

1 NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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3
4 THE STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

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9 ALBANY, NEW YORK

10 May 20, 2026

11 2:54 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

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

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

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

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

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: I invite
9 Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, from Church of
10 Our Saviour in New York, New York, to join us.

11 MONSIGNOR SULLIVAN: As we begin
12 this session, let us bow our heads and call to
13 mind, in addition to being in one another's
14 presence, we are in God's holy presence.

15 Almighty God, we ask Your blessing
16 upon this New York State Senate. Bless the work
17 to foster the common good throughout all the
18 counties and communities of New York State.

19 May this body work toward especially
20 the poor and the vulnerable being protected,
21 feeling safe, that they may advance further in
22 their lives.

23 On this day when we recognize the
24 legacy of Dorothy Day, who spent so much time in
25 Staten Island, may her legacy be an inspiration

1 that we all can change and grow, that we are not
2 paralyzed by our past but that we can move in new
3 directions as we open ourselves to growth. And
4 as we see new insights, that we continue to build
5 upon them.

6 May we be like her, passionate and
7 perseverant in commitment to our values and our
8 beliefs. But yet may we draw from her
9 inspiration, be respectful of those with whom we
10 disagree, and not be vitriolic in the way we
11 describe their motives.

12 Almighty God, these days we must ask
13 You to reduce the hate that is in our world. We
14 remember in a special way those who were victims
15 of the shooting in the mosque in San Diego. We
16 remember those who are victims of violence at
17 synagogues in New York and other places.

18 And Almighty God, even though we are
19 in New York State, we ask you to protect those in
20 other countries, Christians in Nigeria and
21 elsewhere. May those who believe in You by
22 whatever name we call You, not use our belief in
23 You to spew hate and divisiveness on others.

24 Safeguard all in New York State:
25 Our long-term residents who for decades and

1 centuries have given so much to build this great
2 state. And also watch over those newcomers,
3 immigrants and refugees, who seek to build a new
4 life here and seek safety.

5 And as we draw to the end of May and
6 the beginning of June, a special blessing of the
7 students of New York State. May this year be
8 finished well. May their summers be times of
9 recreation and refreshment.

10 And Almighty God, we ask Your
11 blessings on all, that we might live worthy of
12 being made in Your image and likeness.

13 And let us all say amen.

14 (Response of "Amen.")

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Reading
16 of the Journal.

17 THE SECRETARY: In Senate, Tuesday,
18 May 19, 2026, the Senate met pursuant to
19 adjournment. The Journal of Monday, May 18,
20 2026, was read and approved. On motion, the
21 Senate adjourned.

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

24 Presentation of petitions.

25 Messages from the Assembly.

1 Messages from the Governor.
2 Reports of standing committees.
3 Reports of select committees.
4 Communications and reports from
5 state officers.

6 Motions and resolutions.

7 Senator Gianaris.

8 SENATOR GIANARIS: Good afternoon,
9 Mr. President.

10 There will be an immediate meeting
11 of the Rules Committee in Room 332.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There
13 will be an immediate meeting of the
14 Rules Committee in Room 332.

15 SENATOR GIANARIS: The Senate will
16 stand at ease.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
18 Senate will stand at ease.

19 (Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease
20 at 2:59 p.m.)

21 (Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at
22 3:04 p.m.)

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
24 Senate will return to order.

25 Senator Gianaris.

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
2 there's a report of the Rules Committee at the
3 desk. Please take that up at this time.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
5 Secretary will read.

6 THE SECRETARY: Senator
7 Stewart-Cousins, from the Committee on Rules,
8 reports the following bill:

9 Senate Print 10544, by
10 Senator Serrano, an act making appropriations for
11 the support of government.

12 The bill reports direct to third
13 reading.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to accept
15 the report of the Rules Committee.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: All those
17 in favor of accepting the report of the
18 Rules Committee please signify by saying aye.

19 (Response of "Aye.")

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed,
21 nay.

22 (Response of "Nay.")

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
24 report of the Rules Committee is accepted.

25 Senator Gianaris.

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

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
4 Secretary will read.

5 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
6 1283, Senate Print 10544, by Senator Serrano, an
7 act making appropriations for the support of
8 government.

9 SENATOR GIANARIS: Is there a
10 message of necessity and appropriation at desk?

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There is
12 a message of necessity and appropriation at the
13 desk.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to accept
15 the message.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: All those
17 in favor of accepting the message please signify
18 by saying aye.

19 (Response of "Aye.")

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed,
21 nay.

22 (Response of "Nay.")

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
24 message is accepted, and the bill is before the
25 house.

1 SENATOR LANZA: Lay it aside.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
3 will be laid aside.

4 Senator Gianaris, that completes the
5 reading of the supplemental calendar.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please go to the
7 reading of the controversial supplemental
8 calendar.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
10 Secretary will ring the bell.

11 The Secretary will read.

12 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
13 1283, Senate Print 10544, by Senator Serrano, an
14 act making appropriations for the support of
15 government.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
17 O'Mara, why do you rise?

18 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
19 Mr. President. Will Senator Serrano yield for
20 some questions on this extender bill?

21 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will
23 Senator Serrano yield?

24 Senator Serrano yields.

25 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,

1 Senator.

2 On this 14th extender bill on this
3 late budget, how much more are we appropriating
4 and through when?

5 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
6 Mr. President. Senator O'Mara, this indeed is
7 our 14th extender. It does contain \$1.9 billion
8 in additional spending, which brings us to a
9 total of \$33.7 billion through these extenders.
10 And it does take us through Tuesday, May 26th.

11 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
12 Senator.

13 If the Senator will yield for
14 another question, Mr. President.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
16 sponsor yield?

17 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

18 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
19 sponsor yields.

20 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, do you
21 expect the joint budget conference committees to
22 meet before we take up any of the budget bills?

23 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
24 Mr. President. Senator O'Mara, things have been
25 certainly moving quickly in the last 48 hours.

1 We are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel
2 for this budget, thankfully.

3 And this budget extender gets us at
4 least to continue the operation of state
5 government while we finalize all of the different
6 items.

7 But as far as the understanding and
8 the discussion around this budget, it has
9 certainly been ongoing. It has been conveyed
10 through media reports, and there's been quite a
11 bit of discussion about all of the different
12 policy items as well as budget items at this
13 point. So certainly this has been widely
14 reported and discussed.

15 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
16 Senator.

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 Senator yields.

24 SENATOR O'MARA: It's my
25 understanding, Senator, that we have one of the

1 remaining nine budget bills that's in print that
2 we'll be taking up today, and that's the ELFA
3 bill.

4 When will we have the other eight
5 bills?

6 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
7 Mr. President. You're correct, we do have the
8 ELFA bill ready to go, hopefully today.

9 The other bills, I believe they will
10 be closing down over the next few days. And I
11 suspect that we will begin voting early next week
12 on the remaining bills of this budget.

13 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

14 Mr. President, if the Senator will
15 continue to yield.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
17 sponsor yield?

18 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
20 sponsor yields.

21 SENATOR O'MARA: You just said that
22 hopefully we'll be taking up the ELFA bill today.
23 What did that mean?

24 SENATOR SERRANO: Okay. Well,
25 until there's a bill in front of me. But yes, I

1 believe we will. I am more than hopeful. I am
2 pretty sure.

3 (Laughter.)

4 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
5 Senator. I was pretty sure too.

6 (Laughter.)

7 SENATOR O'MARA: But you made me
8 second-think that.

9 Mr. President, if the Senator will
10 continue to yield.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
12 sponsor yield?

13 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
15 sponsor yields.

16 SENATOR O'MARA: It was my
17 understanding that there might be a second bill
18 coming, either for a vote today or tomorrow,
19 which in my understanding was going to be PPGG.

20 Where do we stand on that bill?

21 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
22 Mr. President. We're continuing to close that
23 down. My understanding is that we will hopefully
24 have something to vote on tomorrow for that.

25 But the ELFA bill is certainly ready

1 to go. We can begin with that. So I think we
2 can all hang our hat on the fact that budget
3 bills are coming to us. We will begin, we will
4 have a robust debate and discussion surrounding
5 that bill today.

6 We will be able to really have the
7 opportunity to understand everything that is in
8 that bill and vote on it. And over the next few
9 days, and including next week, we will completely
10 shut down this budget and have everything done.

11 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

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

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
15 sponsor yield?

16 SENATOR SERRANO: Yes.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
18 sponsor yields.

19 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, can you
20 tell us what the open, unresolved issues are for
21 the remaining bills to take up?

22 SENATOR SERRANO: Through you,
23 Mr. President. There's been lots of media
24 speculation and reports out there on different
25 issues. And it's been pretty clear that we're

1 coming together and finding cohesion and
2 coalition around those different issues.

3 And I think we are at that point now
4 where we are starting to go to print on all of
5 the remaining issues. I can't really speculate
6 on what the different issues may have been or
7 continue to be at this point, because it is very
8 fluid. But I do feel very confident that we are
9 at the end of that road.

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

12 On the bill, Mr. President.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
14 O'Mara on the bill.

15 SENATOR O'MARA: You know, it's --
16 this whole process remains very disconcerting to
17 me, that we're asking specific questions on what
18 issues are unresolved and we're getting responses
19 about things that have been discussed in the
20 media.

21 Well, we're the elected
22 representatives, not the reporters. And we're
23 the ones representing 300-and-some-thousand
24 people each in our districts. And we're not
25 getting answers to these questions on nine

1 remaining budget bills, only one of which we have
2 before us to take up shortly, I believe.

3 And it's just -- it's very
4 unfortunate that this is what this process has
5 devolved to, with no information being shared,
6 apparently even to the Majority members, on where
7 things stand on these issues. And certainly no
8 information being shared to the citizens of
9 New York State on where these -- where this
10 budget process stands, what's actually being
11 discussed.

12 Yet we're going to be presented with
13 bills on 12, 15 hours notice that we're going to
14 be having to vote on here shortly.

