americans who are Orthodox in this country.

Greek literature occupies itself with a number of recurring themes, and one of the most significant is that of returning home. It's called nostos. Odysseus returns to Ithaca -- not the one we're more familiar with here in upstate New York -- Agamemnon to Argos; Pericles to Thebes; even Oedipus and his decades-long exile, to die in his ancestral home.

The stories told by the greatest writers the world has ever known are that of Greeks traveling far, facing great challenges, and returning home. The tales of these homecomings have been told for centuries, highlighting how crucial the idea of returning home was and remains in Greek storytelling.

Similarly, Greece is the home of my ancestors, but New York is my home, our home. As part of the diaspora, it's the home of my father, my daughter, my family, my friends. While home here in New York is where we now invest ourselves, our energy, and our care, we do so with the spirit and the DNA of the Greeks who came before us.

More so, in many ways New York is our nostos. While we return to our beloved Greece, New York, our home, is also home to the third largest population of Greeks in the world. First, of course, Greece itself; then Melbourne, Australia; then New York. In many ways our ancestors brought their home with them here.

So in Greek literature every journey is unique, but in one way those of us who sit in this chamber are all the same, whether or not you

are fortunate enough to be Greek yourself, and that is we are all fortunate enough to call New York our home.

Thank you, Mr. President.

(Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Rolison.

SENATOR ROLISON: Thank you, Mr. President.

And I am not a member of the Greek Caucus, but I would -- I'd like to be.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR ROLISON: And the reason -- and the reason I say that, Mr. President, and to my colleagues, is because of how I have been accepted, as a member of this body, to an organization that is in the 39th District. It's in Garrison.

Now, as a kid growing up, Poughkeepsie had a large Greek community. It still does. My first real experience within the Greek community was at a friend's wedding, Tony Colicci, and I can tell you it was one of the longest weddings I was ever at at that particular point in time in my life.

And when I got elected to the Senate in 2023, I met a woman in Cold Spring, and she said, "You need to come to St. Basil Academy in Garrison," which is in my district. So the great story about that is my parents grew up in New Jersey, and as a young kid we would go to visit them every other weekend in Madison and Morristown. And we would go by St. Basil Academy on Route 9D to the Bear Mountain Bridge. I had no idea what it was, but was always interested, What are behind the gates? And I knew it was overlooking the river.

So there came a point in time where I was able to go down there. I will tell you, it is a magical and wonderful and loving place. They actually have a residential program there, under the auspice of OCFS. And I went there several times afterwards with the Boy Scouts that were there on Swim Safety -- they have a pool. The grounds overlook the river and West Point.

And then I had the opportunity to meet His Eminence here last year. And then I was back down at St. Basil -- which was founded in 1944, by the way. It was formally the Jacob Ruppert Estate, from the Yankees.

And so I met the archbishop here, and then I was invited to go to their Christmas Pageant on December 13th. And I have to say, you know, like many of us sometimes, we're not sure if we can stay, we're going to rip through or whatever. And I got there, and I said, I'm not going anywhere. And I was with the archbishop and the rest of the members of the church that were there. I had the opportunity on that day, again, I got to see Senator Gounardes's dad, Dr. Steve.

And I just have to say that, you know, how they have welcomed me -- and others, not just me -- is really very something special. And so I went to the pageant not knowing what to expect, and it was down in this very large building where they have a stage. It was absolutely so important in the way that I stayed there. Because when I left there that day, I had the Christmas spirit that I did not have prior to seeing these students, these children performing, singing with their families.

And I'm going to end with this, Mr. President. You know, you get a chance to do some things very special as elected officials and

in this body. And I was able to present a Senate commendation to His Eminence for becoming a naturalized citizen that took place on November 10, 2025.

Thank you, Your Eminence. Appreciate you always. Thank you for what you do for your community with the magic and the good work you do for children and their families at St. Basil.

Thank you, Mr. President.

(Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

To His Eminence and 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.

(Extended standing ovation.)

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Okay, Mr. President, let's move on to previously adopted Resolution 1607, by Senator Rivera, read its title, and call on Senator Rivera.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1607, by

Senator Rivera, memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim March 2026 as American Red Cross Month in the State of New York.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Rivera on the resolution.

SENATOR RIVERA: Thank you, Mr. President.

