

1 NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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4 THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

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9 ALBANY, NEW YORK

10 May 11, 2026

11 4:05 p.m.

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13
14 REGULAR SESSION

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18 SENATOR JEREMY COONEY, Acting President

19 ALEJANDRA N. PAULINO, ESQ., Secretary

P R O C E E D I N G S

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
Senate will come to order.

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

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

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: In the
absence of clergy, let us bow our heads in a
moment of silent reflection or prayer.

(Whereupon, the assemblage respected
a moment of silence.)

ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Reading
of the Journal.

THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Friday,
May 8, 2026, the Senate met pursuant to
adjournment. The Journal of Thursday, May 7,
2026, was read and approved. On motion, the
Senate adjourned.

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

Presentation of petitions.

Messages from the Assembly.

The Secretary will read.

THE SECRETARY: Senator Bailey

1 moves to discharge, from the Committee on Rules,
2 Assembly Bill Number 10710 and substitute it for
3 the identical Senate Bill Number 9599,
4 Third Reading Calendar 659.

5 Senator Griffo moves to discharge,
6 from the Committee on Local Government,
7 Assembly Bill Number 11008 and substitute it for
8 the identical Senate Bill Number 9973,
9 Third Reading Calendar 903.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: So
11 ordered.

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

17 Motions and resolutions.

18 Senator Gianaris.

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

21 On behalf of Senator Ryan, I wish to
22 call up Senate Print 611A, recalled from the
23 Assembly, which is now at the desk.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
25 Secretary will read.

1 (Pause off the record.)

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
3 allow me to correct myself.

4 On behalf of Senator Stavisky, I
5 wish to call up Senate Bill Number 611A, recalled
6 from the Assembly, which is now at the desk.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 Secretary will read.

9 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
10 795, Senate Print 611A, by Senator Stavisky, an
11 act to amend the Criminal Procedure Law.

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

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
15 Secretary will now call the roll on
16 reconsideration.

17 (The Secretary called the roll.)

18 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 55.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
20 is restored to its place on the Third Reading
21 Calendar.

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: I offer the
23 following amendments.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
25 amendments are received.

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

4 By Senator Myrie, page 16,
5 Calendar Number 540, Senate Print 1859;

6 Senator Sepúlveda, page 32,
7 Calendar Number 847, Senate Print 5037;

8 Senator Gonzalez, page 33,
9 Calendar Number 854, Senate Print 9051;

10 Senator Baskin, page 43,
11 Calendar Number 966, Senate Print 6020;

12 And Senator Kavanagh, page 24,
13 Calendar Number 724, Senate Print 9742.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
15 amendments are received, and the bills will
16 retain their place on the Third Reading Calendar.

17 Senator Gianaris.

18 SENATOR GIANARIS: There will now
19 be an immediate meeting of the Rules Committee in
20 Room 332.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There
22 will be an immediate meeting of the Rules
23 Committee in Room 332.

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: The Senate
25 stands at ease.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
2 Senate stands at ease.

3 (Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease
4 at 4:08 p.m.)

5 (Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at
6 4:14 p.m.)

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 Senate will return to order.

9 Senator Gianaris.

10 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
11 there's a report of the Rules Committee at the
12 desk.

13 Let's take that up, please.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
15 Secretary will read.

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

19 Senate Print 10262, by
20 Senator Serrano, an act making appropriations for
21 the support of government.

22 The bill is reported direct to third
23 reading.

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

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: All those
2 in favor of accepting the report please signify
3 by saying aye.

4 (Response of "Aye.")

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed,
6 nay.

7 (Response of "Nay.")

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
9 report of the Rules Committee is accepted.
10 Senator Gianaris.

11 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up
12 the supplemental calendar.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There's a
14 substitution at the desk.

15 The Secretary will read.

16 THE SECRETARY: Senator Serrano
17 moves to discharge, from the Committee on Rules,
18 Assembly Bill Number 11295 and substitute it for
19 the identical Senate Bill 10262, Third Reading
20 Calendar 999.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
22 substitution is so ordered.

23 The Secretary will read.

24 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
25 999, Assembly Bill Number 11295, by

1 Assemblymember Pretlow, an act making
2 appropriations for the support of government.

3 SENATOR GIANARIS: Is there a
4 message of necessity and appropriation at the
5 desk?

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There is
7 a message of necessity and appropriation at the
8 desk.

9 SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to accept
10 the message.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: All those
12 in favor of accepting the message, please signify
13 by saying aye.

14 (Response of "Aye.")

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed,
16 nay.

17 (Response of "Nay.")

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
19 message is accepted.

20 The bill is before the house.

21 SENATOR LANZA: Lay it aside.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
23 will be laid aside.

24 Senator Gianaris, that completes the
25 reading of the supplemental calendar.

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up
2 the controversial supplemental calendar.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
4 Secretary will ring the bell.

5 The Secretary will read.

6 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
7 999, Assembly Bill Number 11295, by
8 Assemblymember Pretlow, an act making
9 appropriations for the support of government.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
11 O'Mara, why do you rise?

12 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
13 Mr. President.

14 Will the sponsor yield for some
15 questions on this 11th extender bill?

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
17 sponsor will be Senator Serrano.

18 Senator Serrano, do you yield?

19 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
21 Senator yields.

22 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you. Thank
23 you, Senator.

24 Here we are on Monday, May 11th. We
25 are taking up the 11th extender bill. We're now

1 a month and a half late on this year's budget.
2 Can you tell us where we stand on an overall
3 budget agreement so we actually have budget bills
4 for this current year to consider?

5 Since the Governor announced we had
6 a deal last Thursday, five days ago, and yet
7 apparently there is still no deal, where does
8 this process stand?

9 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
10 Mr. President.

11 Senator, the negotiations are still
12 continuing. I think we're in the final stretch
13 here. And we are certainly very close to having
14 a set of budget bills to vote on here.

15 But you are correct, we are -- this
16 is our 11th extender. And this will cover us
17 until May 14th, which is Thursday. It does
18 appropriate \$2.9 billion to cover a host of
19 different issues.

20 But again, I cannot tell you for
21 sure exactly when we will have a full budget.
22 But the bill before us will get us at least to a
23 point where we can continue the operating of
24 state government.

25 So that's pretty much where we stand

1 right now.

2 SENATOR O'MARA: Okay, thank you.

3 Mr. President, will the Senator
4 continue to yield.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
6 sponsor yield?

7 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
9 sponsor yields.

10 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, do you
11 have any updates for us on the major policy
12 issues that have been holding up this process --
13 namely, the CLCPA, SEQR, auto insurance costs,
14 and a few others. Which of these have been
15 nailed down, which have not been nailed down?

16 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
17 Mr. President. Those conversations are certainly
18 winding down. And I think that there has been a
19 tremendous amount of progress made on all of the
20 different policy issues that you've mentioned.
21 And they've been widely reported in the media as
22 well.

23 But until we have a final set of
24 budget bills and language before us that we can
25 look at and -- it's hard to say exactly where we

1 are on those issues.

2 But I do feel very confident that we
3 are very close to having all of the outstanding
4 issues resolved, and certainly all of the math as
5 well and the actual budgeting of this budget. So
6 I do feel very confident that we will have more
7 clarity in the coming days, and hopefully a
8 budget to vote on.

9 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
10 Senator.

11 Mr. President, if the Senator will
12 continue to yield.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
14 sponsor yield?

15 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
17 sponsor yields.

18 SENATOR O'MARA: It's been
19 reported, Senator, that there's been a deal to
20 provide some \$1 billion of relief to ratepayers
21 in this state on their utility bills. Can you
22 tell us how firm that agreement is?

23 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
24 Mr. President. Again, these are -- these sort of
25 fall under the heading of policy issues that we

1 will not know until we have a final agreement.

2 I do believe all of those are
3 important issues. All of the policy issues that
4 you've mentioned, both now and in previous
5 discussions on extenders, are all critically
6 important to residents of the State of New York.
7 And I feel confident that we will get to a
8 resolution very soon.

9 And we're close. We're I think in
10 the final stretch here, and we're just getting
11 everything together. And hopefully we will have
12 budget language to vote on the remaining budget
13 bills.

14 SENATOR O'MARA: Through you,
15 Mr. President, if the Senator will continue to
16 yield.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
18 sponsor yield?

19 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
21 sponsor yields.

22 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, last
23 Monday you informed us that there were indeed
24 table targets of \$380 million. I have not heard
25 of any joint budget conference committees having

1 been scheduled to distribute those funds amongst
2 the various areas of state government.

3 Can you tell us where we stand on
4 joint conference committees and the formal
5 distribution of that \$380 million?

6 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
7 Mr. President. Thank you for that question,
8 Senator O'Mara.

9 My understanding is the table
10 targets are actually \$385 million.

11 As far as the joint conference
12 committees, I don't know of any scheduled at this
13 time. But rest assured, I know that that
14 allocation for table targets is being utilized as
15 we wind down this budget process.

16 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

17 Mr. President, if the Senator will
18 continue to yield.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
20 sponsor yield?

21 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
23 sponsor yields.

24 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, do you
25 know, can you tell us whether or not these joint

1 budget sub-conference committees are going to be
2 held at all?

3 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
4 Mr. President. To my knowledge, there aren't any
5 scheduled at this time.

6 SENATOR O'MARA: Through you,
7 Mr. President, if the Senator will yield.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
9 sponsor yield?

10 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
12 sponsor yields.

13 SENATOR O'MARA: Can you tell us
14 whether or not they are actually going to be held
15 before we finalize this budget?

16 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
17 Mr. President. Again, it's difficult to answer
18 that question because I have no information on
19 that.

20 But just as a reminder, the bill
21 before the house doesn't deal with any of those
22 issues. This is a budget extender bill to
23 appropriate for the continuation of state
24 government and things like payroll costs and
25 things for -- the Commuter Transportation

1 Mobility Tax, WIC payments, and other important
2 payments.

3 SENATOR O'MARA: Mr. President, on
4 the bill.

5 Thank you, Senator Serrano.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
7 O'Mara on the bill.

8 SENATOR O'MARA: Mr. President,
9 we're no further along today than we were last
10 Thursday when the Governor announced that there
11 was a deal on this budget.

12 We're still in limbo on all of the
13 major policy issues. We have no information from
14 the Majority where these stand, which of those
15 may have been nailed down and agreed to, which
16 ones are open and outstanding, and what the issue
17 is that is open and outstanding on those major
18 policy issues that New Yorkers deserve to know
19 where the majorities of this Legislature and the
20 Governor are going to take the State of New York
21 in regards to these very significant policy
22 issues that are holding this budget up.

23 It's very concerning to me that
24 there is no commitment to hold the budget
25 conference committees to ultimately determine how

1 the table targets will be distributed. My guess
2 is and hunch is that they probably won't be held.
3 As they haven't been held in prior years under
4 this Majority and under this Governor.

5 That we will get the budget bills in
6 the dead of night, and we'll be asked to vote on
7 them that same night, as has been done far too
8 often in this Legislature.

9 You know, we are now six weeks late
10 on this budget. We are now eight days away from
11 every school district in this state voting on its
12 budget, not knowing what amount of money is going
13 to be designated in this budget for the voters to
14 vote on.