15 It's just -- it's the wrong way to
16 be approaching this. And I'm just very concerned
17 with this process. And it's unfortunate for the
18 citizens of New York State that we have to
19 proceed this way.

20 Thank you, Mr. President.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
22 you, Senator O'Mara.

23 Are there any other Senators wishing
24 to be heard?

25 Seeing and hearing none, debate is

1 now closed.

2 The Secretary will ring the bell.

3 Read the last section.

4 THE SECRETARY: Section 15. This
5 act shall take effect immediately.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Call the
7 roll.

8 (The Secretary called the roll.)

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Announce
10 the results.

11 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
12 Calendar 1283, voting in the negative are
13 Senators Rhoads and Weik.

14 Ayes, 59. Nays, 2.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
16 is passed.

17 Senator Gianaris, that completes the
18 controversial calendar.

19 SENATOR GIANARIS: Okay, now back
20 to motions and resolutions.

21 Let's take up previously adopted
22 Resolution 1493, by Senator Scarcella-Spanton,
23 read its title and call on Senator
24 Scarcella-Spanton, please.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The

1 Secretary will read.

2 THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1493, by
3 Senator Scarcella-Spanton, commemorating the
4 45th Anniversary of the death of Dorothy Day,
5 venerable Catholic lay leader, journalist, and
6 cofounder of the Catholic Worker Movement.

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

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

11 And thank you, Monsignor Sullivan,
12 for that wonderful invocation.

13 Today it's my great privilege to
14 commemorate the life and legacy of Dorothy Day, a
15 woman whose influence stretches far beyond
16 history, beyond the Catholic Church, and beyond
17 the movement that she helped to build.

18 For many of us on Staten Island,
19 Dorothy Day does not feel like a distant figure,
20 she feels like someone who's familiar and
21 personal.

22 I first learned about Dorothy Day
23 years ago when I was a student at St. John Villa
24 Academy, my all-girl Catholic high school. So
25 where else would I be learning, of course.

1 I remember finding her incredibly
2 interesting, but at that stage of my life I
3 mostly knew the version of Dorothy Day that many
4 people know, the broad strokes: The journalist,
5 the activist, the founder of the Catholic Worker,
6 the woman who was discussed in classrooms and
7 books, and the hopefully-one-day saint.

8 Even then, there was always
9 something about her that felt different to me.
10 Perhaps it was because she was not just a
11 historical figure to Staten Islanders, but a
12 person who belonged to the place we all call
13 home. She walked our streets, prayed in our
14 churches, raised her daughter here, spent summers
15 on our beaches, and built a huge part of her life
16 in the neighborhoods that we call home.

17 Over time, I started to realize that
18 Dorothy Day's story was not only about faith and
19 activism, but it was about Staten Island itself,
20 about how our borough shaped the woman who would
21 go on to shape so many others.

22 Right after Thanksgiving last year,
23 I happened to be flipping through the
24 Staten Island Advance and saw there would be a
25 mass held on November 29th, the anniversary of

1 Dorothy Day's death. And something compelled me
2 to attend, so I did.

3 Listening about her story in mass
4 that morning cracked open the desire to learn so
5 much more about her -- not just about the version
6 that we hear, but the woman herself. It led me
7 to meeting Anne-Louise, who we have here today,
8 who got me interested in reading her books and
9 the books her family had written as well.

10 What struck me most was the more I
11 learned about Dorothy Day, the more human she
12 became. Sometimes history gives us a version of
13 a person which is polished and easy to digest,
14 but the story I have learned recently about the
15 woman I admire and hope to see become a saint was
16 not simple at all.

17 From the pages that make her come
18 alive, Dorothy Day was dynamic, passionate,
19 deeply faithful, a person full of conviction,
20 sacrifice, struggle, love -- and my personal
21 favorite, sometimes contradiction. Which who
22 among us isn't?

23 I have become fascinated by the
24 layers and layers of what made Dorothy, Dorothy.
25 I have begun reading the letters she wrote

1 throughout her life, a fascinating journey which
2 further shows how fully human she was -- not
3 untouched by pain or conflict or longing,
4 wrestling with life, wrestling with love,
5 wrestling with sacrifice but finding deep faith
6 through it all, and finding the dignity in all
7 people.

8 Together with Peter Maurin, she
9 helped build the Catholic Worker movement during
10 one of the most difficult parts of American
11 history. What began as a newspaper which sold
12 for a penny became something far greater -- a
13 movement rooted in hospitality, labor rights, and
14 the belief that every human being possesses
15 inherent dignity.

16 Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin
17 challenged people to look directly at poverty,
18 injustice and suffering, not as an abstract
19 political issue but as human realities demanding
20 both compassion and action.

21 What makes her legacy so enduring is
22 that she did not simply write about these ideals,
23 she lived them. She opened homes, shared meals,
24 welcomed strangers, and built a movement centered
25 on the belief that every person matters.

1 The deeper I get into her history,
2 the more I change how I approach my own work and
3 life. She's motivated me to slow down and see
4 the humanity in every constituent case, every
5 interaction, and every person who reaches out for
6 help.

7 In government and public service, as
8 probably all of us in this room know, it is so
9 easy to move on from one issue to the next. But
10 the lessons of Dorothy Day remind us that every
11 issue belongs to a human being. Every call for
12 help belongs to a person carrying burdens we may
13 never fully see. And that perspective has stayed
14 with me deeply.

15 As a mother, Dorothy Day's life
16 speaks in another profound way. I think about
17 what it meant for her to raise her daughter Tamar
18 while serving and sacrificing so much of her
19 herself, while balancing motherhood.

20 Her story is the story of so many
21 women who quietly make sacrifices every day to
22 build a better world around them while trying to
23 be the best mom they can be.

24 That is why Dorothy Day resonates so
25 strongly to so many people. People see

1 themselves in her. She was layered, complex, and
2 deeply human. And today as we commemorate the
3 45th anniversary of her passing, it is especially
4 meaningful that we are joined by people who
5 continue to carry her legacy forward.

6 I'd like to extend a heartfelt
7 welcome to George Horton and his wife,
8 Carolyn Zablotny. George is the vice postulator
9 of the Dorothy Day Guild. Kevin Ahern, chair of
10 the Dorothy Day Guild, along with his awesome
11 daughter Islay.

12 Islay, hi! Good to see you.

13 And my friend Anne-Louise DePalo,
14 who founded Desert Day House, leading retreats
15 for folks to walk where Dorothy once walked.

16 And while she could not be here
17 today in person because she's with her own
18 grandchildren, which only makes the Dorothy Day
19 family even more relatable, I have been in touch
20 with her granddaughter Martha, who I've had the
21 privilege of speaking with over the last few
22 weeks as this special day came together.

23 For Martha, when you see this, your
24 grandmother's life continues to inspire people in
25 ways that are deeply personal and transformative.

1 Thank you for sharing your grandmother with us
2 today and for allowing me to have the privilege
3 of recognizing her on the Senate floor.

4 I pray soon we will have St. Dorothy
5 Day and her legacy will continue to shape the
6 world for generations to come, especially on
7 Staten Island.

8 Thank you. I proudly vote aye.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
10 you, Senator.

11 Senator Ramos on the resolution.

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

14 You know, there's a photo of
15 Dorothy Day hanging in my dining room. I keep it
16 there not as decoration but as a reminder to my
17 children, to my family, and sometimes even to
18 myself, as we eat, that we have a responsibility
19 to those who have less than we do.

20 And Dorothy Day understood that
21 responsibility deeply. Through the
22 Catholic Worker movement she built something
23 rooted in a radical but simple idea: Human
24 dignity isn't conditional -- not on immigration
25 status, not on wealth, not on whether society

1 considers someone important.

2 She believed faith has to be lived.
3 And Dorothy Day believed that if we claim to see
4 Jesus in scripture, then we should also be able
5 to see him in the hungry, the worker, the
6 immigrant, the unhoused, and the person society
7 has decided to overlook.

8 She believed faith was not about
9 power or performance, it's about how we treat
10 people. In soup kitchens, in shelters, on
11 picket lines with workers, alongside farmworkers
12 demanding dignity and fair treatment. She
13 understood that poverty is not a personal
14 failure, it's a societal responsibility. And she
15 understood that compassion without material
16 change is just performance.

17 Dorothy Day once said "We love God
18 as much as the person we love the least." At a
19 time when too many working families are
20 struggling to afford housing, food, healthcare
21 and stability, Dorothy Day reminds us that
22 justice is not abstract. It's whether workers
23 are treated with dignity, whether children go
24 hungry, whether the poor are seen as burdens or
25 as human beings deserving of care.

1 And as lawmakers, that challenge
2 belongs to us too. Because values only matter if
3 they shape how we govern.

4 In the work I've tried to do for
5 farmworkers, domestic workers, underpaid workers,
6 immigrant workers and families struggling to stay
7 afloat in New York, I often think about people
8 like Dorothy Day who understood that dignity must
9 be protected not only through charity, but
10 through justice. Not only through kindness, but
11 through systems that value human beings.

12 She didn't separate faith from
13 public life. She brought moral clarity into
14 public life. And in moments like this, I think
15 we are called to do the same.

16 So today we honor Dorothy Day not
17 only for what she believed, but for how she
18 lived -- with humility, with courage, and with a
19 relentless commitment to human dignity.

20 I want to thank Senator
21 Scarcella-Spanton for highlighting one of the
22 greatest New Yorkers who has ever lived.

23 Thank you.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
25 you, Senator Ramos.

1 Senator May on the resolution.

2 SENATOR MAY: Thank you,
3 Mr. President.

4 And I also want to thank
5 Senator Scarcella-Spanton and Senator Ramos for
6 your words, and the family of Dorothy Day for
7 sharing her with the world.

8 In Syracuse is a place where
9 Dorothy Day came often. She worked with the
10 Berrigan brothers in the Catholic Worker
11 Movement.