So we all have experiences in our own backyards when we have -- I know that I've had some sad moments in my district where there are floods or where there are fires. And we certainly make our way there, as elected officials, making sure that we can help our constituents in any way that we can. Most times when we do that, when we get there, not only are the firefighters or other emergency personnel there, but we find the Red Cross there.

Certainly it has been the case in my district many times when folks have been stricken by fires or other tragedies in their life, that they find that the Red Cross is there to help them immediately, finding places for them to stay, connect them to services. And so I'm incredibly thankful for the work that they do.

A couple of years ago I had the

opportunity to travel with one of the group of folks, and I started to learn some things about the Red Cross. One of the things that I did not know was that about 90 percent of the folks who are -- who you see out there working for the Red Cross are volunteers.

Their staff is actually relatively -- it's a very, very small staff, but there are thousands upon thousands of volunteers all across the country and certainly here in the State of New York that every single day, out of -- take their own time to say, I'm going to go to somebody else's community, or maybe their own, and make sure that I am there to help people in what might be the darkest moment in their lives.

So I wanted to make sure that we took some time to celebrate those folks. We are joined by a whole host of folks here from the Red Cross. And there's three in particular that I want to recognize, Mr. President.

First of all, as far as the folks who are -- since they have a few staffers -- not many of them, but they do have a few staffers, and some of them are incredibly dedicated. And we certainly in my office have worked with them

plenty.

And I'd like to recognize both Mr. John Waldman, who is the senior director of government and community affairs for the Greater New York Region -- please stand up so people can see who you are. There you are -- and Denise Bloise, who is the manager of government and community affairs of the Greater New York region. She is there too.

Thank you both. You do so much work with our office.

But they would probably say, We would rather not be recognized, we want to make sure that the volunteers are recognized. And so I'm going to take a moment to recognize three of them. Unfortunately, none of them from my district, Mr. President, but that is fine. They serve people all over the state.

First, a volunteer who lives in Senator Ryan's district, and that is Bobbie Krukowski. Since 2012 -- and if Ms. Krukowski could stand up for a second. Could you stand up, ma'am? There you go.

So Ms. Krukowski, since 2012, has served more than 4,000 hours as a disaster duty

officer, which is the first line of contact. She has dedicated all of this time to support families after fires, blizzards, floods, ice storms. And again, probably the worst time, the worst moment in that person's life when they get to see this amazing lady helping them out.

And she's also built a comprehensive monitoring model for disaster duty officers. Just so you know, today 85 percent of all duty officer shifts in Eastern New York are covered by volunteers that she personally trained. Right?

And during Thanksgiving week, when 66 residents were displaced by an apartment fire, just so that you can understand what she does every day, she ensured that every family received the care that they needed.

So we're very thankful to have you with us, Ms. Krukowski.

We're also john -- joined by John, joined by John Hatch. This is -- come on. I speak for a living. This should be easier.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR RIVERA: We are joined, Mr. President, by John Hatch, who is Senator Cooney's constituent.

Now, in 2019 Mr. Hatch became a volunteer for the American Red Cross, and he has served on nearly 20 disaster relief operations. He holds multiple logistics positions, including disaster service technology, for which he serves on the national team as well, Mr. President. And he is dedicated to mobilizing the power of volunteers by recruiting and monitoring new, highly skilled volunteers, creating cross-functional collaboration across his department.

So one of the folks that makes sure that things are connected. And it can be really messy out there, Mr. President, if it wasn't for folks like Mr. Hatch, we would not be able to get these folks the help that they need.

Thank you so much for joining us today, Mr. Hatch.

And last but certainly not least, from Senator Mayer's district, is Mary Davis. And Ms. Davis is -- has been helping -- has been part of the Red Cross family for about 15 years. And she has been -- her contributions have been outstanding, monitoring new volunteers, strengthening community preparedness, and she has

been instrumental in integrating mental health support in every disaster response that she has been a part of.

Thank you so much for joining us today, Ms. Davis.

Bottom line, Mr. President, every single one of these folks would probably tell you that they should themselves not be recognized, and instead probably the teams that they help every single day to connect folks to services and to assistance.

So I thank all of you for being here today. But more importantly, I thank you for the work that you do out there every day for New Yorkers. You certainly have helped many of my constituents, many of our constituents. We thank you for your continued support.

Mr. President, if you could recognize them and give them the benefits of the -- what do we call it, the benefits of the house? The privileges of -- you'll get there --

(Laughter.)

SENATOR RIVERA: But thank you so much, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Mayer.

(Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: We will get there.

SENATOR MAYER: Thank you, Mr. President.

And I too rise to support this resolution. And I want to particularly, of course, give credit to Mary Davis of Larchmont, in my district, for her volunteer -- persistent and ongoing volunteer efforts, and to all the volunteers.

I think that people do not realize, but every time there is a fire or a very serious incident in any of our communities, we actually get an email immediately from the American Red Cross, from John and Denise, saying this happened, three people, five people were displaced, do not have a home.

Recently there was a serious fire in Mamaroneck where five children were displaced, as well as their parents. We get this email so that we know we can reach out immediately: How can we help? Their job is to be at the front end. Our job is to make sure that we do everything as government officials to support the American

Red Cross.

And lastly, I want to point out that during Ida, one of the most serious storms that ever occurred in my district in Westchester, volunteers from all over the United States came and sat in front of the Mamaroneck Town Hall helping hundreds and hundreds of residents figure out what they were going to do when they lost their homes, their businesses, their items, and everything else that was of importance to them.

We could not have gotten through that without the American Red Cross. So a salute to you, all of you, for your work. Thank you for cooperating and working so closely with us as elected officials. It is our honor to be your partners as we help people struggle through some of the most difficult days of their lives.

Thank you, and I vote aye.

(Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Murray on the resolution.

SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. President.

I'll echo much of what was said, but also I want to start by appreciating their great

taste and wisdom as they are here today to also honor a couple of our colleagues. A couple of our colleagues were named Legislators of the Year by the Red Cross today, and that is Senator Pamela Helming and Senator April Baskin.

So congratulations to them.

But it goes to show, they're always -- it's always someone else. We've got a group of volunteers that do so much. And when you think of the American Red Cross, you do think of some of the local things they do.

But I Googled their mission statement. I wondered what would it say in writing. So it says "prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors." And that is exactly what they do. Whether it's a major catastrophe in some area -- in fact, it says Disaster Response, they respond to around 65,000 disasters annually.

Military support. They provide support and services, over a half a million services to veterans, service members and their families each year.

Blood donations. They do blood

drives and collect blood, almost 4.5 million blood donations and over 1 million platelet donations annually.

And then they also -- this group of volunteers take their time to train others on how to help as well. They train more than 5 million people annually in first aid, water safety, and other lifesaving skills.

And to Senator Mayer's point, many times I've come into the office, received an email that overnight, before I even heard that it occurred, yes, a family of five was displaced by a fire. But we know, right then and there, the American Red Cross was there to help. And they took care of that family. And we know who to contact to see if they need other help.

So these are the folks who don't ask for the recognition and the honor or, Senator Rivera, the cordialities of the house. That's what we were looking for, right? Right.

But, no, they don't look for it, but they deserve it. And so I'm proud that we're honoring them and recognizing them for all the wonderful work that they do.

And I proudly vote aye,

Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Ryan.

SENATOR RYAN: Thank you, Mr. President.

I rise today, I want to support the resolution. I certainly want to thank the American Red Cross for all the work that you do across the great State of New York and this great country.

All of our Red Cross volunteers here today have selflessly committed themselves to helping neighbors, their communities, and people in need for countless, countless hours. Your compassion and hard work is nothing short of extraordinary. And you certainly deserve all the credit that you get each and every day.

I too, as Senator Rivera had pointed out, I too would like to recognize my great constituent who I have the great privilege of serving, Roberta "Bobbie" Krukowski. I won't go through those again, because we've mentioned it, but I just want to say thank you for all that you do. Four thousand countless hours. You don't just volunteer and serve, you certainly have

built a capacity for volunteers for years to come, and I can't thank you enough.

So -- and Bobbie is more than just a volunteer, she is a mentor, she is a builder of teams and a compassionate leader.

So thank you, Senator Rivera, for bringing this resolution. I am proud to recognize Bobbie Krukowski's extraordinary service and the service of every single American Red Cross volunteer across the State of New York.

Thank you very much for your service.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Cooney.

SENATOR COONEY: Thank you, Mr. President. I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to rise and support this resolution.

I want to thank Senator Rivera for his leadership in bringing the resolution and for recognizing John Hatch, one of our wonderful Greater Rochester residents, and of course an outstanding volunteer for the American Red Cross.

I won't repeat what's already been said, but of course it should be said and noted

that since 2019, Mr. Hatch has served on nearly 20 disaster relief operations. And of course he goes and does so much more.