15 Those budgets are already in print.
16 They've already been decided based on a number
17 that they've guessed at, at this point. If we
18 had a budget done before the budget votes of
19 those schools next Tuesday, at least the voters
20 might have a chance to find out whether those
21 school districts have allocated too much or not
22 enough state aid in those figures.

23 And if they've calculated too little
24 state aid, that means the property tax levies in
25 these school districts are going to be raised

1 further than they would need to be raised if that
2 aid was coming from the state. And voters would
3 have a decision to make and say, Well, no, this
4 budget's too much -- it's not needed. It's over
5 and above what the state aid number was factored
6 into formulating that budget.

7 And voters could say, No, we're not
8 going to support that budget because we want it
9 to be revised to include the accurate state aid
10 figure.

11 There's discussions of this
12 \$1 billion to be returned to ratepayers in some
13 form or fashion. I'd like some explanation to
14 the ratepayers of this state why it's only a
15 billion dollars being discussed.

16 Why isn't the full \$3 billion that
17 NYSERDA and the utility companies of this state
18 are holding in escrow for further green projects
19 to go forward -- throwing money down the drain
20 more and more, and not returning it to the
21 ratepayers who are in desperate need. Only a
22 third of what's being held is being considered to
23 be returned to those ratepayers.

24 And that amount is basically built
25 into NYSERDA's financial plan for the next

1 several years out, to have that excess in its
2 coffers rather than in the pockets of the
3 ratepayers of New York State.

4 I just want to know really what the
5 Governor and the majorities of this Legislature
6 are really doing about the affordability crisis
7 we have in New York State. And that we hear, day
8 in and day out, about the affordability struggles
9 in this state, and yet the State Budget continues
10 to rise. Now it's an estimated \$268 billion,
11 around that, is going to be approved --
12 \$15 billion more than last year.

13 As I've said many times, the
14 spending in this state is out of control. It's
15 unsustainable. And it's only exacerbating the
16 affordability issues that we have in this state.
17 And it's only going to further exacerbate those
18 issues as we continue to have policies in this
19 state that drive businesses out, that drive
20 people out. We'll have less larger taxpayers so
21 the amount of spending is going to be spread
22 about even more against lower-income households,
23 which is not fair. It's not just.

24 And we're making the wrong policy
25 designations to move this state forward so we can

1 have some affordability, some semblance of
2 affordability so that New Yorkers can afford to
3 stay here and raise their families, so that
4 businesses will want to stay here and invest and
5 provide the jobs that New Yorkers need to sustain
6 themselves and their families.

7 You know, we now, in this budget
8 extender, have allocated \$23.1 billion towards
9 this year's budget. Now, that's only 8.6 percent
10 of what the overall budget would be at
11 \$268 billion. But an alarming fact is that that
12 amount of \$23 billion is in excess of the entire
13 budgets of 22 states in this country, just to
14 show you how out of whack our spending is in this
15 state. Eleven to 12 times more than what
16 22 states are in this -- yeah, they're smaller
17 states, I get it. But our spending per capita in
18 these state budgets is out of control.

19 And there's nothing that's been
20 shown to be being done or even considered by the
21 Governor or the majorities of the Legislature in
22 going after that issue, going after these
23 uncontrolled budgets, going after the impact
24 they're having on businesses and households in
25 this state, with no relief in sight.

1 Thank you, Mr. President.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
3 you, Senator O'Mara.

4 Are there any other Senators wishing
5 to be heard?

6 Seeing and hearing none, debate is
7 now closed.

8 Senator Gianaris.

9 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
10 Mr. President. We've agreed to restore this bill
11 to the noncontroversial calendar.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
13 will be restored to the noncontroversial
14 calendar.

15 Read the last section.

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

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
19 roll.

20 (The Secretary called the roll.)

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
22 the results.

23 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
24 Calendar 999, voting in the negative:
25 Senator Weik.

1 Ayes, 59. Nays, 1.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
3 is passed.

4 Senator Gianaris.

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
6 let's return now to motions and resolutions and
7 recognize Senator Sanders for an introduction.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
9 Sanders for an introduction.

10 SENATOR SANDERS: Thank you,
11 Mr. President.

12 As the president knows, I'm sure, in
13 1787 Richard Allen and Absalom Jones were tossed
14 out of the Methodist Episcopalian Church in
15 Philadelphia for a simple crime. Their crime?
16 Praying. They wanted to pray to God with other
17 people. These people were white, and they were
18 Black, and they were tossed out.

19 This led to many different things,
20 including the creation of the first Black
21 denomination -- the AME church, the
22 African Methodist Episcopalian church, was
23 created.

24 That church has of course been at
25 the forefront of many of the human rights

1 struggles that the world has seen. To speak of
2 them would take days, if not months. But they
3 have been at the forefront.

4 In that tradition, the Allen AME
5 church, located in my favorite borough, Queens,
6 is also a church that has been at the forefront
7 of every human rights struggle that there is.
8 And now that it is under the guidance, the
9 pastorship of Pastor Green, we expect nothing but
10 great things from it.

11 Mr. President, will you let them
12 know that their trip up here has been
13 well-received?

14 And now that I have introduced them,
15 Pastor Green, we thank you for coming up here
16 with your congregation.

17 Thank you, Mr. President.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
19 you, Senator Sanders.

20 To Pastor Green and our guests, I
21 welcome you on behalf of the Senate. We extend
22 to you the privileges and courtesies of this
23 house.

24 Please rise and be recognized.

25 (Standing ovation.)

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
2 Gianaris.

3 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
4 we have another introduction, this time by
5 Senator Hinchey.

6 Please recognize Senator Hinchey.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
8 Hinchey for an introduction.

9 SENATOR HINCHEY: Thank you,
10 Mr. President.

11 If you like a good underdog story, a
12 real David versus Goliath, then you need to know
13 what happened in Middletown, New York, in the
14 early 1990s. It happened because of the grit and
15 determination of students and their extraordinary
16 teacher, named Fred Isseks.

17 If you were one of Fred's students,
18 he taught you that you learned by doing. In his
19 pioneering Electronic English class, he handed
20 students video cameras and together they
21 investigated rumors of contamination at their
22 local landfill, the kind that showed up through
23 sludgy tap water and birth defects in local
24 children.

25 These teenagers, backed by their

1 teacher's belief in them, became key
2 investigators. They interviewed their neighbors
3 living with the consequences of pollution and
4 collected samples from the landfill that showed
5 dangerous levels of ammonia, arsenic and other
6 toxic substance.

7 And yet reporters brushed them off.
8 Local officials put up roadblocks. But still
9 they pushed forward. Through the work of classes
10 from 1991 to '97, they uncovered a conspiracy of
11 toxic dumping, Mafia involvement, and political
12 corruption in their hometown.

13 Despite being underestimated by
14 those in power at every turn, they also gained
15 allies. Among them was my father, who was
16 Assemblyman and the chair of the Environmental
17 Conservation Committee at the time. He
18 spearheaded hearings and investigations, which
19 uncovered a vast organized-crime ring dumping
20 toxic materials across the state that led to more
21 than 20 convictions and was a defining moment for
22 me growing up, watching all of that in action.

23 Incredibly, we are not only able to
24 learn about what happened, we can see it unfold.
25 Fred and his students captured about 500 hours of

1 archival video footage, and in 2025 directors
2 Jesse Moss and Amanda McBaine turned it into the
3 acclaimed documentary Teenage Wasteland.

4 The film shows us the incredible
5 gift Fred gave his students. He taught them that
6 being in a democracy means believing it's yours
7 to protect.

8 We feel the turbulence of politics
9 today, and we know that the antidote to apathy in
10 our democratic process is civic courage, because
11 the only plague to democracy is indifference.

12 Fred and his students were a model
13 for the kind of change we can make if we stay
14 engaged, and that is a beautiful thing.

15 So tonight, at 6 p.m., I invite
16 everyone to join us for a screening at the
17 State Museum, for a free screening of Teenage
18 Wasteland, and the chance to meet the people who
19 unearthed this piece of Hudson Valley and state
20 history, several of whom are here with us today.

21 They are Fred Isseks, the mentor,
22 former teacher, and believer in the power of
23 collective action, and David Birmingham, one of
24 the former students whose bravery and persistence
25 helped uncover the truth. They are joined today

1 with their families.

2 Mr. President, please welcome them
3 to the chamber, thank them for their incredible
4 work. Everyone should check out this film that
5 the students created called Garbage, Gangsters
6 and Greed. I believe that still may be on
7 YouTube, but I'm sure we can get a copy.

8 And please give them all the
9 cordialities and privileges of the chamber.

10 Thank you very much.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
12 you, Senator Hinchey. We thank you for your
13 work.

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

17 Please rise and be recognized.

18 (Standing ovation.)

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
20 Gianaris.

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
22 let's take up previously adopted Resolution 1343,
23 by Senator Gallivan, read its title and recognize
24 Senator Gallivan.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The

1 Secretary will read.

2 THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1343, by
3 Senator Gallivan, memorializing Governor Kathy
4 Hochul to proclaim May 10-16, 2026, as
5 Police Week in the State of New York.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
7 Gallivan on the resolution.

8 SENATOR GALLIVAN: Thank you,
9 Mr. President.

10 Law enforcement has been a part of
11 my life as long as I can remember, and so I rise
12 in support of Police Week in New York State and
13 across the country.

14 We all know the job of a police
15 officer is dangerous and difficult. We were all
16 reminded of this just last week when we gathered
17 in the Plaza here in Albany, pausing in solemn
18 remembrance of 56 officers who made the ultimate
19 sacrifice, and adding their names to the New York
20 State Police Officer Memorial's black granite
21 walls.

22 Their names, and the names of the
23 other fallen police officers etched on memorials
24 from Albany to Washington, along with the nearly
25 60,000 police officers who are assaulted each

1 year while on the job, remind us of the cost of
2 our freedom.

3 These fathers, mothers, brothers,
4 sisters, sons and daughters, sacrifice family
5 dinners, holidays and personal safety so that the
6 rest of us can live the lives we do, safe and
7 secure in our homes and communities.

8 We're fortunate and grateful that
9 hundreds of thousands of dedicated individuals
10 have taken the oath to serve and protect our
11 communities across the country, despite the risks
12 and challenges they face.

13 As we honor all who have fallen, let
14 us also thank all who have served -- thank them
15 for their service, their sacrifice, their
16 dedication, and their steadfast protection of our
17 families and our communities.

18 And we can support them,
19 Mr. President, with a commitment to providing the
20 policies, tools and training they need to protect
21 us and to ensure they return home safely to their
22 own families each and every day.

23 I ask my colleagues to join me in
24 calling on the Governor to proclaim this week
25 Police Officers Week in the State of New York.

1 Thank you, Mr. President.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
3 you, Senator Gallivan.

4 Senator Chan on the resolution.

5 SENATOR CHAN: Thank you,
6 Mr. President. I feel compelled to stand up and
7 speak on behalf of Police Week.

8 And I want to thank Senator Gallivan
9 for introducing this resolution.

10 As a retired police officer, I can
11 honestly say and speak with a clear conscience
12 that I did my job to the best of my ability, and
13 with public service in mind. I can't keep
14 account of how many people I helped, but it was
15 many and many.