12 And her legacy lives on in a
13 not-for-profit known as Friends of Dorothy in
14 Syracuse, which is run by two men,
15 Michael DeSalvo and Nick Orth, who started in
16 1992 opening their home to men who were dying of
17 AIDS and whose families had turned their backs on
18 them, who struggled to find hospice care or
19 anyone who would care for them. And Michael and
20 Nick have continued caring for people at the end
21 of their lives who were outcast in various ways
22 from society, for 34 years.

23 It is a remarkable organization
24 inspired by a remarkable woman. And I lift them
25 up today as well as this entire movement that, as

1 Senator Ramos said, is for people who are
2 otherwise left in the shadows and don't have the
3 support that they need.

4 So I proudly vote aye on this
5 resolution. Thank you.

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

8 The resolution was adopted on
9 January 28th.

10 Senator -- and before we go to our
11 Senator, to our guests, I welcome you on behalf
12 of the Senate. We extend to you the privileges
13 and courtesies of this house.

14 Please rise and be recognized.

15 (Standing ovation.)

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
17 Gianaris.

18 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please recognize
19 Senator Skoufis for an introduction.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
21 Skoufis for an introduction.

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

24 In the event that my many
25 constituents in the gallery are not keeping their

1 eyes glued to Channels 83 or 108 when they're
2 back home and watching us, they got a real treat
3 really watching democracy in action just before,
4 as we passed our latest budget extender.

5 But today is one of my favorite days
6 of spring during legislative session, a day where
7 each year I get to invite and welcome the
8 valedictorians and salutatorians from the dozen
9 high schools in the 42nd Senate District.
10 There's some extra brain power in the chamber
11 today.

12 And as we all know, it takes a great
13 deal of dedication, fortitude -- yes, of course,
14 academic talent -- in order to rise to one of the
15 two highest ranks of their graduating classes.
16 But they go beyond academic success, to a person.
17 They're leaders in their schools and communities;
18 they're members of various service organizations,
19 and active participants in clubs and musical
20 groups, sports, athletics, and the list goes on
21 and on.

22 Many of them -- there are
23 20 students with us today. Many of them are here
24 with their parents. And certainly behind every
25 great student are great parents or caretakers.

1 And so I welcome and congratulate them as well.

2 And whether upon graduation they're
3 going off to college or the military or for some
4 period of time traveling, I wish them nothing but
5 continued success, and the best. And it's a
6 privilege to be able to represent them.

7 And most importantly from my
8 perspective, I hope they either stay or return to
9 New York where their talents and their expertise
10 are so desperately needed.

11 With that all said, I do want to
12 acknowledge the 20 students who are here for the
13 Senate record.

14 From Cornwall Central High School,
15 my hometown, we have Marisa Barnsby and
16 Slav Mishkovski.

17 From George F. Baker High School,
18 Kayleigh Donnelly and Logan Saari-Poznanski.

19 From Goshen Central High School,
20 we have Mehri Ghezel-Ayagh and
21 Dalton Fortugno-Harris.

22 From Middletown High School, we have
23 Matthew MacKay and Renata Rugerio.

24 From Minisink Valley High School, we
25 have Conner Doane and Colin Hansen.

1 From my alma mater, Monroe-Woodbury
2 High School, we have Prasad Saha and Luka Joncic.

3 From Pine Bush High School, we have
4 Lucas Meisel and Leah Meberg.

5 From Port Jervis High School, we
6 have Michelle Gimena and Kayleigh Wright.

7 From S.S. Seward Institute, the
8 valedictorian there is Alexander Vargas.

9 From Warwick Valley High School, the
10 salutatorian is Nathan Link.

11 And from Washingtonville High
12 School, we have Joseph Mullan and Caroline Korba.

13 It's a privilege to represent these
14 extraordinary constituents.

15 And Mr. President, if you could
16 please afford them the privileges and
17 cordialities of the floor.

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

20 To our extraordinary students who
21 are joining us today, I welcome you on behalf of
22 the Senate. We extend to you the privileges and
23 courtesies of this house.

24 Please rise and be recognized.

25 (Standing ovation.)

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
2 Gianaris.

3 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please recognize
4 Senator Jackson.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
6 Jackson for an introduction.

7 SENATOR JACKSON: Good afternoon,
8 everyone. I'm State Senator Robert Jackson from
9 the 31st Senatorial District in
10 Northern Manhattan in the Northwest Bronx, and
11 I'm here with approximately 25 students, high
12 school students from Yeshiva University Civic
13 Education Day.

14 And so I had the opportunity to go
15 upstairs while they were waiting to come in, and
16 we shook hands and took pictures. And they were
17 very, very pleased to be here in the Capitol with
18 us, knowing that they were going to be watching
19 democracy in action.

20 And so this is democracy, whether
21 you agree or disagree, whether it's -- you're
22 right or you're wrong. But this is what we do
23 here in the State Senate.

24 So to the students from Yeshiva
25 University Civic Education Day, I welcome you to

1 the State Senate and I ask the chair to please
2 give them the courtesy of the house.

3 And thank you.

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

6 To our students, I welcome you on
7 behalf of the Senate. We extend to you the
8 privileges and courtesies of this house.

9 Please rise and be recognized.

10 (Standing ovation.)

11 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
12 Gianaris.

13 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
14 Madam President.

15 At this time let's take up
16 previously adopted Resolution 1939, by
17 Senator Cooney, read that resolution's title and
18 recognize Senator Cooney, please.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
20 Secretary will read.

21 THE SECRETARY: Resolution 1939, by
22 Senator Cooney, mourning the death of
23 Freddi Macek, distinguished citizen and devoted
24 member of her community.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator

1 Cooney on the resolution.

2 SENATOR COONEY: Thank you,
3 Madam President.

4 I'm so grateful for this opportunity
5 to honor my friend and a friend of so many:
6 Freddi Macek, who sadly passed away last
7 November.

8 For those who knew Freddi, they knew
9 her passion, her endless determination, her
10 humor, and her commitment to students and workers
11 alike.

12 I'd like to extend a warm welcome to
13 members of Freddi's union family who join us here
14 today, those who stood beside her in the work she
15 cared so deeply about: Maria Fisher,
16 representing AFSCME, along with Brian McDonald
17 from AFSCME. Eddie Santiago, from IAFF. And
18 Kevin Eitzmann, from the State AFL-CIO.

19 Thank you for being here to
20 acknowledge Freddi's lasting impact and legacy,
21 as she leaves, with the labor community. Freddi
22 spent over three decades as a second-grade
23 teacher in the Rochester City School District, my
24 alma mater, shaping the leaders of tomorrow and
25 instilling a love of learning in each generation.

1 The impact she had on these students
2 is truly immeasurable. Her support, her care and
3 expertise could always be felt with each class
4 and with each individual student.

5 But what made Freddi so special is
6 that her passion didn't end at the classroom
7 door. She was a fierce union advocate, fighting
8 for a better quality of life for her fellow
9 instructors. Through the Rochester Teachers
10 Association and NYSUT, Freddi embodied what it
11 means to be union strong. And she never truly
12 slowed down. Even in her eighties, Freddi
13 remained involved in community organizing. It
14 was this boundless passion that served as an
15 inspiration to so many.

16 And while her loss has been felt
17 community-wide, her legacy will continue on in
18 every student, friend, neighbor, and loved one
19 she had the privilege of knowing. And we had the
20 privilege of knowing her.

21 It's my great honor to be able to
22 recognize her today and to show her the
23 appreciation from a state that deserved a union
24 leader, a teacher, and a friend to so many.

25 Madam President, I vote aye.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Thank you,
2 Senator Cooney.

3 To our guests from the union family
4 of Freddi Macek, we welcome you. We acknowledge
5 her. We cherish her memory and her work. We
6 appreciate you being here in her memory, and we
7 will keep it alive.

8 Please rise and be recognized.

9 (Standing ovation.)

10 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: The
11 resolution was previously adopted on April 28th.

12 Senator Gianaris.

13 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please recognize
14 Senator Weber for an introduction.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT MAYER: Senator
16 Weber for an introduction.

17 SENATOR WEBER: Good afternoon,
18 Madam President.

19 Today it's my great honor to rise
20 and welcome a very special group of guests here
21 in the gallery. And we recognize the growing
22 contributions, culture, and heritage of the
23 Indian American community across the State of
24 New York.

25 As many of our colleagues know,

1 August has been officially recognized as
2 Indian American Heritage Month here in New York
3 State, a meaningful opportunity to celebrate the
4 history, tradition, achievements and enduring
5 impact of Indian Americans in every corner of our
6 state.

7 I especially want to thank Dr. Aney
8 Paul for once again organizing this trip to
9 Albany. Year after year, Dr. Paul, who's also a
10 Rockland County legislator, has helped strengthen
11 the connection between communities across
12 New York State and their state government, while
13 also reminding all of us of the importance of
14 civic engagement, cultural understanding, and
15 public service. We are grateful for your
16 leadership and dedication.

17 I also want to acknowledge the
18 leaders of the outstanding organizations
19 represented here today.

20 From the Rockland Indian Cultural
21 Heritage and Arts Awareness Club, we have
22 Shaimi Jacob.

23 It's nice to see you, Shaimi. How
24 are you?

25 Representing the Hudson Valley

1 Malayalee Association, we're joined by my good
2 friends Noah George and Paul Karukappillil.

3 The Indian Cultural Society of
4 Rockland's president, Suresh Iyer, is also here
5 as well.

6 The chairman and founders of
7 Jeevan Jyoti: Suresh and Mamta Arya.

8 And finally, members of the
9 Albany AAPI, and the World Yoga Community.

10 So many great friends are here today
11 that I would like to recognize them. It's great
12 that you're here today.

13 You know, each of these
14 organizations plays an important role in
15 preserving traditions, supporting families,
16 promoting education, encouraging cultural
17 exchange and building stronger communities
18 throughout our state.

19 I'm especially proud to represent
20 Rockland County, one of the most culturally
21 diverse counties anywhere in New York State.
22 That diversity is truly one of our greatest
23 strengths.