But one of the things I wanted to highlight for this body is his collaboration with other facets of disaster relief, making sure that we're supporting our development and communications staff in their fundraising efforts, most notably the telethons when disasters are held in other parts of our country.

Thanks to John's efforts in the fall of 2024, a telethon to support the relief efforts of Hurricanes Helene and Milton was one of the most successful in recent memory for the Western New York region -- again, thanks to John Hatch.

He is a dedicated volunteer, mobilizing the powers of many other volunteers to support the cornerstone of the Red Cross's mission. By recruiting and mentoring highly skilled volunteers, John has created an inclusive and supportive environment across Western New York.

He is the backbone to our Western New York operation, and we are grateful and

thankful for his commitment to New York State.

Mr. President, I vote aye.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Ramos on the resolution.

SENATOR RAMOS: Thank you, Mr. President.

I too rise in deep gratitude to the American Red Cross. I mean, we have had fires in the district where families are displaced. During Hurricane Ida, they arrived very quickly to help us cope with the aftermath.

And so for those at home who may be watching and may not know, people can actually call the Red Cross or even our offices -- and I just learned this, because I volunteered with them to do it in my district -- in order to have smoke alarms tested, installed. And we really want to ensure that everyone in our district is safe in that way.

I also want to use this moment to advocate for a very important budget item. In general, the American Red Cross could use the help, and we're hoping that the second floor helps us in that endeavor.

I have to say that right now the

American Red Cross is only able to provide victims of catastrophe with just three nights of stay in a hotel. And that's rarely enough for a family, especially a working-class family, to get back on their feet.

So if there is any way, shape or form that we can help the Red Cross help more people for a greater -- a longer period of time, that's going to go a long way, and that's probably the best possible way, to show gratitude to the volunteers and the staff of the American Red Cross.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Scarcella-Spanton.

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

And thank you to the Red Cross for all that you do.

Each March as we celebrate the Red Cross we must acknowledge that the celebration honors the compassion and humanitarian efforts of volunteers, donors and supporters who provide disaster relief daily.

A very proud moment for me, and I

have to recognize my constituent, John Waldman, who has taken me around the district to install alarms so that our homes on Staten Island and in Southern Brooklyn remain safe. And that was such a fun experience. I didn't know I was so handy with a hammer. I learned that that day, so thank you.

But I do know the Red Cross is helping to build a safer and more resilient future for all families. And I'm proud to be an advocate of the magnificent work that you all do every single day.

The Red Cross is special in my office each and every day because we also have one of the volunteers, Paul Matrecano, who's on my staff. And he actually deploys with the Red Cross missions.

So you have been there for fires and floods, prevention measures and everything in between, and we truly, truly appreciate the work that you do. So thank you. Thank you for being here. Thank you to all the volunteers.

And I proudly vote aye.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Bailey.

SENATOR BAILEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

Thank you, Senator Rivera, for this resolution.

It has become abundantly clear in my 43 years on this planet that angels are real and they often walk amongst us. And Red Cross, you are angels in physical form.

When there are calamities and disasters and tragedies happening in our districts -- like on January 24th, a fire happened in the Boston Secor Houses which displaced hundreds of residents. Before myself, the Speaker, and Councilmember Riley were able to get there, the Red Cross was there and you were there with a smile.

Think about that. You usually don't put disasters and smiles together, but the folks from the Red Cross are always smiling, always bringing out positivity. Because when they're deployed in these volunteer capacities, they're not being deployed -- most of the times. Sometimes John gets them to the candy store.

But they're not going to the candy store. They're not going to the county fair.

They're not going to happy events. They're going to life-changing incidents, and they do so with deference, respect, and love.

So I just want to say thank you to the Red Cross. And John and I, we've also changed a few alarms in our day. And I really appreciate the preparedness aspect that goes into what the Red Cross does.

Yes, they help out on-site. But they do their best to make sure they provide information to us as elected officials, our staffs, and our constituents about the ways that you should prepare yourself in the event of an emergency or a tragedy.

So, Red Cross, thank you for all that you do and all the people that you help. Continue to be a blessing upon us. And I proudly vote aye on the resolution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Rolison.

SENATOR ROLISON: Thank you, Mr. President.

Thank you, Senator Rivera, for this resolution honoring and highlighting the great

work of the Red Cross.