16 Today's atmosphere in regards to
17 police officers has changed. I feel very bad for
18 them because the public opinion about the police
19 is definitely on the wrong side.

20 And I would hate for any new police
21 officers today to call this their good old days,
22 because I had my good old days and my
23 predecessors had their good old days. And I
24 don't want this kind of an atmosphere to be their
25 good old days, especially to the families of all

1 the police officers that gave their lives, made
2 the ultimate sacrifice, so that we could stand
3 here today.

4 I just wanted to say thank you, and
5 thank you for still running around out there.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
7 you, Senator Chan.

8 Senator Rolison on the resolution.

9 SENATOR ROLISON: Thank you,
10 Mr. President.

11 I want to thank the sponsor,
12 Senator Gallivan, for introducing this
13 resolution.

14 I too attended the memorial of last
15 weekend. I remember being here many times over
16 during my career as a Town of Poughkeepsie police
17 officer. The memorial was dedicated in 1991.
18 And every single service at that memorial is
19 special. It is special to remember the lives
20 that were lost, the families that were affected,
21 and the communities also, Mr. President, that
22 were affected by the loss of members of law
23 enforcement.

24 This year there were 56 names added
25 to the memorial.

1 And this year was a special year for
2 members of the City of Poughkeepsie Police
3 Department and the greater City of Poughkeepsie
4 community. This was the 15th anniversary of the
5 death of Detective John Falcone, who was shot and
6 killed on February 1, 2011, after he and other
7 officers responded to a shots-fired call during
8 the day near the Poughkeepsie Train Station.

9 Ultimately John lost his life
10 because an individual who was there who had just
11 actually killed his wife -- which, at the time,
12 the officers did not even know that was the
13 genesis of the shots-fired call in a
14 domestic violence incident -- and John, in trying
15 to apprehend this individual, was shot and
16 killed.

17 And I have attended many of those
18 anniversaries down at the site by the
19 Poughkeepsie Train Station. This year was no
20 different. But thinking about John's family, his
21 mom and dad -- his mom has since left us, but his
22 father of course was there. And it is very
23 comforting to know that there were police
24 officers from all over the Greater Dutchess
25 County and Ulster County area to remember John.

1 And on that particular morning I saw
2 John and his City of Poughkeepsie police car, and
3 I waved at John. And I don't think he saw me.
4 He was at a traffic light in the City of
5 Poughkeepsie. And then several hours later, John
6 would be gone. And it shows you the sacrifices
7 that can come in an instant, and that happened
8 that day.

9 And I can also say, Mr. President,
10 as this happens unfortunately throughout this
11 great state of ours all too often, that there are
12 people that are left behind. And in the City of
13 Poughkeepsie of course it was his family, but it
14 was the greater City of Poughkeepsie community
15 that loved John. And they felt that loss just
16 like his family, because John was part of that
17 family.

18 So today, Mr. President, I want
19 to -- again, I want to thank the sponsor. I want
20 to thank all the police officers and their
21 families that make sacrifices for us every single
22 day.

23 But today, Mr. President, on the
24 15th year of John Falcone's death, I'm
25 remembering Detective John Falcone.

1 Thank you, Mr. President. I proudly
2 vote aye.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
4 you, Senator Rolison.

5 Senator Weik on the resolution.

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

8 Police Week has always been a big
9 deal in my family. It's always been a week of
10 celebrating and acknowledging all the hard work
11 that law enforcement does. We typically will go
12 out to Yaphank headquarters, which is Suffolk
13 County police headquarters, to see all the
14 different skills that law enforcement is required
15 to do, whether it's helicopters, Marine Bureau,
16 highway officers, and the many, many lifesaving
17 skills that they need to acquire and to be able
18 to perform in order to save all of us on our
19 worst day.

20 And it's usually the most
21 interesting place you can be, and to see how many
22 different things they have to do.

23 My late uncle, who was deputy
24 Suffolk County police commissioner back in the
25 eighties, is actually in the Suffolk County

1 Museum. He was shot in the line of duty and many
2 years later passed away due to those injuries.
3 So it's always been something of my family that
4 we celebrate law enforcement.

5 Police Week means a celebration for
6 all families of law enforcement, to be able to
7 acknowledge what a difficult job this is. Every
8 day when my husband put on his uniform and left
9 the house, I did not know if he was going to
10 return that day. And now, as a mom, I have that
11 same worry about my son, who's a state trooper.

12 It's a difficult job -- not just
13 being law enforcement police officers, but it's a
14 difficult job to be the family of law
15 enforcement. They perform so many good deeds,
16 whether it's helping someone who got a flat tire
17 on the side of the road.

18 But then when you read in the news
19 how many people get hit and killed while they're
20 changing a tire on the side of the road, you
21 realize the dangers. You know, my husband was
22 hit and severely injured, like so many other
23 officers on the job. Luckily, he's still alive,
24 thank goodness.

25 But we don't see that with so many

1 officers. And that's why we have these
2 memorials. My husband always attended the
3 memorial in Washington, D.C., and now I get the
4 great privilege to be able to attend the ones
5 that we have here in Albany, which truly means so
6 much to us, the families of law enforcement.

7 But more than that, I want all of my
8 dear police officers to know how much we love and
9 support the work that you do, and that there are
10 so many people out there that rely on you and
11 think the world of you.

12 And I want to thank all of our
13 law enforcement, today more than any other day.
14 We love you, we support you, and we're here for
15 you.

16 Thank you.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
18 you, Senator Weik.

19 Senator Ryan on the resolution.

20 SENATOR RYAN: Thank you,
21 Mr. President.

22 I want to say thank you to Senator
23 Gallivan for bringing this up.

24 I just want to mention I too was at
25 the memorial service, and it brings back

1 memories. In April of 2024, a high-speed chase,
2 two officers were led in the chase. The person
3 who led them on that chase went back to their
4 house, barricaded themselves in. More than
5 100 law enforcement officers responded to that
6 scene after a six-hour standoff.

7 Two officers, Officers Hoosock and
8 Jensen, were brutally murdered, gunned down that
9 terrible night. And it was a bad week, month,
10 for law enforcement leaving behind families.

11 So I too want to mention that. And,
12 you know, that scenario tragically happens far
13 too many times.

14 So I want to say, to our state law
15 enforcement agencies, to our county sheriffs
16 across the state, to our local town and village
17 municipalities, our police officers, to our
18 police chiefs, our detectives, our lieutenants,
19 but also to -- because I'm a union guy, our union
20 rank-and-file police members, I want to say
21 thank you.

22 Thank you for all you do. Thank you
23 for putting on the badge. And thank you for
24 putting on the uniform and keeping us -- keeping
25 us safe and allowing us to sleep at night,

1 knowing that there's somebody out there making
2 sure that our communities are safe.

3 So I want to say thanks again. And,
4 you know, we owe you a debt of gratitude.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
6 you, Senator Ryan.

7 Senator Myrie on the resolution.

8 SENATOR MYRIE: Thank you,
9 Mr. President.

10 I just wanted to thank
11 Senator Gallivan for bringing this resolution.

12 We have very spirited conversations
13 in this chamber in the Codes Committee around
14 public safety, but there's rarely if ever a time
15 that our families have to worry about whether we
16 will return home from the job that we do for
17 people.

18 And this is something that everyone
19 who puts on a uniform, their family has to endure
20 on a daily basis.

21 So I just want to say thank you for
22 the service that you provide to keep us safe. We
23 are grateful for that service, we appreciate that
24 service. And I'll be proudly voting in the
25 affirmative for this resolution.

1 Thank you.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
3 you, Senator Myrie.

4 The resolution was adopted on
5 January 13th.

6 Senator Gianaris.

7 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
8 let's take up previously adopted Resolution 1851,
9 by Senator Sepúlveda, read that resolution's
10 title and call on Senator Sepúlveda.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
12 Secretary will read.

13 THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1851, by
14 Senator Sepúlveda, commemorating Dominicans in
15 Albany, a celebratory event of empowerment, on
16 May 11, 2026.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
18 Sepúlveda on the resolution.

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

22 Today I rise before this chamber
23 with a deep sense of pride and a steadfast
24 commitment to the communities that enrich and
25 strengthen the great State of New York.

1 I have the honor of introducing a
2 resolution to recognize the Dominicans in Albany
3 event. It's happening today in the Well. It's
4 been going on since 10:00 this morning.

5 New York State is the home to the
6 largest Dominican community outside of the
7 Dominican Republic, with about 900,000 of them
8 calling New York State home. They live in the
9 Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn,
10 Staten Island, and all the other counties
11 throughout the State of New York.

12 Dominicans have become a central
13 part of the social, cultural, economic, and civic
14 fabric of New York. Their contributions continue
15 to shape the industry, strength, and future of
16 our great state and great country.

17 Along with my Dominican colleagues
18 in the Assembly, today we aim to celebrate and
19 honor the Dominican community, a community that
20 has contributed immeasurably to the economic,
21 cultural and social growth of our great state and
22 nation.

23 The Dominican presence in this
24 region tells us a story of constant hard work,
25 sacrifice, entrepreneurship, and dreams built

1 through determination and perseverance.

2 This resolution is not merely a
3 symbolic act; it is an institutional recognition
4 of a community that has helped strengthen and
5 shape the diverse identity of New York State. It
6 also serves as a reminder that our great state
7 grows stronger when we embrace our differences
8 and celebrate our roots.

9 To my colleagues, I respectfully ask
10 for your support on this resolution -- not only
11 as a legislative gesture, but as an affirmation
12 of the values that unite us. New York State is
13 built by immigrants, enriched by diversity, and
14 guided by the hope of a better future for all.

15 Now in Spanish. {Delivering address
16 in Spanish.}

17 Thank you. I vote aye.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
19 you, Senator Sepúlveda.

20 Senator Chan on the resolution.

21 SENATOR CHAN: Thank you,
22 Mr. President.

23 I rise to support Senator Sepúlveda
24 because I proudly represent the neighborhood of
25 Sunset Park, in Brooklyn, with a large Dominican

1 community.

2 I want to especially thank my older
3 daughter Elizabeth's godmother. I'm giving her a
4 shout out: Maria Padilla, who is in fact
5 Dominican. And she's happily retired in
6 Florida -- a retired cop, so she gets a double
7 thanks today, both as a police officer and as a
8 Dominican woman who is the godmother to my child.

9 And I want to thank the Hispanic
10 community in my neighborhood of Sunset Park,
11 especially the Dominicans. We have many eateries
12 that I enjoy very much, from the chicharron to
13 the pernil, and the Senator knows what I'm
14 talking about.

15 So I thank you for this resolution.
16 I proudly support it.

17 Thank you.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
19 you, Senator Chan.

20 The resolution was adopted on
21 April 21st.

22 Senator Gianaris.

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
24 the sponsors of today's resolutions would like to
25 open them for cosponsorship.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
2 resolutions are open for cosponsorship.

3 Should you choose not to be a
4 cosponsor, please notify the desk.

5 Senator Gianaris.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up
7 the calendar.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
9 Secretary will read.

10 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
11 215, Senate Print 7618B, by Senator Hinchey, an
12 act to amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
14 last section.

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

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
19 roll.

20 (The Secretary called the roll.)

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
22 the results.