24 Throughout the year I have the
25 privilege of attending so many wonderful Indian

1 American events in my district, from cultural
2 festivals and holiday celebrations to community
3 gatherings, educational programs, and charitable
4 events.

5 Every one of those experiences
6 reflects the incredible warmth, generosity, and
7 spirit of service that defines the community.

8 Whether it's celebrating Diwali,
9 participating in cultural performances, enjoying
10 incredible food that I've gotten to really like,
11 or simply spending time with family and community
12 members, I'm always reminded how fortunate we are
13 to live in a place where so many cultures come
14 together while we still proudly preserve their
15 unique identities and traditions.

16 The Indian American community has
17 contributed enormously and continues to
18 contribute enormously to New York in business, in
19 medicine, education, technology, public service,
20 the arts, and countless other fields. But just
21 as importantly, this community continues to
22 strengthen the social fabric of our neighborhoods
23 through volunteerism, faith, family values and
24 civic participation.

25 So today, on behalf of the New York

1 State Senate, I extend our sincere gratitude and
2 appreciation to all the guests that are here
3 today. Thank you for being with us here. Thank
4 you for all that you do for our communities. And
5 thank you for helping make New York a richer and
6 more vibrant state.

7 Madam President -- oh,
8 Mr. President, sorry. You changed. Please
9 extend to the guests here today all the
10 cordialities of this great esteemed body.

11 Thank you.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
13 you, Senator Weber.

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

18 Please rise and be recognized.

19 (Standing ovation.)

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
21 Gianaris.

22 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
23 at this time there will be an immediate meeting
24 of the Finance Committee in Room 332.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There

1 will be an immediate meeting of the
2 Finance Committee in Room 332.

3 SENATOR GIANARIS: The Senate will
4 stand at ease.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
6 Senate will stand at ease.

7 (Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease
8 at 3:38 p.m.)

9 (Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at
10 3:47 p.m.)

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
12 Senate will return to order.

13 Senator Gianaris.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
15 there's a report of the Finance Committee at the
16 desk. Please take that up.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
18 Secretary will read.

19 THE SECRETARY: Senator Krueger,
20 from the Committee on Finance, reports the
21 following bill:

22 Senate Print 9006C, Budget Bill, an
23 act to amend the Education Law.

24 The bill reports direct to third
25 reading.

1 SENATOR GIANARIS: Move to accept
2 the report of the Finance Committee.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: All those
4 in favor of accepting the report of the
5 Finance Committee please signify by saying aye.

6 (Response of "Aye.")

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed,
8 nay.

9 (No response.)

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
11 report of the Finance Committee is accepted.

12 Senator Gianaris.

13 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up
14 the supplemental calendar.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
16 Secretary will read.

17 There is a substitution at the desk.

18 The Secretary will read.

19 THE SECRETARY: Senator Serrano
20 moves to discharge, from the Committee on
21 Finance, Assembly Bill Number 10006C and
22 substitute it for the identical Senate Bill
23 9006C, Third Reading Calendar 1284.

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: Is there a
25 message of necessity at the desk?

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
2 substitution is so ordered.

3 The Secretary will read.

4 SENATOR GIANARIS: Oh, sorry.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There is
6 a message of necessity at the desk.

7 SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to accept
8 the message.

9 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
10 1284, Assembly Bill Number 10006C, Budget Bill,
11 an act to amend the Education Law.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There is
13 a message of necessity at the desk.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you. I
15 move to accept the message.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: All those
17 in favor of accepting the message please signify
18 by saying aye.

19 (Response of "Aye.")

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Opposed,
21 nay.

22 (Response of "Nay.")

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
24 message is accepted.

25 The bill is before the house.

1 SENATOR LANZA: Lay it aside.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
3 will be laid aside.

4 Senator Gianaris, that completes the
5 reading of the supplemental calendar.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: Please take up
7 the controversial calendar.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
9 Secretary will ring the bell.

10 The Secretary will read.

11 THE SECRETARY: Calendar Number
12 1284, Assembly Bill Number 10006C, Budget Bill,
13 an act to amend the Education Law.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
15 Lanza, why do you rise?

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

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
21 you, Senator Lanza.

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

25 SENATOR LANZA: Accordingly,

1 Mr. President, I appeal the ruling of the chair
2 and ask that Senator Borrello be heard on that
3 appeal.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
5 appeal has been made and recognized, and
6 Senator Borrello may be heard.

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

9 Well, we have a unique opportunity
10 at this moment. So we have before us a budget
11 bill that I am told, if it passes, will extend
12 the electric school bus mandate for five years.

13 So what my amendment will do is it
14 will include a NYSERDA study on the effectiveness
15 of electric school buses. So if we're going to
16 take five years and we're going to delay it,
17 let's actually make sure we do something
18 productive in that five years to ensure that this
19 truly will work, and where it will work and where
20 it won't work.

21 So this is very germane to this
22 budget bill because it's indeed about adding some
23 substance to this five-year delay on this EV
24 school bus mandate.

25 So, Mr. President, I would certainly

1 love to have this ruled germane so that we can
2 move forward productively with this delivery in
3 the electric school bus mandate.

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

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

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

11 (Response of "Aye.")

12 SENATOR LANZA: Show of hands.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: A show of
14 hands has been requested and so ordered.

15 Announce the results.

16 THE SECRETARY: Ayes, 22.

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

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
22 Gianaris.

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: As we begin
24 debate on this bill, I would ask my colleagues in
25 the Minority to identify the part of the bill

1 that they intend to debate as they get up. In
2 the absence of Senator Krueger, we will have
3 various members defending the bill, and it would
4 be helpful to move things along if we know which
5 part is being debated.

6 Thank you.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
8 O'Mara, why do you rise?

9 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
10 Mr. President. I have some questions on the
11 financial plan.

12 SENATOR GIANARIS: Senator Liu will
13 address those questions, Mr. President.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
15 Liu, do you yield?

16 SENATOR LIU: I do yield.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
18 sponsor yields.

19 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
20 Senator. Good afternoon.

21 We have a financial plan before us
22 that was handed up at some point last night. It
23 shows an increase in state funds in this budget
24 by 8.5 percent, with total State Operating Funds
25 being \$161.4 billion.

1 Do we have the revenue bill before
2 us in this house?

3 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
4 Mr. President, we don't have the revenue bill
5 yet, but it is expected to be finalized by the
6 middle of next week.

7 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
8 Mr. President. If the Senator will continue to
9 yield.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
11 sponsor yield?

12 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do,
13 Mr. President.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
15 sponsor yields.

16 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, the
17 All Funds budget at this point is \$268 billion in
18 this budget, up nearly 4 percent from last year.

19 Can you explain the sources of
20 revenue that we're going to be collecting,
21 ultimately through the revenue bill, which is the
22 major part of this budget?

23 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
24 Mr. President. The Senator is right, and it's a
25 3.8 percent increase over fiscal '26. And the

1 tax receipts are also expected to increase
2 commensurately, so that we have more or less a
3 balanced budget.

4 To answer your question, most of the
5 tax growth comes from economic growth.

6 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

7 Mr. President, if the Senator will
8 continue to yield.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
10 sponsor yield?

11 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
13 Senator yields.

14 SENATOR O'MARA: Since we're
15 predicting an over 6 percent increase in tax
16 revenues in this financial plan, does that
17 indicate the economy in the State of New York is
18 doing fairly well?

19 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
20 Mr. President. Yes, it does.

21 In fact, you may recall the end of
22 calendar year 2025, just a few months ago,
23 revenues came in \$4 billion ahead of what was
24 expected at the time.

25 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,

1 Senator.

2 Mr. President, if the Senator will
3 continue to yield.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
5 sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 sponsor yields.

9 SENATOR O'MARA: With the taxes
10 anticipated to raise -- tax collections
11 anticipated to raise by over 6 percent this
12 coming year, the increase in the State Operating
13 Funds part of this budget is an 8.5 percent
14 increase.

15 Can you explain how or why the
16 growth of State Operating Funds disbursements is
17 outpacing the growth of the tax revenue increase?

18 (Pause.)

19 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
20 Mr. President.

21 Part of the -- a large amount of the
22 growth in spending ahead of the growth in
23 revenues is the fact that we do have to make up
24 for many of the federal cuts that have been
25 imposed upon our state.

1 And as you know, we try to help our
2 fellow New Yorkers who have been hurt by the
3 federal budget cuts.

4 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
5 Senator.

6 Mr. President, if the Senator will
7 continue to yield.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
9 sponsor yield?

10 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
12 sponsor yields.

13 SENATOR O'MARA: While the State
14 Operating Funds budget is expected to grow
15 8.5 percent in this budget, over the last
16 two years it's grown 21 percent, far outpacing
17 inflation and certainly far outpacing any federal
18 cuts that have happened.

19 So, you know, we keep a 2 percent
20 tax cap on all our local governments and school
21 districts, yet here we exceed that 2 percent with
22 a 21 percent increase in state operating spending
23 over a two-year period.

24 How can we justify that?

25 SENATOR LIU: Through you,

1 Mr. President. The expenditures have risen, but
2 so have our overall receipts, to the point we
3 have more or less a balanced budget like we had
4 in past years.

5 And a great deal of the revenue
6 increase is because of a robust economy.
7 Notwithstanding the dire predictions of
8 forecasters from years past, the state economy
9 continues to bring in those tax revenues.

10 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

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

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
14 sponsor yield?

15 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
17 Senator yields.

18 SENATOR O'MARA: But yet, Senator,
19 we're expected to start voting on this first of
20 the remaining nine budget bills today without
21 having a revenue plan in place -- at least the
22 budget in place.

23 Should we be proceeding with this
24 budget without having all components of it put
25 together and have a whole budget for us to be

1 considering as a whole?

2 Because the individual pieces all
3 need to add up to this amount in the financial
4 plan. Yet we only have one of those budget Bills
5 before us today. How can we responsibly be
6 proceeding with votes on this bill?