And I've spoken on this before. I had, you know, the good fortune of being a volunteer firefighter for 14 years, a cop for 26. So, so many times in my career, whether it was a fire scene or other types of issues that the Red Cross needed to be deployed, we would be saying "Has somebody called at Red Cross?" And "Is the Red Cross coming?"

Because as a fireman or a cop, you know, once that scene is either secured or the fire has been extinguished, there's not a whole heck of a lot you can do other than wait. And you're waiting with families and individuals who have suffered great losses.

And there is this overwhelming sense of relief when that red-and-white ERV, emergency response vehicle, shows up on the scene and individuals with red vests or jackets get out with clipboards, and they're going to find the individuals who have been affected to offer some comfort and then assistance.

And in 2008, when I retired from the PD -- I was a board member prior to that. Early on in the early 2000s, I was a board member for

the local Dutchess County Red Cross chapter. And then I had an opportunity to actually become a member of the staff.

And I know I've said this before, but there's always this great story I want to tell to conclude my remarks about the Red Cross, was that I became the development director, which was to help raise money and do press and things like that, but also was to follow-up with individuals who had been helped by our local Red Cross chapter.

And there was a fire in the Town of Beekman, an early-morning fire. It was a spring day. The family, their dog got out, off the back porch, and the house essentially was destroyed right before their eyes.

And in about a week we were following up just to make sure that, you know, they were now in a rental house, and I think insurance had kicked in for them. And to Senator Ramos's, three days is sometimes not enough because there are a lot of folks who don't even have insurance. So they're in a motel or temporary housing, and they're going to run out of that assistance. And that's not on the

Red Cross, that's just on funding in general.

So we had the opportunity to go meet with the family. And not that we wanted to relive the story, but they wanted to tell us. I was not at that fire that morning. And this is that they said. As they were out on the front lawn in their nightclothes watching their house consumed by fire, many local fire departments were there trying to save that house, which could not be done.

And it was the mom and the wife that said: "And I'm standing there, and then someone came up behind me and put their hand on my shoulder. I turned around, and it was a member of the Dutchess County chapter of the American Red Cross, who said, 'We're with the Red Cross, and we're here to help.'"

And she said at that point in time, with all that was going on and seeing their house destroyed, their lives essentially going up in smoke, a term that we use sometimes, she said: "I felt, even for a brief five minutes, that I knew everything was going to be okay because we were okay, and that the Red Cross was there."

So to the Red Cross and everyone

that helps fund the Red Cross, continue to do that.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Comrie.

SENATOR COMRIE: Thank you, Mr. President.

I rise today to support the resolution. I want to thank Senator Rivera for consistently bringing this resolution before us. I want to thank the Red Cross and all of the volunteers that consistently help.

In my district in Southeast Queens, unfortunately we have one of the highest needs because we have a lot of homeowners that have older houses. And with all of the gadgets nowadays, a lot of people are overwired and wind up with electrical fires in my district.

So I want to thank the Red Cross for what they're doing, for their continuing to make sure that they're installing smoke detectors, the programs that they're doing to have volunteers.

I would encourage anyone that's interested in doing volunteer work to volunteer

with the Red Cross. It's deeply satisfying, and it's a great opportunity to give back to your community in a direct way.

It is a time of year where the Red Cross is not only here to be celebrated, but also should be given an opportunity to get all of the resources they need so that they can move from three days. Because three days is not enough time for a family to get resettled after a tragedy.

So I would hope that we can consider that as we finalize the budget this year, to give the Red Cross a little bit more. Everybody comes to us in a budget year and says that they want a little bit more, but the Red Cross has earned a little bit more for their efforts.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Martins.

SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you, Mr. President.

I also rise to support this resolution. I want to thank the sponsor for bringing it.

And I also want to echo the efforts

of this great organization in our communities on Long Island, the president, Jose Dominguez, and the great work that they do. And we've heard examples throughout the state of the Red Cross appearing with our emergency responders at the time when our communities need the most.

And so yes, to the extent that we can get together and support them and provide them with more resources. It is rare in this body that we're able to celebrate an organization universally and everyone agree that it's an organization that not only deserves to be recognized here on the floor, but actually deserves our support and the support of this great state.

Because every dollar that you put into this organization, Mr. President, is returned a thousandfold in terms of the relief and help that it provides each and every one of our communities.

So not only are we talking about emergency preparedness, blood drives, and of course disaster relief, but great volunteers and examples of civic pride or civic relief in our communities.