23 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
24 Calendar 215, voting in the negative are
25 Senators Ashby, Borrello, O'Mara, Ortt, Stec,

1 Walczyk and Weik.

2 Ayes, 53. Nays, 7.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
4 is passed.

5 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
6 258, Senate Print 1676, by Senator Skoufis, an
7 act to amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
9 last section.

10 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
11 act shall take effect one year after it shall
12 have become a law.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
14 roll.

15 (The Secretary called the roll.)

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
17 the results.

18 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
19 Calendar 258, voting in the negative are
20 Senators Ashby, Borrello, Chan, Gallivan, Griffo,
21 Helming, Martinez, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt,
22 Rhoads, Stec, Walczyk, Weber and Weik.

23 Ayes, 45. Nays, 15.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
25 is passed.

1 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
2 262, Senate Print 4691B, by Senator Cleare, an
3 act to amend the Environmental Conservation Law.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
5 last section.

6 THE SECRETARY: Section 3. This
7 act shall take effect on the 30th day after it
8 shall have become a law.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
10 roll.

11 (The Secretary called the roll.)

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
13 the results.

14 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
15 Calendar 262, voting in the negative are
16 Senators Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Chan,
17 Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Mattera, Murray,
18 Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt, Rhoads, Stec, Tedisco,
19 Walczyk and Weik.

20 Ayes, 44. Nays, 16.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
22 is passed.

23 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
24 512, Senate Print 703, by Senator Krueger, an act
25 to amend the Agriculture and Markets Law.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
2 last section.

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

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
6 roll.

7 (The Secretary called the roll.)

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
9 the results.

10 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
11 Calendar 512, voting in the negative:
12 Senator Brisport.

13 Ayes, 59. Nays, 1.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
15 is passed.

16 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
17 659, Assembly Bill Number 10710, by
18 Assemblymember Dilan, an act to amend the
19 Insurance Law.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
21 last section.

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

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
25 roll.

1 (The Secretary called the roll.)

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
3 the results.

4 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
5 Calendar 659, voting in the negative are
6 Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick,
7 Chan, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Martins,
8 Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt,
9 Palumbo, Rhoads, Rolison, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk,
10 Weber and Weik.

11 Ayes, 38. Nays, 22.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
13 is passed.

14 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
15 746, Senate Print 9611, by Senator Mayer, an act
16 to amend Chapter 217 of the Laws of 2015.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
18 last section.

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

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
22 roll.

23 (The Secretary called the roll.)

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
25 the results.

1 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
3 is passed.

4 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
5 760, Senate Print 7053, by Senator Webb, an act
6 to amend the County Law.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
8 last section.

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

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
12 roll.

13 (The Secretary called the roll.)

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
15 the results.

16 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
18 is passed.

19 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
20 801, Senate Print 4389, by Senator May, an act to
21 amend the Executive Law.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
23 last section.

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

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
2 roll.

3 (The Secretary called the roll.)

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
5 the results.

6 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
7 Calendar 801, voting in the negative:
8 Senator Brisport.

9 Ayes, 59. Nays, 1.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
11 is passed.

12 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
13 839, Senate Print 88A, by Senator Gianaris, an
14 act to amend the Election Law.

15 SENATOR LANZA: Lay it aside.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
17 will be laid aside.

18 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
19 856, Senate Print 8199, by Senator Sanders, an
20 act to direct the Department of Financial
21 Services to conduct a study on the banking
22 development district program.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
24 last section.

25 THE SECRETARY: Section 4. This

1 act shall take effect immediately.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
3 roll.

4 (The Secretary called the roll.)

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
6 the results.

7 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
8 Calendar 856, voting in the negative:
9 Senator Walczyk.

10 Ayes, 59. Nays, 1.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
12 is passed.

13 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
14 871, Senate Print 9331, by Senator Ramos, an act
15 to amend the Workers' Compensation Law.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
17 last section.

18 THE SECRETARY: Section 5. This
19 act shall take effect on the 60th day after it
20 shall have become a law.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
22 roll.

23 (The Secretary called the roll.)

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
25 the results.

1 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
2 Calendar 871, voting in the negative are
3 Senators Lanza, Walczyk and Weik.

4 Ayes, 57. Nays, 3.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
6 is passed.

7 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
8 893, Senate Print 9677, by Senator Baskin, an act
9 in relation to enacting the "City of Buffalo
10 Historic Preservation Receivership Act."

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
12 last section.

13 THE SECRETARY: Section 12. This
14 act shall take effect on the 90th day after it
15 shall have become a law.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
17 roll.

18 (The Secretary called the roll.)

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
20 the results.

21 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
23 is passed.

24 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
25 897, Senate Print 265, by Senator Harckham, an

1 act in relation to directing State Board of
2 Real Property Tax Services to conduct a study on
3 real property tax saturation.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
5 last section.

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

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
9 roll.

10 (The Secretary called the roll.)

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
12 the results.

13 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
15 is passed.

16 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
17 903, Assembly Bill Number 11008, by
18 Assemblymember Hunter, an act to amend the
19 County Law.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
21 last section.

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

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
25 roll.

1 (The Secretary called the roll.)
2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
3 the results.
4 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.
5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
6 is passed.
7 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
8 918, Senate Print 9848, by Senator Salazar, an
9 act to amend the Court of Claims Act.
10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
11 last section.
12 THE SECRETARY: Section 2. This
13 act shall take effect immediately.
14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
15 roll.
16 (The Secretary called the roll.)
17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
18 the results.
19 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
20 Calendar 918, voting in the negative are
21 Senators Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Rhoads and
22 Walczyk.
23 Ayes, 57. Nays, 3.
24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
25 is passed.

1 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
2 945, Senate Print 9206, by Senator Lanza, an act
3 to amend Chapter 306 of the Laws of 2011.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
5 last section.

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

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
9 roll.

10 (The Secretary called the roll.)

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
12 the results.

13 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 60.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
15 is passed.

16 Calendar Number 966 will be laid
17 aside. It is high.

18 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
19 971, Senate Print 3366, by Senator Rivera, an act
20 to amend the Public Health Law.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
22 last section.

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

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the

1 roll.

2 (The Secretary called the roll.)

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
4 the results.

5 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
6 Calendar 971, voting in the negative are
7 Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick,
8 Chan, Gallivan, Griffio, Helming, Lanza, Martins,
9 Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt,
10 Palumbo, Rhoads, Rolison, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk,
11 Weber and Weik.

12 Ayes, 38. Nays, 22.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
14 is passed.

15 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
16 982, Senate Print 381, by Senator Brouk, an act
17 to amend the Labor Law.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Read the
19 last section.

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

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
24 roll.

25 (The Secretary called the roll.)

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
2 the results.

3 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
4 Calendar 982, voting in the negative:
5 Senator Walczyk.

6 Ayes, 59. Nays, 1.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
8 is passed.

9 THE SECRETARY: Excuse me. Also
10 Senator Gallivan.

11 Ayes, 58. Nays, 2.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
13 is passed.

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

16 SENATOR GIANARIS: Let's take up
17 the controversial calendar, please.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
19 Secretary will ring the bell.

20 The Secretary will read.

21 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
22 839, Senate Print 88A, by Senator Gianaris, an
23 act to amend the Election Law.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
25 Lanza, why do you rise?

1 SENATOR LANZA: Mr. President, I
2 believe there's an amendment at the desk.

3 I waive the reading of that
4 amendment and ask that you recognize
5 Senator Walczyk.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
7 you, Senator Lanza.

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

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

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
16 appeal has been made and recognized, and
17 Senator Walczyk may be heard.

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

20 And thank you, Mr. Floor Leader. I
21 appreciate the appeal here.

22 I needed an ID to drive here today.
23 I also needed an ID to swipe into the building.
24 The bill before us will automatically register
25 people to vote when they meet various state

1 agencies and file paperwork, including the DMV,
2 who actually issues IDs.

3 Aside from common sense and common
4 practice, this idea, this helpful amendment that
5 I offer here today is also immensely popular by
6 the majority of New Yorkers.

7 A Siena poll just a couple of weeks
8 ago -- and I know we follow polls around here.
9 But just a couple of weeks ago they showed that a
10 majority of New Yorkers support voter ID.

11 In New York we also have an
12 affidavit system that if somebody forgets their
13 ID on Election Day, has lost their ID, or just
14 didn't bring it to the polls that day, we have a
15 robust affidavit system that would allow them to
16 vote and continue the franchise. Nonetheless,
17 they would just vote on another ballot.

18 So this bill that I offer up -- this
19 helpful amendment to the bill-in-chief that we'll
20 talk about in a moment -- doesn't solve all of
21 the problems of the bill, but it is one helpful
22 way that New Yorkers have consistently been
23 asking for. They want to believe in full faith
24 that our elections are secure by having voter ID
25 at the polls.

1 Thank you, Mr. President.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
3 you, Senator.

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

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

9 (Response of "Aye.")

10 SENATOR LANZA: Show of hands.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: A show of
12 hands has been requested and so ordered.

13 Announce the results.

14 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 22.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
16 ruling of the chair stands, and the bill-in-chief
17 is now before the house.

18 Read the last section.

19 THE SECRETARY: Section 9. This
20 act shall take effect January --

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
22 Walczyk, why do you rise?

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

25 Would the sponsor yield?

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

2 I thank Senator Rhoads for goading
3 you on to get up. This is your moment,
4 Senator Walczyk. Let's go.

5 (Laughter.)

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
7 sponsor yields.

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: I notice we
9 almost rushed through things.

10 Through you, Mr. President. How
11 many registered voters are there in the State of
12 New York?

13 SENATOR GIANARIS: Many millions.

14 If you want an exact number -- one
15 second, Senator Walczyk. I can give you an
16 estimate, if you would like.

17 I would daresay we're probably at 7
18 or 8 million, but that's just a guess. I don't
19 have the precise number in front of me.

20 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
21 will the sponsor continue to yield?

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
23 sponsor yield?

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The

1 sponsor yields.

2 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
3 Mr. President.

4 I talked to folks at the Board of
5 Elections this morning. They said it's roughly
6 13.5 million currently registered, a little bit
7 lower than that in active voters that have voted
8 in previous elections in years past. I think
9 they look at the five-year lookback.

10 And that's according to July of last
11 year. But the number is 13.5.

12 How many New Yorkers are eligible to
13 vote? Do you know that number?

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: I'd say you were
15 correct on the number. I was handed that
16 information after I answered.

17 So probably that number has
18 increased in large part because we have some
19 version of automatic registration in place. Yet
20 estimates are there remain about 2 million
21 New Yorkers who are eligible yet unregistered.

22 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
23 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
24 yield?

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the

1 sponsor yield?

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
4 sponsor yields.

5 SENATOR WALCZYK: It's actually,
6 according to -- through you, Mr. President.
7 According to the Census's American Community
8 Survey from 2024, there are 14.1 million
9 New Yorkers eligible to be registered.

10 So we're at about a 96 percent
11 registration rate for eligible New Yorkers in the
12 state.

13 What does this bill do?

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: First of all,
15 that's an imprecise estimate that you're using as
16 it relates to the census. It's not an exact
17 figure. As we all know, the census is
18 notoriously inaccurate.