7 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
8 Mr. President. Although we may not have the
9 details that will be spelled out in the revenue
10 bill, we do know what the revenues are going to
11 be. I believe we're looking at the same chart.

12 So the revenues are going to be
13 sufficient to fund the expenditures that we're
14 expecting for fiscal year 2027. And this is also
15 in line with past practice. This is not the
16 first year that we'll be voting on some of the
17 budget bills prior to the finalization of the
18 revenue bill.

19 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
20 Senator.

21 Mr. President, if the Senator will
22 continue to yield.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
24 sponsor yield?

25 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
2 sponsor yields.

3 SENATOR O'MARA: I'm always amused
4 by the argument that that's the way we've always
5 done it, so let's continue to do it that way.

6 We did it that way when we were in
7 the majority. You didn't like it. You're doing
8 it that way when you're in the majority. We
9 don't like it. I didn't like it then, I don't
10 like it now. I don't think it's responsible
11 government. Yet the spending continues to go up
12 astronomically.

13 Can you tell us, Senator, what
14 revenue -- what taxes are being increased to help
15 generate the revenue to support this budget?

16 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
17 Mr. President. There are no significant
18 increases in tax rates levied at the state level.

19 A lot of it has been driven by
20 economic growth. Some people will credit a
21 strong Wall Street environment for that. But
22 that reflects the overall state of our New York
23 economy. And so that's what's been driving the
24 increases in tax revenues.

25 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,

1 Senator.

2 Mr. President, if the Senator will
3 continue to yield.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
5 sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do,
7 Mr. President.

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
9 sponsor yields.

10 SENATOR O'MARA: What insignificant
11 tax increases can you tell us are going to be
12 included in this budget?

13 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
14 Mr. President, there are no tax rate increases.
15 Revenue increases, yes, but not increases in
16 rates. And no new taxes that I can recall off
17 the top of my head.

18 There may be some minor fee
19 increases that I don't recall right now. We can
20 get you a list of those a little bit later. But
21 really the answer to your question is no new
22 taxes.

23 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

24 Mr. President, if the Senator will
25 continue to yield.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
2 sponsor yield?

3 SENATOR LIU: Yes, sir.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
5 sponsor yields.

6 SENATOR O'MARA: Will there be any
7 personal income tax rate reductions coming forth?

8 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
9 Mr. President, no.

10 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you.

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

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
14 sponsor yield?

15 SENATOR LIU: Yes.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
17 sponsor yields.

18 SENATOR O'MARA: With increasing
19 revenues due to the economy humming along and
20 Wall Street doing well, we have the revenues, we
21 have the resources. So your side of the aisle
22 thinks it's better to just spend all that money
23 rather than giving maybe a tax break to
24 New Yorkers?

25 SENATOR LIU: Through you,

1 Mr. President. We are stepping up to help fellow
2 New Yorkers that were hurt by H.R. 1, the federal
3 tax bill that was passed last year. And that tax
4 bill actually gave many New Yorkers a substantial
5 tax break.

6 So if you look at the overall tax
7 burden of New Yorkers, that's decreased for many
8 of the highest-income New Yorkers.

9 We haven't increased tax rates for
10 New Yorkers in this budget. We don't plan to do
11 so. And the -- could we have offered additional
12 tax breaks? That would have been difficult,
13 given that the federal budget already imposed
14 huge burdens on our New York budget in our desire
15 to take care of fellow New Yorkers.

16 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
17 Senator.

18 Mr. President, if the Senator would
19 continue to yield.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
21 sponsor yield?

22 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
24 sponsor yields.

25 SENATOR O'MARA: The overall

1 concerns we continue to hear over and over again
2 are the cuts of the federal government.

3 The cuts, at least according to this
4 financial plan, are expected to be about
5 \$7 billion, yet we're increasing spending by
6 13 or 14 billion dollars from last year. So
7 those federal cuts don't seem to be impacting our
8 overall budget and ability to provide for
9 New Yorkers.

10 And we have increased revenues
11 coming, yet we're giving no tax breaks to any
12 New Yorkers. So I still don't see how we justify
13 not providing some relief, and way outpacing a
14 2 percent growth in this.

15 But to move on in the financial
16 plan -- and it's not in here, but what are the
17 projected outyear gaps based on the structure of
18 this budget we're proceeding with?

19 (Pause.)

20 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
21 Mr. President. I don't have the outyear budget
22 gaps, but they're similar to the amounts
23 presented in the Executive Budget.

24 But they'll be at least a couple of
25 billion dollars.

1 SENATOR O'MARA: Through you,
2 Mr. President, if the Senator will continue to
3 yield.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
5 sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR LIU: Yes.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 sponsor yields.

9 SENATOR O'MARA: There will be at
10 least a couple of billion dollars? I mean, in
11 prior years we were looking at 20 to 30 billion
12 dollars in outyear gaps. So has that been
13 closed?

14 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
15 Mr. President. They have not been closed. They
16 are going to be similar to what they are as
17 presented in the Executive Budget. Perhaps we
18 can get a copy of that shortly.

19 SENATOR O'MARA: Do you have those
20 or you don't have those?

21 SENATOR LIU: I don't have them on
22 hand. But why don't we get a copy of them real
23 quick.

24 SENATOR O'MARA: Okay. I'll move
25 on, then. Thank you, Senator.

1 Mr. President, if the Senator will
2 continue to yield.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
4 sponsor yield?

5 SENATOR LIU: Yes.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
7 sponsor yields.

8 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, what is
9 the expected cost of the reforms being considered
10 to Tier 6?

11 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
12 Mr. President, the Tier 6 negotiations or
13 negotiations to amend Tier 6 are still underway.

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

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
18 sponsor yield?

19 SENATOR LIU: Yes.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
21 Senator yields.

22 SENATOR O'MARA: It's difficult to
23 debate this budget with eight of nine budget
24 bills not being in front of us or in print, or
25 these decisions having been made. So that's

1 concerning with moving forward at this point.

2 Can you tell us, Senator, we're
3 passing -- we're moving this bill today with a
4 message of necessity, a bill that was introduced
5 later last night. The Constitution requires
6 three days waiting period. We don't have eight
7 of the nine remaining budget bills.

8 What is the rush to get this bill
9 done today that we couldn't wait the
10 constitutionally mandated three-day waiting
11 period?

12 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
13 Mr. President, we're trying to get the budget
14 done as expediently as possible.

15 And in particular, this budget bill
16 includes the funding for our public schools
17 throughout the State of New York. And as you are
18 likely aware, many of our school districts, they
19 need their numbers. They need their numbers as
20 soon as possible. So this is an urgent matter.

21 SENATOR O'MARA: Through you,
22 Mr. President, if the Senator will continue to
23 yield.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
25 sponsor yield?

1 SENATOR LIU: Yes.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
3 sponsor yields.

4 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, our
5 school districts needed a budget before
6 yesterday, when all their budgets went to vote.
7 And so voters and school districts blindly put
8 forth a budget and went to vote on a budget not
9 knowing what that school aid was going to be.

10 While we now have school runs today,
11 when were those school runs actually determined?

12 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
13 Mr. President. I'm not exactly sure when the
14 State Education Department delivered the school
15 runs. But those school -- the results of those
16 school runs are reflected in this particular
17 budget.

18 SENATOR O'MARA: Through you,
19 Mr. President, if the Senator will continue to
20 yield.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
22 sponsor yield?

23 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do,
24 Mr. President.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The

1 sponsor yields.

2 SENATOR O'MARA: Since the main
3 thing in this first bill of ELFA is the local
4 school aid that's in there, and really not a
5 whole lot else in this budget bill before us, why
6 couldn't or why shouldn't that have been done
7 weeks ago? We're nearly eight weeks late on this
8 the budget at this point, and we will be next
9 week. We just did an extender into next week.

10 So I don't see the urgency of having
11 to pass this today with a message of necessity
12 when we've extended the operations of government
13 into next week.

14 Do you, Senator, expect that we're
15 going to get the remaining eight budget bills
16 later today and expected to vote on them
17 throughout the weekend?

18 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
19 Mr. President, I don't expect that we'll be
20 voting throughout this important Memorial Day
21 weekend.

22 There's some expectation that one
23 other budget bill may come before the weekend.
24 And then we will finish the remaining bills next
25 week.

1 SENATOR O'MARA: Thank you,
2 Mr. President. If the Senator will continue to
3 yield.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
5 sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR LIU: Yes, I do.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 Senator yields.

9 SENATOR O'MARA: So at best, we
10 might get through two of the nine remaining
11 budget bills before the weekend.

12 I see no reason why these, since the
13 school budget votes have already been taken, why
14 these couldn't be held for the three-day waiting
15 period to get feedback from our constituents on
16 this. It really makes no sense.

17 You know, as of -- can you tell me,
18 Senator, as of about this time yesterday
19 afternoon, around 3:30 or so -- and it's a little
20 after 4:00 right now today -- the word from the
21 majorities in the Legislature were there weren't
22 going to be any budget bills this week, we'd be
23 doing them next week.

24 And then I guess the Governor
25 pitched a fit and now, today, we miraculously

1 came up with one budget bill to move forward and
2 maybe two bill before this weekend, yet we're
3 still proceeding with a message of necessity.

4 What is the urgency to move on this
5 today? Because the Governor wanted it done
6 today?

7 SENATOR LIU: Through you,
8 Mr. President. As you know, Senator, sometimes
9 we -- oftentimes, things happen a little bit
10 later than we expect.

11 In this case, surprisingly,
12 pleasantly so, we're able to move quicker than
13 was expected yesterday. And I for one am glad
14 we're moving ahead with this.

15 Your continuing question of the need
16 for the message of necessity -- again, we want to
17 get this done as quickly as possible. Getting
18 this bill out of the way frees us up to
19 finalizing and voting on the remaining bills.

20 SENATOR O'MARA: Through you,
21 Mr. President, if the Senator will continue to
22 yield.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
24 sponsor yield?