And frankly, I want to again thank the sponsor for the opportunity to recognize this great organization statewide, but also a special mention to our great volunteers on Long Island as well.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Krueger.

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

Thank you for the resolution.

And many people have said a lot of things about the Red Cross, so I'm going to shift a little bit. I see many high school students here today with us. And a lot of us talk about the importance of civic education, and a lot of us are getting involved more in the importance of civic education. And frankly, we're all in politics, so we probably start with discussions of what does it mean to vote, what does it mean to be a member of our society when we hit 18 and up.

But I think, looking at the Red Cross and what they do, it helps really illustrate what I think is probably even the more

important modeling for civics education. Somebody said -- I found this quote -- "Civics is the operator's manual for our democracy." And volunteerism. And understanding the role we each play in making sure that our society works, that our democracy works, is for young people to understand it doesn't work on its own. It doesn't work just because we have a government.

That volunteerism in your own community, in all kinds of different ways, is critical, both in the kinds of responses you've just heard about the Red Cross playing in each of our communities. The obvious thing a lot of people know about the Red Cross, they collect blood. And what I think is really important in talking about that is not enough people are volunteering to donate blood.

And that's because I think we don't do a good enough job of explaining how important it is for us as a society, as a democracy, in every neighborhood, in every community, if we fail to get the blood donations we need or when we are successful at it.

And so I think one of the great values of having this discussion specific to the

Red Cross today -- and yes, obviously, it's budget time. We get it -- is that it's the importance of teaching the next generation and the next generation what it means to volunteer in their communities, to understand how none of us are independent of each other, we are all reliant on each other, and to understand that's what holds together our democracy in the long term.

So thank you for being educators of civics as well as all the other work you're doing. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Senator Baskin.

SENATOR BASKIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

And thank you to my colleague Senator Rivera for bringing this piece of legislation -- or this resolution, pardon me -- forward today.

I have sat here and listened to so many of my colleagues speak so eloquently about the wonderful community work that the American Red Cross has done in the great State of New York, but I'd like to share my sentiments

about being a beneficiary of their service and my gratitude to them.

In May of 2022, in my district, a domestic terrorist devised a plan to drive to Buffalo, New York, with one goal in mind: To kill as many Black people as possible.

And he was successful with robbing my district of 10 innocent lives of 10 individuals who were merely grocery shopping on a a Saturday afternoon.

We looked up in that tragedy, and there was our local Red Cross, who's led by Nick Bond in Western New York, to help our community heal.

Six months after that, Buffalo faced its deadly Christmas Blizzard of 2022, which again robbed our community of 50 lives. People froze to death. People in their cars thinking that they were heating themselves to get warmth, but they actually were going to -- and it ended in their demise. A tragic situation.

I remember myself, my power went out during that Christmas blizzard. I was at home with my baby boy, who was two years old at the time. We were preparing to watch "The Grinch Who

Stole Christmas." I had popped some popcorn. The lights went out.

And that's typical in upstate New York, for us to have snow blizzards, but this one continued. And after a few hours we got very, very cold. I got some sleeping bags and some pillows and made a bed for us in the bathroom so that we could warm ourselves until help would come. And it continued to get colder.

I would take my baby out of the tub every 30 minutes and run the hot shower so that the steam would heat us, and then let the water drain out, wipe out the tub, and get back in.

And this continued for a day before a neighbor came to our rescue and allowed me and my son to spend the next day in a closet in their home, which had heat.

A couple of months after that, the following Christmas I, being a single mom, had managed to save enough money to buy my first home for me and my children. And a couple of days after we bought the house, the house caught fire. And I remember waking up, working with law enforcement, working with the first responders to figure out the cause of the fire. And then

again, just like after the mass shooting, just like during the Christmas blizzard, just like they had done time and time again, there was a member of the American Red Cross there to hand me a debit card for me and my children to be able to get a hotel to stay for the night.

I am a chief advocate of this organization because of the good work that they do, and because they create a space for neighbors across the State of New York to have a place to give and to help each other. And right now I believe, Mr. President, at this time in our country, the greatest act that any legislator could do is to just be a neighbor and be kind to one another. That is more superior than any piece of legislation that we could ever pass in this honorable body.

And the Red Cross is teaching us right now how to do that. I'm not just an advocate or somebody that's going to fight in the state budget for this organization to continue to receive the funding that the need, but I'm also a beneficiary who, time and time again over the past recent years, has looked up and saw the Red Cross there at my rescue, to give me refuge,

to give me support, to give me and my babies a safe space.