19 But this would allow, even if it's
20 half a million or 2 million -- I guess we can
21 agree that that's the range we're talking
22 about -- that's a significant amount of
23 New Yorkers who are currently disenfranchised,
24 even though they are eligible to vote.

25 SENATOR WALCZYK: Would the sponsor

1 continue to yield?

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
3 sponsor yield?

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
6 sponsor yields.

7 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
8 Mr. President.

9 So the title of your -- of the bill
10 here says "provides for automatic voter
11 registration and preregistration for persons
12 applying for certain Department of Motor Vehicle
13 documentation and for Medicaid enrollees."

14 What does this bill do?

15 SENATOR GIANARIS: It streamlines
16 the automatic registration process we currently
17 have in place.

18 Currently, if you're interacting
19 with the DMV, I believe you have to fill out
20 paperwork in order to register, which is part of
21 your transaction with the Department of Motor
22 Vehicles.

23 This would have the process be more
24 automatic in the sense that it would be a burden
25 on the agencies themselves to determine if you

1 are eligible and then transmit that information
2 to the Board of Elections. So it would remove a
3 hurdle that the voter would currently have to go
4 through.

5 And I should add that it would also
6 make the process -- the reason it's called secure
7 AVR is it would make the process more secure, for
8 lack of a better word, in a lot of the ways that
9 I would think you would support.

10 So, for example, currently someone
11 who's filling out that paperwork has to attest
12 themselves to their eligibility. Whereas in
13 this -- under this bill, the agencies which would
14 be armed with the data and information to
15 conclusively prove a voter's eligibility would
16 have that burden.

17 SENATOR WALCZYK: And,
18 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
19 yield?

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
21 sponsor yield?

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
24 sponsor yields.

25 SENATOR WALCZYK: On page 3,

1 line 24, you address DMV voter registrations,
2 which we've just talked about a little bit. Line
3 24 says "provides documentation conclusively
4 demonstrating that such person is not a
5 United States citizen."

6 The checkbox that is currently on
7 the DMV or Motor Voter registration, the checkbox
8 reads this way: "I decline use of this form for
9 voter registration and preregistration purposes.
10 Do not forward my information to the Board of
11 Elections. If you do not check this box and you
12 provide your signature on the space below, you
13 will have applied to register or preregister to
14 vote, and you will have attested to your
15 eligibility to register or preregister to vote."

16 Is that box going to remain under
17 this law?

18 SENATOR GIANARIS: I suppose that
19 would be up to the DMV.

20 But it should not have to be there.
21 It would be redundant because the burden, as I
22 just mentioned, would fall on the DMV, based on
23 the information the applicant provides to them,
24 to make that determination regardless of whether
25 a box is checked or not.

1 And if I could direct you to the
2 next page of the bill, on page 4, subdivision 2
3 says, in fact, that such person needs to provide
4 documentation to the DMV conclusively
5 demonstrating United States citizenship.

6 And so that -- it's a little bit --
7 the section you outlined is a little bit
8 redundant. It basically says you have to prove
9 citizenship. And if somehow you prove that
10 you're not a citizen, because you registered to
11 vote with some other documentation, be it a green
12 card or what have you, the DMV should definitely
13 not transmit that information.

14 But they're only authorized to
15 transmit the information, under this bill, if
16 they've already proven citizenship. So it's a
17 little bit redundant.

18 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
19 would the sponsor continue to yield?

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
21 sponsor yield?

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
24 sponsor yields.

25 SENATOR WALCZYK: And what

1 documentation, for someone who doesn't have any
2 documentation -- often referred to as
3 undocumented -- what information would they
4 provide the DMV?

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: What information
6 would they provide to the DMV? I guess as it
7 relates to this bill, that's irrelevant, because
8 they would not have documentation proving
9 citizenship, so the inquiry would end there and
10 the information would not be sent to the Board of
11 Elections.

12 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
13 would the sponsor continue to yield?

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
15 sponsor yield?

16 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
18 sponsor yields.

19 SENATOR WALCZYK: If someone is not
20 a citizen and doesn't have documentation, what
21 would they bring to the Department of Motor
22 Vehicles to prove their noncitizenship?

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: You've asked the
24 same question twice.

25 SENATOR WALCZYK: I did.

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: And what I'm
2 indicating to you is as it relates to this bill,
3 that is an irrelevant question.

4 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
5 would the sponsor continue to yield?

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
7 sponsor yield?

8 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
10 sponsor yields.

11 SENATOR WALCZYK: What, then, would
12 be the actions of the front-facing clerk --
13 through you, Mr. President. What then would be
14 the actions of the front-facing clerk at the
15 Department of Motor Vehicles or a button-pusher
16 in the Department of Motor Vehicles if they're
17 doing it online?

18 What would they -- what
19 documentation would they have to be able to not
20 register someone to vote?

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: You're asking
22 the question in the negative.

23 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mm-hmm.

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: The fact of the
25 matter is if an applicant does not provide

1 conclusive proof that they are a citizen, the
2 DMV's process as it relates to this, to
3 registering someone to vote, is over.

4 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
5 would the sponsor continue to yield.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
7 sponsor yield?

8 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
10 sponsor yields.

11 SENATOR WALCZYK: Yeah, and maybe
12 it's -- through you, Mr. President. Maybe it's
13 some confusion on the redundancy that you
14 mentioned earlier.

15 But on page 3, in Section 2,
16 (reading): Notwithstanding any other law to the
17 contrary, the Department of Motor Vehicles shall
18 not provide an opportunity to register or
19 preregister to vote to, or transmit an
20 application for registration or preregistration
21 for any person who, when conducting a Department
22 of Motor Vehicles transaction pursuant to the
23 subdivision 1 of this section, provides
24 documentation conclusively demonstrating that
25 that person is not a United States citizen.

1 So I know you said it's a double
2 negative. But I'm wondering about the double
3 negative in that statement. If they don't have
4 documentation, how do they prove that they are
5 not a citizen to the Department of Motor
6 Vehicles?

7 SENATOR GIANARIS: Well, as I
8 indicated to you, you're harping on this one
9 provision, which I would think should make you
10 happy.

11 But the fact is in the following
12 page, the bill talks about when the DMV is in
13 fact authorized to transmit someone's information
14 to the Board of Elections. It specifically says
15 after United States citizenship has been
16 conclusively documented.

17 Then there's this extra provision
18 that you're talking about that says if somehow
19 they've proven they're not a citizen, definitely
20 do not send that information to the Board of
21 Elections. But they wouldn't be allowed to send
22 it regardless unless there's something that shows
23 that they are in fact a U.S. Citizen.

24 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
25 would the sponsor continue to yield?

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
2 sponsor yield?

3 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
5 sponsor yields.

6 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
7 Mr. President. So on that process on page 4 that
8 you mentioned, there are multiple paragraphs
9 here. The DMV and Board of Elections will
10 determine what proves citizenship, as you
11 outlined. Whether they're already registered,
12 and that information, how it gets shared. The
13 State Board of Elections then sends that
14 registration to the local boards of elections,
15 and then the local board of elections shall
16 register that voter.

17 How will DMV and the Board of
18 Elections decide what documents are -- make
19 someone an eligible citizen to vote in New York
20 State's elections?

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: That will be for
22 them to determine.

23 I would think you would have some
24 comfort in the fact that the Board of Elections'
25 decision-making process is governed equally by

1 Democrats and Republicans. It's a decision that
2 the commissioners would have to authorize, and
3 that would not have any partisan leaning one way
4 or the other.

5 So whatever the Board of Elections
6 deems sufficient would be something that members
7 of your party would agree to.

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
9 would the sponsor continue to yield?

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
11 sponsor yield?

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
14 sponsor yields.

15 SENATOR WALCZYK: I asked the
16 question -- and I would have more comfort if it
17 were outlined in the bill. So I asked the
18 question about what the process for the DMV and
19 the Board of Elections would be in determining
20 what that documentation is, which isn't spoken to
21 in the bill.

22 What do you imagine their process in
23 determining what documentation --

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: I assume there
25 would be some kind of interagency document that

1 would be agreed upon through whatever
2 authorization those agencies have.

3 For the DMV, it would probably be
4 the commissioner's agreement.

5 For the Board of Elections, it would
6 be their commissioners' agreement. Which, as I
7 mentioned, is equally split amongst the parties.

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
9 would the sponsor continue to yield?

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
11 sponsor yield?

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
14 sponsor yields.

15 SENATOR WALCZYK: With three
16 parties in the mix here, the DMV, the Republican
17 elections commissioner and the Democrat elections
18 commissioner, is there a weighted vote for --

19 SENATOR GIANARIS: No --

20 SENATOR WALCZYK: -- the process
21 for how -- or does it need to be unanimous when
22 determining which documentations will be
23 acceptable?

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: No, I think -- I
25 think the bill is clear that DMV would have to

1 agree and the State Board of Elections would have
2 to agree.

3 And so the DMV process would be what
4 it is. Let's presume it's the commissioner
5 single-handedly making the determination.

6 But for the Board of Elections, for
7 them to agree, it would have to be a majority
8 vote of their commissioners. Or else the Board
9 of Elections is not making a decision, legally
10 speaking.

11 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
12 would the sponsor continue to yield.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
14 sponsor yield?

15 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
17 sponsor yields.

18 SENATOR WALCZYK: So -- and that
19 does give me comfort. So the commissioners of
20 the Board of Elections, both Republicans and
21 Democrats, would have to agree on which
22 documentation is presented.

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: Correct.

24 SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you.

25 Through you, Mr. President, would

1 the sponsor continue to yield.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
3 sponsor yield?

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
6 sponsor yields.

7 SENATOR WALCZYK: Why would -- so
8 we -- and I know we've done Motor Voter and we've
9 done the Green Light Law, and we do have
10 automatic voter registration. Some of those --
11 some of those policies haven't been all the way
12 put in place. I know the Board of Elections is
13 still working on agreements for some of the
14 finalization of Motor Voter or automatic
15 registration through the DMV currently.

16 Why would we put more onus on
17 front-facing clerks to more registrations at this
18 point, before those rules are finalized at the
19 Board of Elections with, as you point out,
20 bipartisan agreement?

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: Because we have
22 a fundamental disagreement about our democratic
23 process. We like for people to vote who are
24 eligible to vote. And as I just saw from your
25 attempted hostile amendment, you prefer to put

1 obstacles in people's way before we let them
2 vote. So there's a fundamental philosophical
3 difference.

4 I will always be proposing
5 legislation, for the last few months I'm here, to
6 make it easier for people who are eligible to
7 participate in the democratic process. And it
8 seems that you would prefer the opposite.

9 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
10 would the sponsor continue to yield for another
11 question.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
13 sponsor yield?

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
16 sponsor yields.

17 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
18 Mr. President. I didn't present this bill today;
19 I'm just asking some questions because I'd like
20 to know some answers about it. It's a pretty
21 lengthy bill, and I'm trying to understand what
22 the implication of the policy that you're
23 proposing here is.

24 On page 6, line 45, what if they
25 register through the DMV online?

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: What would they
2 do? Is that your question?

3 SENATOR WALCZYK: Yeah, I'll --
4 through you, Mr. President, I'll clarify.

5 So line 45 says that if such
6 applicant applies to register to vote
7 electronically, such applicant thereby consents
8 to the use of an electronic copy of such
9 applicant's manual signature that is in the
10 custody of the Department of Motor Vehicles as
11 such applicant's voter registration exemplar
12 signature.