25 SENATOR LIU: Yes.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
2 sponsor yields.

3 SENATOR O'MARA: Senator, once this
4 bill, this ELFA bill was put into print last
5 night, that was set. And you can move on to
6 working on the other eight budget bills and wait
7 the three days to take that bill up so that we
8 would meet the constitutional requirements of a
9 three-day waiting period.

10 It just makes sense to me to be
11 moving forward with this.

12 Senator, thank you for your answers
13 to the questions.

14 And just on the bill briefly --

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
16 O'Mara on the bill.

17 SENATOR O'MARA: -- Mr. President.

18 I believe we're premature in
19 bringing this bill up. We should have a complete
20 budget before us, every aspect of it, not moving
21 parts.

22 Voting on a massive amount of
23 spending for education without even having a
24 revenue plan -- and the revenue bill, as far as
25 where these -- how these revenues are going to be

1 produced, and the other spending areas of the
2 budget, it's a piecemeal. And clearly we're not
3 going to have the rest of the budget bills
4 completed before this weekend, a holiday weekend.
5 We'll be into next week.

6 There's no reason that we couldn't
7 and that we shouldn't be waiting the
8 constitutionally required three days just so
9 somebody can say we got the budget process
10 started and we passed a bill by this date.

11 It's by no means a complete budget.
12 This is -- continues to be bad government. The
13 increases in this spending continue to be
14 astronomical, with a 21 percent increase in State
15 Operating Funds, the increase in the last two
16 years far outpacing inflation.

17 The other side of the aisle
18 continues to complain about the federal
19 government and the impacts that it has, yet the
20 spending continues to go through the roof
21 unabated. The spending increases are far greater
22 than whatever cuts have been proposed by the
23 federal government that may or may not come
24 forth. Those remain to be seen.

25 And this is not a sustainable

1 budget, a sustainable spending plan. It
2 continues to go up, far exceeding the 2 percent
3 increases that we require every other local
4 government in this state, and school district, to
5 abide by, or require a 60 percent vote of that,
6 which is not a requirement here. We need
7 51 percent.

8 It is just spending out of control,
9 spending that is higher, far higher than states
10 larger than the State of New York. It is just --
11 I don't see how it keeps going without imploding
12 on New Yorkers. And I think that's why we're
13 seeing the exodus of people from New York fleeing
14 to these other states that are now larger than
15 us.

16 We continue to rely on significant
17 revenues from Wall Street, which is a great
18 industry in this state that we seem to be doing
19 everything we possibly can to run it out. We're
20 hearing from the leaders of those major
21 institutions of the efforts underway and the
22 expansion that they're having in other states,
23 particularly Texas and Florida -- that that
24 revenue source is going to dwindle and it's going
25 to dry up, and it's going to be a major

1 catastrophe for this state because we have no
2 control over the unabated spending in this state,
3 and providing no relief to New York State
4 taxpayers.

5 When affordability is the buzzword
6 of the day, nothing, not one tax decrease in this
7 budget that we've seen so far. Eight bills
8 remain to come. I won't hold my breath to see
9 them in there.

10 But this -- to complain, you know,
11 about the federal government over and over and
12 over, yet continually outpace increases in
13 spending by whatever cuts there will or might
14 possibly be coming, we continue to outspend those
15 with no concern for that whatsoever.

16 So, Mr. President, thank you.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
18 Borrello, why do you rise?

19 SENATOR BORRELLO: Mr. President, I
20 have questions on Part A, school aid,
21 specifically dealing with the delay of the
22 zero-emission bus mandate.

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
24 that would be Senator Mayer.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator

1 Mayer, do you yield for questions?

2 SENATOR MAYER: Yes, I do.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
4 sponsor yields.

5 SENATOR BORRELLO: All right, thank
6 you. I didn't have to ask that time. Thank you.

7 So, Senator Mayer, it says that
8 we're going to extend this mandate. I think
9 we've all heard from our school districts this is
10 unworkable, it's a huge unfunded mandate, perhaps
11 the biggest we've ever laid upon a school.

12 But the question is, why five years?
13 What's the significance of delaying it five
14 years?

15 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
16 Mr. President, this is actually a very
17 significant victory for the school community.
18 Many of them expressed strong reservations and
19 concerns.

20 This just delays the bus requirement
21 for purchasing or leasing to July 1, 2032, and
22 the deadline by which schools may only operate or
23 maintain to July 1, 2040. So we have a
24 substantial amount of time ahead of us, and we're
25 confident that many schools have already started

1 this process and others will continue to.

2 And five years is a very reasonable
3 amount of time, coupled with the other kinds of
4 provisions we have enacted which reflect concerns
5 by school districts.

6 SENATOR BORRELLO: Mr. President,
7 will the sponsor continue to yield?

8 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
9 sponsor yield?

10 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
12 sponsor yields.

13 SENATOR BORRELLO: Well, so I guess
14 I'm -- you know, five years was just an arbitrary
15 number that you feel that -- you think in
16 five years, for example, that these school buses
17 will be cheaper or they'll be, you know, better
18 or they'll be able to last longer, they'll be
19 able to last in our upstate cold winters without
20 having to turn the heat off, like the reports we
21 heard?

22 Do you think in five years -- have
23 you been assured that the technology is going to
24 improve that much in the next five years that we
25 won't have the problems that we're seeing right

1 now?

2 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
3 Mr. President. My colleague is throwing sort of
4 every complaint about electric school buses.

5 Let me start by saying that we in
6 the Majority are committed to the transition to a
7 clean energy economy. When we passed this in the
8 '22-'23 budget we thought the amount of time was
9 reasonable. We put a good deal of money in
10 there, including in the Bond Act and other
11 provisions.

12 We've now put additional funds in
13 there. We've worked closely with the school
14 community. And we're confident that within the
15 five-year extension both for the purchase and the
16 operation of electric school buses, that schools
17 will be able to meet this deadline, and it will
18 protect both the children and the staff of the
19 schools.

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

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
23 sponsor yield?

24 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The

1 sponsor yields.

2 SENATOR BORRELLO: So you brought
3 up funding. I think you're well aware that these
4 electric school buses themselves are much more
5 expensive, about triple the price of a
6 traditional gas or diesel school bus.

7 And that doesn't include the cost of
8 infrastructure. Some of the rural school
9 districts that I represent are telling me that
10 it's going to be hundreds of thousands if not
11 millions of dollars to upgrade their
12 infrastructure. And because of all of the green
13 energy mandates, the actual ability to deliver
14 those infrastructure improvements could be three
15 or five years out.

16 But let's just stay focused on the
17 cost first. Is there additional funding in this
18 budget so that they can actually execute this?
19 Because as far as I know, it's about an eight to
20 \$10 billion delta, upside down, how much more it
21 will cost for an electric school bus than for gas
22 or diesel, and we've only provided less than a
23 billion so far.

24 So how are we going to make up that
25 delta?

1 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
2 Mr. President. First place, let me just remind
3 my colleague we passed the Environment Bond Act
4 and allocated 500 million. Last year in the
5 Sustainable Futures Fund, we put in another
6 hundred million.

7 At the time the bill was enacted,
8 there was federal money which was used by all the
9 school districts. In addition, NYSERDA provides
10 the money for the study.

11 So we're confident with that, and
12 hopefully additional money in the Sustainable
13 Futures fund this year, as well as other
14 provisions, that there will be the funding as
15 well as the safety needed to achieve this goal.
16 And we feel quite confident about that.

17 SENATOR BORRELLO: Mr. President,
18 will the sponsor continue to yield?

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
20 sponsor yield?

21 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
23 sponsor yields.

24 SENATOR BORRELLO: So, yeah, the
25 federal money was a one-time thing. That's gone.

1 I think we're looking at, you know, roughly about
2 a billion or so dollars that you've said was
3 allocated by the state.

4 So are you going to assure our
5 school districts now that that additional we'll
6 call it 7 to 9 billion dollars will not be an
7 unfunded mandate on our school taxpayers?

8 SENATOR MAYER: Well, through you,
9 Mr. President, let me just add to that.

10 When you purchase a school bus or
11 you engage in transportation costs, they are
12 reimbursed by the State Education Department at
13 the ratio.

14 We have also added reimbursement for
15 additional infrastructure costs associated with
16 electric school buses. So in addition to the
17 funds I described, there is an ongoing
18 reimbursement for the cost of buses for every
19 district, depending on their reimbursement
20 methodology.

21 SENATOR BORRELLO: Mr. President,
22 will the sponsor continue to yield.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
24 sponsor yield?

25 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
2 sponsor yields.

3 SENATOR BORRELLO: Well, if that
4 was always the case, then why have we heard from
5 literally every school district that this is
6 going to be devastating for their budgets?

7 If that was all enough, then why
8 would we have this amazing outcry across the
9 state from school districts that it's just not
10 enough? I mean, you're saying that there's money
11 there and it should be fine. But it's not fine,
12 right?

13 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
14 Mr. President. I would point out when the state
15 enacts a law that requires schools to do
16 something that is not 100 percent reimbursed by
17 the state, of course schools complain.

18 Whether it's full-day pre-K, the
19 cost of educating a student, which is also
20 dependent on property tax revenue, New York State
21 does not pay 100 percent of every educational
22 cost. Our system is built on a rubric of state
23 funds, where there are federal funds, and as well
24 as property taxes.

25 So I'm confident that schools will

1 have the funding from a variety of sources to
2 meet this requirement in the extended period of
3 time which, as I note, is a long way in the
4 future.

5 SENATOR BORRELLO: Mr. President,
6 will the sponsor continue to yield?

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
8 sponsor yield?

9 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
11 sponsor yields.

12 SENATOR BORRELLO: I think now on
13 two occasions I've tried to attach an amendment
14 to force a study. I think there's very little we
15 do in the state that we don't study first, like
16 almost nothing -- except for this.

17 So will this also include in this
18 five years, this long time that we have, a study
19 to determine whether or not this is feasible
20 everywhere in New York State?

21 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
22 Mr. President. No, there's not a provision about
23 a study in here.