And for that, I'm forever grateful and vote in favor of this resolution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

To our guests -- John Walton, Denise Bloise, Roberta Krukowski, John Hatch, Mary Davis, and all of the volunteers -- I welcome you on behalf of the Senate. We extend to you the privileges and courtesies of this house.

Please rise and be recognized.

(Enthusiastic standing ovation.)

THE PRESIDENT: The resolution was adopted on February 25th.

Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, the sponsors of today's resolutions would like to open them 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 Sutton for an introduction.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Sutton.

SENATOR SUTTON: Thank you, Mr. President.

Esteemed colleagues, today I stand with profound pride to recognize a remarkable group of young people visiting us from my home community of Brooklyn, students whose presence in this chamber represents not only personal achievement but the living promise of New York's future.

These students -- who actually come from my own elementary school, Magen David Yeshiva; my own high school, Yeshiva of Flatbush; and the school where three of my grandchildren attend, Barkai Yeshiva -- have shaped me, guided me, and instilled in me the values that led me to stand here in this hallowed chamber.

To see them seated in the gallery is deeply personal. It is a reminder that leadership does not happen in marble halls. That's not where it's born. It is nurtured in classrooms, in homes, and in communities that believe every child can make a difference.

For me, this moment carries

additional meaning. As the first Sephardic Jewish Senator from New York City to serve this body, I stand on the shoulders of generations who came before me seeking freedom, opportunity and dignity.

My grandfather, also named Sam A. Sutton, who passed through Greece coming to New York City in December of 1909, came with little more than faith, family, and an unshakable belief in America -- America, where they could give you a better tomorrow.

To the students: You are the heirs of that journey. Your families' stories, your traditions, your resilience, and your dreams are not separate from the story of this great state. They are part of what makes New York strong.

Our diversity is not a challenge to overcome. It is the strength to embrace. It is how innovation happens, how compassion grows, and how democracy renews itself generation after generation.

You are growing up in a very complicated world, one that will test your courage, your character, and your commitment to one another. But if you carry forward the values

that you've been taught -- respect for learning, responsibility for community, kindness to strangers, and faith in something larger than yourself -- there is no limit to what you can accomplish.

Some of you will become doctors, some teachers, artists, lawyers, entrepreneurs, and public servants. Maybe one of you will be standing in this very spot that I'm standing in now.

And when that day comes, I hope you will remember one thing about leadership. It is not about power. It is about serving the community. It is about lifting others as you climb. It's about leaving this world -- and listen to this -- leave this world as a more just, more compassionate, and more hopeful place than the one you find.

Today we do more than recognize your achievements. We affirm our belief in you. We place our confidence in your generation to carry forward the ideals of this great state.

On behalf of the New York State Senate, I welcome you, I congratulate you, and I thank you, because your presence here reminds all

of us why this institution exists: To build a future worthy of the next great generation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

(Applause.)

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

Please rise and be recognized much.

(Standing ovation.)

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Gianaris.

SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up the reading of the calendar.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 211, Senate Print 5105, by Senator Harckham, an act to amend the Mental Hygiene Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the 60th 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, 62.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 230, Senate Print 8741, by Senator Cleare, an act to amend the Elder Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 278, Senate Print 7202A, by Senator Hinchey, an act to amend the Penal Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This act shall take effect on the 60th 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, 62.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 358, Senate Print 1148, by Senator Gounardes, an act to amend the Public Authorities Law.

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 358, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan, Griffo, Lanza, Martins, Mattera, Oberacker, Rhoads, Stec, Walczyk and Weik.

Ayes, 50. Nays, 12.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 374, Senate Print 4925, by Senator Ramos, an act to amend the Labor Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the 180th day after it shall have become a law.

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Ramos to explain her vote.

SENATOR RAMOS: Thank you, Mr. President.

This bill is grounded on a simple idea. No one should have to endure bullying, intimidation or humiliation simply to do their job. Workplaces are places where people should be able to debate ideas, challenge one another, and advocate strongly for the issues they believe in. That is part of healthy institutions.

But disagreement should never turn into personal attacks, intimidation, or efforts to undermine someone's dignity. Many of us have experienced moments when someone suggests we are

not the right person to lead on an issue, not because of our work but because of assumptions about who we are or what we look like.