13 So if someone is registering online,
14 how will someone at the DMV determine their
15 citizenship?

16 SENATOR GIANARIS: Well, as I've
17 discussed, that would be up to the Department of
18 Motor Vehicles and the State Board of Elections
19 to jointly determine.

20 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
21 would the sponsor continue to yield.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
23 sponsor yield?

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The

1 sponsor yields.

2 SENATOR WALCZYK: Could that still
3 be a checkbox opt-out, or a self-attestation in
4 the case of online registration through the DMV?

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: No, that's not
6 the intention. No, that's not documentation.

7 SENATOR WALCZYK: And
8 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
9 yield?

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
11 sponsor yield?

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
14 sponsor yields.

15 SENATOR WALCZYK: On page 7 --
16 through you, Mr. President. And this is talking
17 about so if they don't check the box, they're
18 essentially registered.

19 For each person who completes an
20 application to register to vote -- I won't read
21 the entire paragraph, but it closes with line 36:
22 The department shall not transmit to the State
23 Board of Elections an application for
24 registration for a person who indicates on the
25 integrated personal voter registration

1 application, that such person does not meet the
2 eligibility requirements for registration.

3 So if they don't check the box, will
4 they automatically be registered?

5 (Pause.)

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: I'm trying to
7 remember your question to answer whether
8 negatively or positively in the form that you
9 asked it.

10 But if they do not check the box, is
11 that your question? If they do not check the
12 box, the information is provided to the State
13 Board of Elections for purposes of updating a
14 current registration, but it would not be
15 sufficient documentation to actually register
16 someone who's not registered to vote.

17 SENATOR WALCZYK: And through you,
18 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
19 yield.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
21 sponsor yield?

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
24 sponsor yields.

25 SENATOR WALCZYK: So under

1 Green Light we've obviously been already giving
2 driver's licenses to noncitizens in New York
3 State. If they've updated their address, will
4 they be registered to vote when they've updated
5 their address online?

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: For undocumented
7 individuals? No.

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
9 would the sponsor continue to yield.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
11 sponsor yield?

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
14 sponsor yields.

15 SENATOR WALCZYK: Well, in this
16 case they've got a document, it's a New York
17 State driver's license that we've already granted
18 them. And under this provision, we'll be
19 transmitting information to the Board of
20 Elections when someone changes their address
21 through My DMV.

22 So will they be registered to vote
23 at that time when they've changed their address?

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: No. Like I
25 said, if someone is already registered, that

1 information would be provided so the board can
2 update a current registration, but they would not
3 be eligible to be newly registered.

4 Now, mind you -- I'll just
5 extrapolate on that for a second -- today someone
6 can walk into the Board of Elections and register
7 to vote, and it's unlikely they'd be asked for
8 any documentation at all. So this is a much more
9 secure process than currently exists.

10 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
11 briefly on the bill.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
13 Walczyk on the bill.

14 SENATOR WALCZYK: So today if
15 somebody walks into the Board of Elections to
16 register to vote, they'll get a voter
17 registration form.

18 At the top of your voter
19 registration form it says: If you do not have a
20 DMV or Social Security number, you may use a
21 valid photo ID, a current utility bill, bank
22 statement, paycheck, government check or some
23 other government document that shows your name
24 and address. You may include a copy of one of
25 those types of ID with this form. Be sure to

1 tape it to the sides of the form closed.

2 And under identification, it says --
3 that's Block 13 -- you can provide a New York
4 State DMV number, the last four of your
5 Social Security number, or if you do not have a
6 New York State driver's license or Social
7 Security number -- but you are giving a
8 self-attestation saying that you're a citizen of
9 the United States, and your voter registration
10 form goes -- it's at the Board of Elections.

11 It goes to the bipartisan
12 commissioners that we talked about earlier, in
13 order to validate your eligibility to register to
14 vote in the State of New York.

15 Through you, Mr. President, would
16 the sponsor continue to yield?

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
18 sponsor yield?

19 SENATOR GIANARIS: Sure.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
21 sponsor yields.

22 SENATOR WALCZYK: On page 6 -- or
23 on page 9, rather, subsection 6, what does this
24 bill change about voter registration for
25 convicted felons?

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Before I get to
2 that, let me just also address your comments on
3 the bill. You just basically outlined the exact
4 scenario you were concerned about. If a valid
5 driver's license is good enough when you show up
6 at the Board of Elections, the undocumented
7 individual who has a driver's license would not
8 be deterred.

9 And so, again, this bill would
10 provide a process that would be more secure than
11 someone who's going to walk in, in person, at a
12 board of elections.

13 Now, to your question about --
14 someone who's incarcerated, was that the
15 question?

16 SENATOR WALCZYK: (Inaudible.)

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Give me one
18 moment, please.

19 SENATOR GIANARIS: So my
20 understanding is that the bill would provide for
21 the situation where someone who is incarcerated
22 but would be eligible to vote upon their release,
23 that information would also be transmitted to the
24 State Board of elections so that those
25 individuals could be registered if eligible.

1 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
2 would the sponsor continue to yield.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
4 sponsor yield?

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
7 sponsor yields.

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: Also on the same
9 page, in Section 8 -- so we're looking at
10 line 45 -- it says (reading): Nothing in this
11 section shall be construed to require documentary
12 proof of citizenship for voter registration.
13 Nothing in this section shall be construed to
14 authorize or require the Department of Motor
15 Vehicles to request documentation establishing an
16 applicant's citizenship solely for the purposes
17 of voter recommendation.

18 Why?

19 SENATOR GIANARIS: That is to
20 provide the individual with the option to not
21 provide documentation. And therefore, they would
22 not be registered to vote absent that
23 documentation.

24 In other words, you can't require
25 someone to provide this documentation to be

1 transmitted to the state board. But if you don't
2 provide it, you won't be registered through this
3 process.

4 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
5 would the sponsor continue to yield.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
7 sponsor yield?

8 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
10 sponsor yields.

11 SENATOR WALCZYK: I read it a
12 different and concerning way.

13 But on page 10 -- I'll move along to
14 the next point, because I think we may have a
15 disagreement on the technical purpose of that
16 section -- you're adding a new section to the law
17 that's Section 5-901-a for Medicaid enrollees in
18 the State of New York.

19 When does that part take effect?

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: I believe the
21 effective date of the bill is three years from
22 its enactment.

23 Correction. It's January 1, 2028.
24 Which is probably three years from when the bill
25 was passed, in 2025. So it would be January 1,

1 2028.

2 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
3 would the sponsor continue to yield.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
5 sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 sponsor yields.

9 SENATOR WALCZYK: You can receive
10 Medicaid in New York State as a noncitizen, is
11 that correct?

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

13 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
14 would the sponsor continue to yield?

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
16 sponsor yield?

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
19 sponsor yields.

20 SENATOR WALCZYK: Largely some
21 rules for DOH and DSS -- these are largely some
22 of the same rules for the Department of Health or
23 the Department of Social Services as they are for
24 the DMV, outlined in your bill here? Are they
25 largely the same rules?

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: That's correct.

2 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
3 would the sponsor continue to yield?

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
5 sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 sponsor yields.

9 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
10 Mr. President.

11 The New York State Comptroller
12 released an audit last year; he found multiple
13 issues with how the state identified out-of-state
14 Medicaid members and found close to \$1.2 billion
15 in managed care premiums that were paid for
16 members who have resided outside of New York
17 State. Auditors found the State Department of
18 Health did not properly check to confirm that
19 Medicaid members were New York State residents
20 and waited too long to recoup improper payments.

21 The breakdown there is roughly
22 150,000 non-New Yorkers receiving Medicaid
23 payments and another 600,000 unverified by
24 Social Security numbers.

25 Would these people be automatically

1 enrolled to vote under this bill?

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: Not if there's
3 not conclusive proof of documentation of
4 citizenship that the State Board of Elections
5 agrees to.

6 SENATOR WALCZYK: And,
7 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
8 yield?

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
10 sponsor yield?

11 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
13 sponsor yields.

14 SENATOR WALCZYK: And that onus
15 would be solely on the Board of Elections? Or
16 would the Department of Health or DSS be the
17 rulemaking body there?

18 SENATOR GIANARIS: I believe it's a
19 comparable process to what we earlier discussed
20 about DMV. It would be an enjoined agreement
21 between the agencies.

22 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
23 would the sponsor continue to yield?

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
25 sponsor yield?

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
3 sponsor yields.

4 SENATOR WALCZYK: There is a new
5 section for the New York City Housing Authority,
6 is that correct?

7 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
9 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
10 yield?

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
12 sponsor yield?

13 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
15 sponsor yields.

16 SENATOR WALCZYK: Why did you
17 select the New York City Housing Authority to do
18 automatic voter registration in the State of
19 New York?

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: What we
21 attempted to do was find the agencies that have
22 access to citizenship information and
23 documentation, and also those that were most
24 likely to interact with the individuals we
25 believe are eligible yet unregistered, so we can

1 maximize the number of people we're helping.

2 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
3 would the sponsor continue to yield?

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
5 sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 sponsor yields.

9 SENATOR WALCZYK: On page 13, if
10 someone doesn't automatically register to a
11 political party, the Board of Elections will have
12 to mail them an enrollment application, is that
13 correct?

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

15 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
16 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
17 yield?

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
19 sponsor yield?

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
22 sponsor yields.

23 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you, why
24 is that provision in here?

25 SENATOR GIANARIS: Because there

1 are parts of the state in which primaries are
2 tantamount to elections. In your part of the
3 state, that may be a Republican primary. In my
4 part, it's a Democratic primary.

5 But we want to give every
6 opportunity for someone registering to make a
7 conscious choice if they do not want to be
8 registered in a party, because they would in fact
9 be excluded from participating in primaries if
10 they do that.

11 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
12 will the sponsor continue to yield?

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
14 sponsor yield?

15 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
17 sponsor yields.

18 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
19 Mr. President. Will the forms for NYCHA, for
20 DMV, for the changes that we've got on Medicaid
21 applications, will they include a party
22 registration opportunity already as a way that
23 you've envisioned it?

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes, that's
25 correct.

1 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
2 would the sponsor continue to yield?

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
4 sponsor yield?

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
7 sponsor yields.

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
9 Mr. President, if they've already opted out of
10 enrolling in a party, why would we burden local
11 boards of elections with mailing them an
12 additional registration form?

13 SENATOR GIANARIS: Well, we want to
14 be sure. Because it's easy to imagine someone
15 who is going to the DMV or to the Department of
16 Health or Social Services or whatever agency
17 we're referring to, their primary purpose is not
18 to register to vote, it's to avail themselves of
19 services offered from those agencies.

20 So they may not be thinking about
21 the voter registration aspect of their
22 interaction.

23 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
24 will the sponsor continue to yield?

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the

1 sponsor yield?

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
4 sponsor yields.

5 SENATOR WALCZYK: If the Board
6 of -- through you, Mr. President. If the Board
7 of Elections does not have consensus on
8 documentation, would that prevent them being
9 referred to the Board of Elections for
10 registration?

11 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes. Or if they
12 were, then the board would decline to register
13 those people.