24 There are a number of studies done,
25 both on schools and on other buses that are in

1 sync with the arguments that I am saying here
2 that are in the bill we're enacting today.

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

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

7 SENATOR BORRELLO: Senator Mayer,
8 thank you.

9 You know, obviously we welcome this
10 extension, this delay. And quite frankly, it's
11 because of the advocacy of myself and my
12 colleagues on this side of the aisle that has
13 really brought this forward and made it part of
14 the conversation.

15 But you know what? Back in 2019 all
16 those mandates of the CLCPA seemed like they were
17 a long way away. And all of a sudden they're
18 here. So to say that all of a sudden something
19 is going to change in five years, unless we do
20 something to make it change, I don't know that
21 it's going to happen.

22 I mean, when the government mandates
23 something, when the government says you have to
24 buy something, when does it ever make it cheaper
25 or better? The government mandates we have to

1 have car insurance in New York State. We have
2 the most expensive car insurance in America,
3 because you have to have it.

4 We already have a backlog of these
5 electric school buses here and in other states
6 across the state. They can't produce them fast
7 enough. Apparently the Chinese can't get the
8 batteries here fast enough.

9 But my point is, when we mandate
10 this, whether it's 2027, whether it's 2030,
11 whether it's 2035, whether it's 2040, we haven't
12 done a thing to ensure that this is actually
13 going to be feasible and cost-effective and, most
14 importantly, safe for our children.

15 So I welcome this. But I hope that
16 in five years, the additional five years that
17 we're giving, this longer runway that the
18 Governor likes to talk about, we're actually
19 going to do something productive and effective to
20 ensure that this is actually going to be feasible
21 and practical and affordable for the people of
22 New York State. "Affordable" is a word that gets
23 thrown around in this chamber a lot. This is not
24 affordable, and it may not be even with a
25 five-year-longer runway.

1 So Mr. President, I'm supportive of
2 this idea but still skeptical.

3 Thank you.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
5 Chan, why do you rise?

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

8 I was hoping to ask some questions
9 on Part B, evidence-based math instruction.

10 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
11 Part B is also Senator Mayer.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
13 Mayer, would you yield for a question?

14 SENATOR MAYER: Yes, I do.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
16 sponsor yields.

17 SENATOR CHAN: Thank you, Senator.
18 Can you define "evidence-based math
19 instruction"? What is it?

20 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
21 Mr. President. What is in this bill is a
22 requirement that the State Education Department
23 provide school districts with evidence-based
24 instructional best practices for numeracy and the
25 teaching of math for students in Grades K-5 by

1 January 1, 2027.

2 The bill defers to the State
3 Education Department, which is the expert on
4 issues of model curriculum and best practices, to
5 come up with these materials.

6 SENATOR CHAN: And through you,
7 Mr. President, will the Senator continue to
8 yield?

9 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
10 sponsor yield?

11 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
13 sponsor yields.

14 SENATOR CHAN: Thank you.

15 So is this a whole new curriculum
16 that the teachers must relearn and apply into
17 teaching their students?

18 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
19 Mr. President. As I believe my colleague knows,
20 curriculum is driven at the local level. The
21 State Education Department provides guidelines
22 and guidance for schools.

23 This bill provides that by
24 September 1, 2027, districts must verify that
25 their curriculum and instructional practices for

1 teaching math from kindergarten through five
2 align with the best practices provided by the
3 SED.

4 So it's not a curriculum mandate.
5 There's going to be best practices drafted by the
6 State Education Department, and schools are going
7 to have to assess that they align with those best
8 practices.

9 SENATOR CHAN: Through you,
10 Mr. President, will the Senator continue to
11 yield?

12 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
13 sponsor yield?

14 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
16 sponsor yields.

17 SENATOR CHAN: Okay. So between
18 the years 2014 and 2024 I was a school volunteer
19 for that period of 10 years in two schools. One
20 is a local zone school and the other one is a
21 screened-in middle school. In fact, the elapsed
22 time that I worked in these two schools is
23 13 years.

24 In that time I saw the schools, both
25 schools, transition from Go Math to Eureka Math

1 to I-Ready -- which, by the way, I-Ready and
2 Illustrative Math, these latter two identifies a
3 student's weakness and vulnerabilities and
4 provides a personalized online lesson plan to
5 help them stay on-track and improve. And it
6 works. I've seen it.

7 So are we doing away with these two
8 particular programs, Illustrative Math and
9 I-Ready?

10 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
11 Mr. President. We're not doing away, we are
12 deferring to the State Education Department to
13 come up with a best-practices model.

14 And if the two models that my
15 colleague referenced are deemed to be best
16 practices, I would assume they'll be considered
17 and included in the final provisions by SED.

18 SENATOR CHAN: Through you,
19 Mr. President, would the Senator continue to
20 yield?

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
22 sponsor yield?

23 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
25 sponsor yields.

1 SENATOR CHAN: So what is the
2 reason for this new math instruction this year?

3 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
4 Mr. President. Well, this was I believe
5 originally proposed by the Governor in her
6 Executive Budget.

7 I think it reflects a broad
8 consensus that we need our students to be
9 stronger in math, particularly in the younger
10 grades, so that they can move into more advanced
11 math.

12 And it is one of the approaches
13 states are taking to ensure that students in the
14 early grades have the basics that they need in
15 order to proceed to more advanced math.

16 SENATOR CHAN: Through you,
17 Madam President, will the Senator continue to
18 yield.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
20 sponsor yield?

21 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
23 sponsor yields.

24 SENATOR CHAN: So the Governor's
25 idea that we need this, was there any parent or

1 teacher input?

2 Because I know the teachers are
3 going to have to retrain. And every time they've
4 found something that works and they're getting
5 used to it, learning how to apply a certain
6 method of teaching and they're getting good at
7 it, they have to retrain them to something else.

8 Was there parent and teacher input
9 in this decision?

10 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
11 Mr. President. I don't know which teachers were
12 spoken to by the Governor's office.

13 I would just say that SED and the
14 rest of us talk to teachers and teacher
15 representatives all the time. And I am confident
16 that teachers will have a voice.

17 I would point out to my colleague
18 the fact that when you have to change how you
19 teach, like we did with the science of reading,
20 this is not always a bad thing. It's frequently
21 a way to improve the outcomes.

22 We're supportive of change. If
23 things work the way they were done, we wouldn't
24 have to look at all new approaches or continue to
25 modify it. That's the nature of improvement.

1 SENATOR CHAN: Through you,
2 Mr. President, will the Senator continue to
3 yield?

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
5 sponsor yield?

6 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 sponsor yields.

9 SENATOR CHAN: So who's going to
10 participate in developing the state's whole "best
11 practices" recommendations?

12 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
13 Mr. President. The bill does not specify who the
14 State Education Department will work with in
15 developing these best practices.

16 SENATOR CHAN: Through you,
17 Mr. President, would the Senator continue to
18 yield.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
20 sponsor yield?

21 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

22 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
23 sponsor yields.

24 SENATOR CHAN: So will the state
25 provide funding for curriculum replacement,

1 teacher retraining, and instructional materials?

2 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
3 Mr. President. This bill does not provide that.

4 I assume in the next year's budget,
5 as we continue to increase education funding for
6 every school district, every school district in
7 the state to get more Foundation Aid, we will
8 continue to address the needs of every school
9 district.

10 SENATOR CHAN: Through you,
11 Mr. President, would the Senator continue to
12 yield.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
14 sponsor yield?

15 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
17 sponsor yields.

18 SENATOR CHAN: Thank you.

19 How will the education commissioner
20 determine if the new math instruction is in fact
21 effective? Is it through test scores or math
22 comprehension?

23 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
24 Mr. President. My colleague is asking about the
25 bill. The bill directs the commissioner and the

1 State Ed Department to provide evidence-based
2 instructional best practices without a great deal
3 of description.

4 I am confident, having worked with
5 them on the science of reading and other issues,
6 that they are going to have to, as the experts in
7 education -- and that's what they are, under the
8 Board of Regents -- they will determine what are
9 the best practices and what is the evidence-based
10 instruction that they recommend for all schools.

11 SENATOR CHAN: Through you,
12 Mr. President, will the Senator continue to
13 yield.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
15 sponsor yield?

16 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
18 Senator yields.

19 SENATOR CHAN: Thank you.

20 When should we or can we expect to
21 see a rise in test scores after implementation of
22 the new math programming?

23 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
24 Mr. President. I don't think that's a question,
25 in all good faith, that I can answer, when test

1 scores would rise. I would hope it would be this
2 year. I would hope it would be next year. I'm
3 sure my colleague agrees.

4 This is the part of the goal of
5 improving testing scores -- not only test scores,
6 but actual math knowledge and ability to do
7 complex math.

8 SENATOR CHAN: Thank you,
9 Mr. President. On the bill.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
11 Chan on the bill.

12 SENATOR CHAN: Okay, so in the
13 past, between the years 2014, when my older
14 daughter started the first grade, and 2024, when
15 I couldn't volunteer in the schools anymore,
16 finding little time to do so, I saw our teachers
17 in two schools struggle with new curriculum.

18 They work a lot on their own time.
19 And just when they were refining their method of
20 teaching in a certain way, and we saw scores
21 improve, and then with the new program we saw it
22 decline. And then a couple of years later, when
23 they're getting used to it, we saw the scores
24 improve again.

25 And lately, we're -- right now,

1 New York State spends over \$41,000 per student
2 per year, and that's the highest in the nation.
3 And yet our math scores are once again on the
4 decline.

5 So what it sounds like to me is that
6 this evidence-based math instruction is going
7 back to the basics of counting fingers, like one
8 plus one equals two. Which is something that the
9 teachers do anyway.

10 So I certainly hope this is going to
11 bring up our math scores in the state tests and
12 make our children have a better comprehension of
13 math. That will give a better reflection of the
14 money that we're spending on our students.

15 Thank you very much.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
17 you, Senator Chan.

18 Senator Martins, why do you rise?

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

21 I was hoping that Senator Mayer
22 would yield for a few questions on Part B.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
24 Mayer, will you yield?