Those moments may seem small to the person saying them, but they send a clear signal about who is expected to lead and who is expected to step aside.

Others have seen how advocacy itself can become a reason to become targeted. Rumors spread, motives are questioned, accusations are made, or calls for investigations, based on little more than disagreement.

Over time, those kinds of behaviors do not just harm individuals, they discourage participation, silence voices, and weaken the institutions we are all here to serve.

This bill affirms something very basic. Professional workplaces require professional conduct. Disagreement is part of the job. But dignity must remain the standard. When people are treated with respect, they can do their best work. That's what this bill is about.

Thank you to the Public Employees Federation and, of course, our Majority Leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

I vote aye.

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

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: In relation to Calendar 374, voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Chan, Murray, Oberacker and O'Mara. Also Senator Walczyk.

Ayes, 56. Nays, 6.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 396, Senate Print 1535, by Senator Parker, an act to amend the Public Service 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 396, voting in the negative are Senators Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Helming, Martins, Mattera, Oberacker, O'Mara,

Rhoads, Stec, Walczyk and Weik.

Ayes, 51. Nays, 11.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 421, Senate Print 1050, by Senator Salazar, an act to amend the Correction Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This act shall take effect on the 30th 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: In relation to Calendar 421, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Martins, Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Palumbo, Rhoads, Rolison, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk, Weber and Weik.

Ayes, 40. Nays, 22.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number

436, Senate Print 6318A, by Senator May, an act to amend the Education 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 436, voting in the negative:

Senator Walczyk.

Ayes, 61. Nays, 1.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 439, Senate Print 417, by Senator Gianaris, an act to amend the Election Law.

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: In relation to Calendar 439, voting in the negative: Senators Gallivan and Ortt.

Ayes, 60. Nays, 2.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 440, Senate Print 569, by Senator May, an act to amend the Election 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 440, voting in the negative are Senators Ashby, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan, Gallivan, Griffo, Lanza, Martins, Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Rhoads, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk and Weik.

Ayes, 45. Nays, 17.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 444, Senate Print 7962, by Senator Gonzalez, an act to amend the Election 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: Ayes, 62.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 447, Senate Print 2051, by Senator Webb, an act to amend the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law.

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last section.

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

THE PRESIDENT: Call the roll.

(The Secretary called the roll.)

THE PRESIDENT: Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 448, Senate Print 7332, by Senator Ryan, an act to amend the State Administrative Procedure Act.

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: Senator Ryan to explain his vote.

SENATOR RYAN: Thank you, Mr. President. I appreciate it.

So if you're like me, when you're out in your district, your home district, you talk to a lot of small businesses. And when you do, you hear a consistent message. It's not just always about regulations, but it's about trying to figure out the information and how to obtain it. What rules may apply, and who to call when they need help or if they incur some barriers.

Right now sometimes the process can be unnecessarily complicated. A small business owner may spend countless hours navigating

different agencies' websites trying to locate guidance documents, compliance requirements, updates to regulations.

For large corporations with expansive legal teams or compliance teams, that may be manageable. But for small business owners, it sometimes is not. Small business owners are managing employees, they're advocating for new customers, serving their customers, doing payroll and every other thing that comes with running a small business. And those are barriers.

What this bill is about is cutting through that confusion by requiring state agencies that regulate small business to create a clearly identified section of their website, a small business regulatory nexus where business owners can easily find all of the rules that apply to them, clearly.

If we want businesses to succeed in the great State of New York, to grow, to hire workers and invest in their communities, government should be easy to navigate, especially when it comes to small business.

This bill is a practical,

commonsense step in that direction, and I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Announce the results.

THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 62.

THE PRESIDENT: The bill is passed.

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

SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President, returning to motions for a second.

On behalf of Senator Skoufis, I wish to call up Senate Print 5939B, recalled from the Assembly, which is now at the desk.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number 305, Senate Print 5939B, by Senator Skoufis, an act to amend the Public Health Law.

SENATOR GIANARIS: I 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 PRESIDENT: The bill is

restored to its place on Third Reading Calendar.

SENATOR GIANARIS: I offer the following amendments.

THE PRESIDENT: The amendments are received.

SENATOR GIANARIS: 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, March 12th, at 11:00 a.m.

THE PRESIDENT: On motion, the Senate stands adjourned until Thursday, March 12th, at 11:00 a.m.

(Whereupon, at 4:19 p.m., the Senate adjourned.)