14 SENATOR WALCZYK: And,
15 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
16 yield?

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
18 sponsor yield?

19 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
21 sponsor yields.

22 SENATOR WALCZYK: In 2021, New York
23 City tried allowing noncitizens to register to
24 vote in our elections. Six out of the seven
25 judge on the Court of Appeals found that to be

1 unconstitutional. Is that a problem?

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: No.

3 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
4 would the sponsor continue to yield?

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
6 sponsor yield?

7 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
9 sponsor yields.

10 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
11 Mr. President. There's somewhere between 800,000
12 and a million noncitizens in New York. How will
13 this prevent them from being registered to vote
14 in the State of New York?

15 SENATOR GIANARIS: Because as we've
16 discussed ad nauseam in this debate, there would
17 be conclusive documentation of United States
18 citizenship required before any of this process
19 is implemented.

20 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
21 would the sponsor continue to yield?

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
23 sponsor yield?

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The

1 sponsor yields.

2 SENATOR WALCZYK: Does this bill
3 allow Social Services or the DMV or NYCHA to pull
4 down lists from USCIS on the individuals that are
5 living in New York State that are noncitizens, to
6 check their citizenship status against those
7 lists?

8 SENATOR GIANARIS: I don't think
9 so. But why would that be necessary?

10 As I have said, if they don't have
11 proof that the person they're dealing with is a
12 citizen, that ends their process.

13 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
14 would the sponsor continue to yield.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
16 sponsor yield?

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
19 sponsor yields.

20 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
21 Mr. President. Are you familiar with the good
22 moral character test during an immigration
23 process?

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: Vaguely.

25 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,

1 would the sponsor continue to yield.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
3 sponsor yield?

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
6 sponsor yields.

7 SENATOR WALCZYK: So the good moral
8 test is a criminal background check and also
9 USCIS is checking as individuals are going
10 through the citizenship process, checking to see
11 if they've been registered to vote or if they
12 have voted in elections.

13 You'll actually see this often show
14 up on immigration attorneys' websites: If you're
15 registered to vote, that could be a bar to your
16 citizenship in the United States. If you have
17 voted, that could be another bar.

18 In fact, the Board of Elections has
19 reported many noncitizens reaching out to boards
20 of elections, sometimes they hear from
21 immigration attorneys, asking to be disenrolled,
22 voluntary disenrollment in the State of New York.

23 Are you concerned that by more
24 automatically registering with many state
25 agencies and bureaucracies, noncitizens may be

1 registered to vote in the State of New York, in
2 fact barring them to citizenship or creating
3 another hurdle?

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: No, I'm not.

5 And I understand you're caught up
6 with the fantasy that there are hordes of
7 undocumented people dying to fakely register to
8 vote when the data indicates the contrary.

9 But what I'm concerned about is, by
10 your own admission, at least half a million
11 people -- by my count, almost 2 million people --
12 who are eligible to vote in this state and are
13 not registered to vote.

14 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President,
15 would the sponsor continue to yield.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
17 sponsor yield?

18 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
20 sponsor yields.

21 SENATOR WALCZYK: All right. All
22 of those concerns that you have swayed aside, on
23 page 16, line 7, why would we exempt people who
24 are automatically registered to vote, saying that
25 they did not willfully or knowingly seek to

1 register if they're registered under the
2 provisions of this bill? Why would we give them
3 that immunity?

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: First of all,
5 there is no page 16 in this bill.

6 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President, I
7 apologize. Page 13 of this bill, looking at
8 lines 7 through 9.

9 SENATOR GIANARIS: Why is that
10 provision there, is that your question?

11 SENATOR WALCZYK: Sure.

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: To deal with a
13 potential administrative snafu. If we're putting
14 the burdens on the agencies as opposed to the
15 individuals, we don't want to hold the individual
16 accountable for a mistake that an agency
17 representative might have made.

18 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
19 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
20 yield.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
22 sponsor yield?

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
25 sponsor yields.

1 SENATOR WALCZYK: If proof of
2 citizenship is required, how could an agency
3 possibly make a mistake?

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: There are humans
5 involved.

6 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President, on
7 the bill.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
9 Walczyk on the bill.

10 SENATOR WALCZYK: By the numbers,
11 New York State is actually doing really well on
12 voter registration. Roughly 96 percent of
13 eligible New Yorkers are registered to vote in
14 the State of New York.

15 This bill will automatically
16 register anybody that bumps into multiple
17 different agencies, seeking out those next
18 4 percent -- those last 4 percent.

19 If you've walked around New York
20 State or ever talked to people during an election
21 cycle, which we often do, you'll find many people
22 just don't want to register to vote. Some of
23 those people may register by this, but this will
24 also capture an entirely new crowd that did not
25 intend to register to vote in the State of

1 New York. And Motor Voter has already caused,
2 with Green Light, noncitizens to be accidentally
3 registered to vote in the State of New York.

4 We know this. Talk to an
5 immigration attorney. Talk to someone who has
6 gone through the immigration naturalization
7 process. This can actually be a bar to
8 citizenship that we're laying down in our
9 bureaucracy.

10 So with all of the language here,
11 with all of the affirmation that, no, we'll have
12 to confirm a million times that they are indeed a
13 citizen and eligible to vote, we have said but if
14 they are accidentally, by an administrative
15 snafu, there is no problem for them -- no
16 criminality, no issue whatsoever -- because that
17 is exactly what this bill is designed to do.

18 The Board of Elections has handled
19 our registrations and enrollments for a long time
20 for very good reason. We haven't passed it off
21 to a bunch of different departments that don't do
22 voter registration and enrollment, because that
23 is the job of the Board of Elections.

24 And if you give it to the New York
25 City Housing Authority and to Medicaid, which is

1 making payments to non-New Yorkers as well as
2 some noncitizens, and you say they're going to
3 automatically register people to vote unless all
4 of these hoops are jumped through and everybody
5 dots their I's and crosses their T's, the
6 danger -- as the sponsor has said, the danger is
7 that there could be administrative snafus.

8 Well, of course. And if you have a
9 million noncitizens living in New York State,
10 that's a million options for administrative
11 snafus.

12 This bill moves more registration to
13 Social Services, New York City Housing Authority,
14 and away from our bipartisan local boards of
15 election. Instead of fixing problems, it only
16 causes more. Instead of building faith, it only
17 degrades trust. Instead of protecting the
18 franchise, it threatens to dilute it. And it
19 even creates a bar to citizenship for those who
20 don't want to be caught up in administrative
21 snafus.

22 And for those reasons,
23 Mr. President, I'll be voting no and encourage
24 my colleagues to do the same.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank

1 you, Senator Walczyk.

2 Senator Borrello, why do you rise?

3 SENATOR BORRELLO: Mr. President,
4 on the bill.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
6 Borrello on the bill.

7 SENATOR BORRELLO: Thank you,
8 Mr. President.

9 I want to thank my colleagues for
10 the debate today. I think Senator Walczyk did an
11 excellent job of pointing out the issues with
12 this bill.

13 Now, you can go back and forth and
14 you can say, Oh, no, no, that's never going to
15 happen. Or no, no, no, we have a check and
16 balance here. But our democracy -- in fact,
17 every democracy -- is built on faith and
18 confidence that the voters believe that when they
19 cast a vote, it will be counted and it will be
20 counted fairly.

21 Bills like this undermine that
22 confidence. It is a direct threat to the
23 democracy that I hear so much from my colleagues
24 on the other side of the aisle talking about they
25 want to protect, protecting democracy.

1 Democracy's foundation is free and
2 fair elections and people having confidence that
3 when they cast a vote, that vote is a vote that
4 will be counted. We are threatening that here.

5 One-point-two billion dollars was
6 paid out for Medicaid recipients that don't live
7 in New York State. About 150,000 people, in
8 fact.

9 Now, you might say, Well, how is
10 that going to happen here? How are those folks
11 going to be registered here in New York? That's
12 a good question. Undermining the confidence,
13 because people will ask that question and say:
14 How will they not be registered here in New York
15 State if they're registered automatically because
16 they interacted with the Medicaid office?

17 We do a lot of things here in
18 New York State that undermine confidence --
19 confidence that we can pass a budget on time,
20 confidence that we can actually fund things like
21 schools and hospitals.

22 But undermining confidence in
23 democracy is the most dangerous thing that we do
24 here. You don't have to show an ID. We don't
25 want you to show an ID. We insist that you do

1 not show an ID. People have actually been
2 scolded going to a polling place and showing
3 their ID: You can't do that.

4 So a simple thing like showing an ID
5 could actually even offset a little bit of this
6 confidence that we're undermining in the system.
7 But we're not going to do that here.

8 But here's the bottom line. Please
9 show me that disenfranchised voter. Show that
10 someone that said, I tried really hard to
11 register and vote, and I could not. I haven't
12 seen one yet. I don't know anybody that has,
13 because it's very easy to vote here in New York
14 State if you choose to vote.

15 And this is still a democracy. This
16 is still where people have freedom of choice.
17 They choose not to vote. So the people that
18 aren't voting are not voting because they don't
19 want to. It's that simple.

20 And to undermine the confidence in
21 the process because you think, arrogantly, that
22 we must have everybody vote and we must register
23 everyone to vote is not only arrogant, it's
24 foolish and it's dangerous.

25 And I'll be voting no.

1 Thank you, Mr. President.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
3 you, Senator Borrello.

4 Are there any other Senators wishing
5 to be heard?

6 Seeing and hearing none, debate is
7 closed.

8 The Secretary will ring the bell.
9 Senator Gianaris.

10 SENATOR GIANARIS: This bill is
11 restored to the noncontroversial calendar by
12 consent, Mr. President.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
14 is restored to the noncontroversial calendar.

15 Read the last section.

16 THE SECRETARY: Section 9. This
17 act shall take effect January 1, 2028.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
19 roll.

20 (The Secretary called the roll.)

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
22 Gianaris to explain his vote.

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: "This is still a
24 democracy," thundered one of our colleagues.
25 Despite the best efforts of their president to

1 make it not so -- refusing to accept the results
2 of a previous election, to this day claiming it
3 was invalid. Which led to a bunch of maniacs
4 trying to storm the Capitol, which this party
5 doesn't even recognize as a criminal act.

6 Law enforcement officers were
7 killed. We had the resolution on Police Week
8 today. Where is the outrage that this
9 president's questioning of the democratic process
10 directly led to that outcome?

11 Let's be clear -- thank you for the
12 exhale, Senator Weber. Let's be clear about
13 what's going on here. Because there's no
14 undocumented person today, under threat of having
15 their children yanked away from them, who's going
16 to sit there, commit some fraudulent registration
17 and go and vote to affect an election as if one
18 vote's going to determine the outcome of a
19 particular election. That's not happening.

20 What is happening is there are
21 people who are eligible to vote who are not
22 voting. Maybe they choose not to vote. That's
23 possible. They can continue to choose not to
24 vote. You can be registered and never show up to
25 vote if you don't want to vote.

1 But we're about removing hurdles to
2 voting for those eligible -- not placing new ones
3 in their place, not asking for ID where there are
4 large communities that don't drive, don't have a
5 driver's license, don't have an ID readily
6 available.

7 This is about voter
8 disenfranchisement for my colleagues on that side
9 of the aisle. Let's not dress it up as some
10 fantastical notion that there's massive fraud
11 going on when all the data in this country, for
12 decades, proves that that's not the case.

13 One of my colleagues said, Oh, the
14 4 percent of the people that are not registered,
15 or whatever incorrect number was bandied about --
16 by his own admission, that's at least half a
17 million people. If you want to scoff at half a
18 million people who should be able to vote and are
19 not registered, that makes my point better than
20 anything I've said in the last couple of minutes.

21 Mr. President, this is a bill we've
22 passed before. We've had this debate. We'll
23 have it again. I hope the Assembly joins us in
24 passing it for the first time so we can get it
25 done and do something to make sure that more

1 people participate in our process and not less.

2 I vote aye.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
4 Gianaris to be recorded in the affirmative.

5 Senator Zellner to explain his vote.

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

8 As a recent elections professional,
9 a board of elections commissioner for the last
10 nine years, I rise in support of this bill
11 because, as Senator Gianaris said, we have to
12 remove every hurdle to democracy that we can.

13 And I support this bill because this
14 does. This actually strengthens and streamlines
15 the process as it is now, because our agencies
16 will only be sending the people who are eligible
17 to be voters to our boards of elections, and they
18 will then determine but already have that
19 prerequisite from our agencies.

20 So Mr. President, I vote aye.

21 Thank you.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
23 Zellner to be recorded in the affirmative.

24 Senator Helming to explain her vote.

25 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you,

1 Mr. President.

2 The bill before us continues to
3 shift responsibility to determine voter
4 eligibility and registration from our local
5 bipartisan boards of elections towards state
6 agencies -- as we heard, towards the DMV, the
7 Department of Health, and even the New York City
8 Housing Authority.

9 Under the bill, unless
10 identification documents submitted to these
11 agencies conclusively demonstrate someone is not
12 a United States citizen, they may move forward
13 with the automatic voter registration process.

14 I want to clarify something that was
15 said earlier. Every eligible citizen should be
16 able to vote. And this body, both sides of the
17 political aisle, have taken past actions to
18 support voter participation. But this bill, for
19 me, raises serious concerns and questions,
20 beginning with stripping away local
21 decision-making.

22 And it raises concerns about the
23 potential administrative errors in the
24 registration process that could lead to the
25 possibility that noncitizens could be improperly

1 registered to vote.

2 For those reasons and many others, I
3 vote no and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
5 Helming to be recorded in the negative.

6 Senator May to explain her vote.

7 SENATOR MAY: Thank you,
8 Mr. President.

9 I want to thank Senator Gianaris for
10 this bill, because automatic voter registration
11 is a crucial step toward allowing as many
12 eligible people as possible to exercise their
13 right to vote.

14 A hundred years ago, especially
15 across the deep South, white supremacists
16 employed a host of methods to make it impossible
17 for Black Americans to register: Poll taxes,
18 literacy tests, purges of voter rolls, threats of
19 violence and actual violence, including murder,
20 were all too common.

21 Everyone in this room understands
22 that noncitizen voting is a nonissue. But it is
23 being used to revive the practice of erecting
24 barriers to registration -- once again, for the
25 purpose of blocking eligible citizens from

1 voting.

2 In the past week we have seen white
3 supremacists newly emboldened by an extremist
4 Supreme Court revel in their new powers to
5 disenfranchise Black voters everywhere they can.
6 We should be proud here in New York that we are
7 making it easier for all eligible New Yorkers to
8 exercise their franchise.

9 I vote aye.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
11 May to be recorded in the affirmative.

12 Senator Rhoads to explain his vote.

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

15 We hear a lot of words about
16 barriers to registering to vote. Where are those
17 barriers? Can anyone answer that question?
18 Where are the barriers? What's preventing --
19 whether it's 500,000 or 2 million New Yorkers,
20 what's preventing them from walking into the
21 board of elections? What's preventing them from
22 going online to fill a voter registration form?
23 What's preventing them from going to the post
24 office to fill out a registration form and
25 submitting it? Nothing. Nothing at all.

1 But what this bill does is remove
2 barriers from noncitizens to be able to go and
3 vote. In fact, it actually encourages the
4 process of noncitizens being able to go in and
5 register to vote, because it will actually
6 eliminate the presumption of liability from them
7 falsely registering to vote through this either
8 Motor Voter process or through the process of the
9 Department of Social Services in one of your
10 local municipalities, through Medicaid, through
11 any one of the number of opportunities that are
12 now provided, as in through NYCHA.

13 Now we're taking the responsibility
14 for making that determination away from the
15 trained professionals at the Board of Elections,
16 and we're handing it out to untrained
17 administrative agencies, like those responsible
18 for administering Medicaid -- 150,000
19 non-New Yorkers receiving Medicaid benefits.

20 The Empire Center did a study. We
21 have 8.5 million Medicaid recipients here in the
22 State of New York, though the Empire Center found
23 that only 5 million are financially eligible.

24 The same individuals who allowed
25 3.5 million people to sign up for Medicaid -- by

1 far the single greatest expense, \$120 billion,
2 that we have in our New York State budget -- the
3 same people who are allowing that kind of fraud
4 will now be responsible for determining who's a
5 citizen and who's not, for the purpose of
6 registering to vote.

7 This is an invitation to create a
8 fraud factory. And for that reason I will leave
9 it to the administrative professionals in our
10 boards of elections, and I will vote no on this
11 legislation.

12 Thank you, Mr. President.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
14 Rhoads to be recorded in the negative.

15 Senator Martins to explain his vote.

16 SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you,
17 Mr. President.

18 You know, we talk about, in broad
19 terms, both sides of the aisle,
20 disenfranchisement, requiring proof, hurdles to
21 people voting. But it is our responsibility to
22 make sure that everyone who casts a vote has a
23 right to vote. This is as important as anything
24 else that we do, to ensure that those who would
25 take advantage of the system are prevented from

1 doing so and that we have means of doing just
2 that.

3 The law is pretty clear here in
4 New York that someone can be criminally charged
5 for voting if they know that they should not have
6 voted. "Knowingly" is the standard in our
7 statutes. It's Elections Law 17-132.

8 So it's clearly more than
9 coincidence that the sponsor decided to put that
10 into this bill to remove the knowingly and allow
11 for that process, because it's not that person's
12 fault. It couldn't be. It has to be someone
13 else's fault if someone who shouldn't be voting
14 is allowed to vote.

15 Now, let's talk about access to
16 voting. Here's a person who's registering a car
17 or obtaining a license at DMV, and they can't
18 walk into a board of elections or hop online to
19 register to vote? Let's stop for a second. No
20 one's being disenfranchised, no one's been asked
21 not to vote, no one is being prevented, there are
22 no hurdles being placed here.

23 What we're trying to do here --
24 clearly on this side, and perhaps not as much on
25 that side -- is prevent people being given the

1 opportunity to vote who shouldn't be voting. And
2 if there's one right that we have as citizens of
3 this country, it's the right to vote and to
4 protect the democracy. We should protect that
5 right, and not default to allowing anyone to vote
6 who's not a citizen.

7 Mr. President, I vote no.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
9 Martins to be recorded in the negative.

10 Senator Murray to explain his vote.

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

13 You know, we keep having these bills
14 back and forth talking about making it easier for
15 people to vote.

16 You know, I did -- one time during a
17 debate, I did an actual side-by-side comparison
18 of registering your vehicle or registering to
19 vote. It's about four or five times harder to
20 register your vehicle at the DMV, by the way,
21 than it is to register to vote.

22 Registering to vote is probably the
23 most simple interaction you will ever have with
24 government. It's such a simple, simple process.

25 Then we argue back-and-forth about

1 is there fraud. One side says no, there's no
2 fraud. The other, yes, there is fraud. And yet
3 there's a simple way to solve that problem. A
4 way that more than 80 percent of the country
5 agrees with. And we have that solution in the
6 form of an amendment: To simply show photo ID.

7 And yet this body and the other side
8 of the aisle will do anything, anything but let
9 that happen. It does have to make you wonder
10 why.

11 I vote no, Mr. President.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
13 Murray to be recorded in the negative.

14 Senator Skoufis to close.

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

17 I want to opine on a subject that's
18 been harped on quite a bit here, which is trust
19 in our electoral system.

20 In 2022, the State of Florida --
21 population about 23 million people -- you may
22 remember, with much fanfare, established a new
23 office for election crimes and security.
24 Governor DeSantis at the podium, banging the
25 podium about undocumented people, hordes of

1 undocumented people voting in their elections.
2 People voting twice, like they're running to some
3 coat closet after voting once, putting on a fake
4 mustache to vote a second time. Lots of fanfare.

5 Several election cycles later,
6 several years later, 25 people, in a state of
7 23 million, were charged and convicted with
8 election-related crimes by this office. After
9 they spent over \$10 million, by the way. Do the
10 per-charge cost on that one for taxpayers in the
11 State of Florida.

12 And just as we heard in 2022, in
13 Florida and around the country in other states,
14 and just as we heard on this floor, these
15 conspiracy theories are advanced in the name of
16 creating better trust. It's preposterous.

17 I don't recall seeing -- and I'd
18 love to be corrected if I'm wrong. Senator
19 Gianaris talked about the big lie from
20 President Trump. In addition to what he shared,
21 we literally had fake electoral slates in
22 countries -- in states around this country,
23 slates of fake electoral voters, in an attempt to
24 steal a national presidential election.

25 But we'd rather talk about

1 conspiracies. Senator Rhoads mentioned -- he
2 referenced a think tank, policy experts, as it
3 relates to Medicaid enrollment. There's a reason
4 why we didn't hear a single reference to any
5 think tank or policy expert who has weighed in on
6 how many undocumented people vote in our states
7 or in our country's elections: Because it's
8 near zero.

9 I thank the sponsor for this bill.
10 This, unlike what we heard from the other side,
11 actually would elicit trust in our elections. We
12 have very different perspectives --
13 Senator Martins is right, we have very different
14 perspectives on these issues.

15 We heard from the other side what
16 they think elicits trust in our elections. We
17 believe we elicit trust by getting more people to
18 vote.

19 I vote yes.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
21 Skoufis to be recorded in the affirmative.

22 Announce the results.

23 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
24 Calendar 839, voting in the negative are
25 Senators Ashby, Borrello, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick,

1 Chan, Gallivan, Griffo, Helming, Lanza, Martins,
2 Mattera, Murray, Oberacker, O'Mara, Ortt,
3 Palumbo, Rhoads, Rolison, Stec, Tedisco, Walczyk,
4 Weber and Weik.

5 Ayes, 38. Nays, 22.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
7 is passed.

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

10 SENATOR GIANARIS: Back to motions
11 for a moment.

12 On behalf of Senator Harckham, on
13 page 44 I offer the following amendments to
14 Calendar Number 975, Senate Print 4903A, and ask
15 that said bill retain its place on the
16 Third Reading Calendar.

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

20 Senator Gianaris.

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

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

25 SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to

1 adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday, May 12th, at
2 3:00 p.m.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: On
4 motion, the Senate stands adjourned until
5 Tuesday, May 12th, at 3:00 p.m.

6 (Whereupon, at 6:03 p.m., the Senate
7 adjourned.)
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