25 SENATOR MAYER: Yes. Let me get to

1 Part B.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
3 sponsor yields.

4 SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you.

5 I just want to make sure I'm
6 correct, Senator. It's a continuing discussion
7 on the evidence-based math questions you've just
8 fielded before we move on to other topics.

9 Is it correct that this part will
10 require that this new evidence-based math
11 instruction has to be implemented in school
12 districts by September 1, 2027?

13 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
14 Mr. President. Again, the language is more
15 nuanced than what my colleague is describing.

16 School districts by that day must
17 verify that their curriculum and instructional
18 practices for teaching math align with the best
19 practices. That is not the -- that is different
20 than imposing a curriculum.

21 So there's an alignment of the best
22 practices as determined by this evidence-based
23 review, and that's what the bill requires.

24 SENATOR MARTINS: Appreciate it.
25 Thank you.

1 Mr. President, if the Senator will
2 continue to yield?

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Does the
4 sponsor yield?

5 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

6 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
7 sponsor yields.

8 SENATOR MARTINS: So if we could,
9 just for clarity for our school districts, if we
10 work backwards from that date, and if this were
11 to pass and be signed into law, that would set I
12 guess a perhaps 15-month-or-so timeline in which
13 our school districts would have to align with
14 these new criteria, although we don't have any
15 particulars. Certainly we haven't seen them.

16 And so to the extent that I expect
17 our school districts haven't seen them, when can
18 we assure our school districts that they will
19 have particulars and policies that they can
20 actually begin reviewing for purposes of reaching
21 that September 1, 2027, timeline?

22 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
23 Mr. President. Again, the bill doesn't say when
24 SED must begin the contracting process or the
25 review process.

1 But I would remind my colleagues,
2 just like the science of reading, we're in a very
3 short window. We, through the Governor's
4 leadership, began to greatly change the way we
5 approach the science of reading to an
6 evidence-based methodology.

7 This has a short timeline. Once the
8 bill passes, I'm confident SED will advise us of
9 the timeline and we will see in enough time to
10 advise our school districts what the methodology
11 that they recommend is and how quickly they can
12 enact it.

13 SENATOR MARTINS: Through you,
14 Mr. President, if the Senator would continue to
15 yield.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
17 sponsor yield?

18 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
20 sponsor yields.

21 SENATOR MARTINS: So I've heard on
22 a number of occasions references to the Governor,
23 now the Governor's leadership. Can you tell us
24 whether you know how the Governor came upon this
25 concept? Did this come from the Governor's

1 office? Did it come from the State Education
2 Department? Did it come from a think tank?
3 Where did this originate, if you
4 know?

5 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
6 Mr. President. The Governor had this in her
7 Executive Budget.

8 I would say, as one who represents
9 the State of New York on the Education Commission
10 of the States, this is a national issue. Every
11 state, and particularly many states who are
12 challenged by the results in math scores, are
13 looking at how to improve math outcomes.

14 This is very consistent with what
15 states are doing. They're looking at best
16 practices, evidence-based methodology. And I
17 believe the Governor is in sync with other states
18 and other governors -- many Republican governors,
19 I would point out -- who are looking at how to
20 improve math outcomes. And I would presume that
21 that was what guided her.

22 But this was in the
23 Executive Budget. We have adopted it. We
24 believe it's sound, thoughtful, and will result
25 in better outcomes for our kids. And at the end

1 of the day, that's what we're here for.

2 SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you,
3 Mr. President. Thank you, Senator Mayer.

4 On the bill.

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

7 SENATOR MARTINS: So,
8 Mr. President, I recall all too well and not too
9 fondly the experiment that was Common Core. I
10 think many of my colleagues here in the room also
11 recall that experiment and the impact on our
12 school districts, the impact on our teachers, the
13 impact on our parents, and most importantly the
14 impact on our students across New York State from
15 implementing a change in curriculum.

16 So when we ask questions about where
17 this came from and where is the evidence-based
18 criteria that led to evidence-based changes in
19 math curricula, I think we need to have some
20 particulars about where it came from.

21 To be perfectly frank, I do not care
22 for politicians getting involved in curricula
23 when it comes to teaching our children, whether
24 it is a Democrat governor or whether it's a
25 Republican governor or any governor. If we do

1 not have a basis for it that is rooted in
2 education, in education policy, in policy that
3 comes from -- whether it's professionals or those
4 teachers themselves or those who have dedicated
5 themselves to the education of our children here
6 in New York or elsewhere, we're missing the mark.

7 The fact that we can sit here and
8 discuss changing math for every child K through
9 5th grade in New York State and not have the
10 ability to have an actual discussion of what that
11 means, should be frightening to everyone who sits
12 in this chamber. I can tell you it's going to be
13 frightening to our teachers, to our parents --
14 who may not necessarily understand what it is
15 this means.

16 Folks, we've been through this
17 before. The idea of sending this off to the
18 State Education Department, hoping that they come
19 up with criteria in time to properly provide it
20 to our school districts and to our professionals
21 who are teaching our children, in time for them
22 to be able to implement by September 1, 2027, is
23 wrong.

24 And just because the Governor
25 decided to do it, frankly, that's the worst

1 reason for us to be doing this. I would prefer
2 to have heard somebody say that this came from,
3 you know, a university or a study. But saying
4 that the Governor decided to do it, even with
5 other governors, whatever partisan persuasion
6 they happen to be, should be a concern for us.

7 We all want what's best for our
8 students. We all want to see increased math
9 scores. We all know, and certainly our residents
10 know that they've certainly invested
11 significantly in the education of our children.
12 We pay more per child on education than anyone
13 else perhaps in the world.

14 So yes, our parents and our
15 residents deserve to know that that money is
16 being properly invested and that they are getting
17 the results for that. That does not mean we
18 signed off just because the Governor said she
19 thinks it's a good idea without providing the
20 necessary details that allow us to properly
21 evaluate it.

22 With that, Mr. President, I would
23 ask if there is someone who can speak to Part P.

24 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
25 that would be Senator Kavanagh.

1 SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you. Thank
2 you. Mr. President, if the sponsor would yield.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
4 sponsor yield?

5 SENATOR KAVANAGH: Happily,
6 Mr. President.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
8 sponsor yields.

9 SENATOR MARTINS: So, Senator,
10 Part P deals with changes to the law in allowing
11 for an expansion of protections for tenants in
12 the definition of harassment of tenants in
13 rent-regulated apartments.

14 SENATOR KAVANAGH: Yes.

15 SENATOR MARTINS: Does this change
16 also include protections for tenants who are
17 living in New York City Housing Authority
18 apartments, in addition to those that are
19 privately owned?

20 SENATOR KAVANAGH: Through you,
21 Mr. President, I want to provide just a little
22 context here.

23 This is a bill that deals
24 specifically with tenants in rent-stabilized
25 buildings where the landlord engages,

1 intentionally engages in specific conduct with
2 the intent of getting the tenant to leave the
3 apartment.

4 It's been longstanding law. This
5 bill -- under current law, it can be a modest
6 crime to do that to one tenant. It can be a more
7 significant crime to do it to two tenants. But
8 the two tenants have to be in the same building,
9 under current law, for it to be a more serious
10 crime.

11 What this bill does is makes it
12 clear that if you're harassing two different
13 tenants at the same time -- they could be in two
14 buildings or one building -- you're still
15 violating the standard for the aggravated level
16 of harassment.

17 And there's a further penalty if
18 you're currently intentionally harassing three or
19 more tenants in multiple buildings with the goal
20 of getting them to vacate the apartment.

21 So this has been brought to us as an
22 issue that the Manhattan district attorney has
23 designated for some cases where landlords were
24 perceived to be doing that harassment.

25 It's -- whether -- what the

1 penalties would be for one of our many housing
2 authorities if they chose to harass their tenants
3 would be, you know, it's not relevant to this
4 bill. I'm not sure, but I'm not aware of a lot
5 of instances of public housing authorities
6 harassing their tenants with the intent of
7 getting them to leave.

8 So this -- and this bill is not
9 germane to that particular situation.

10 SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you,
11 Senator.

12 Mr. President, on the bill.

13 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
14 Martins on the bill.

15 SENATOR MARTINS: So this
16 particular part, as Senator Kavanagh mentioned,
17 deals with the definition of harassment or
18 providing for criminal penalties in the event
19 that there is harassment of tenants in certain
20 apartment units.

21 And therefore my question. One of
22 the largest apartment owners in the city happens
23 to be the city itself. Through NYCHA, they have
24 120,000, 130,000 units or so where there are
25 500,000 New York City -- New York State residents

1 residing. And it's widely regarded to be, by
2 far, the worst landlord in the city, in the
3 state, perhaps in the entire country.

4 The living conditions for tenants
5 living in NYCHA apartments -- it's easy to see.
6 Everyone can just do a quick Google search and
7 you can see instances where there have been
8 systemic harassment of tenants.

9 But I point everyone's attention to
10 instances where NYCHA itself has been accused and
11 charged with trying to force people out of their
12 apartments. You know, specifically there are
13 instances at the Fulton & Elliott-Chelsea
14 apartments where they've clearly been charged
15 with trying to remove tenants so that those
16 apartments and those buildings can be torn down
17 and rebuilt.

18 And my question for us is as we go
19 and discuss this in the context of
20 rent-stabilized housing for all the privately
21 owned buildings out there, how do we forget those
22 tenants who are living in government-subsidized
23 housing and who we know time and again are facing
24 some of the worst conditions. And we have
25 examples where they are actually harassing people

1 to leave their apartments.

2 Now, you know I don't represent a
3 district in New York City. You know I don't have
4 NYCHA apartments in my district. But I know that
5 many here in this room do. And so if we're going
6 to provide protections for tenants, let's make
7 sure we include all tenants, including those
8 tenants who happen to be tenants of the worst
9 landlord in the Western Hemisphere.

10 So with that, Mr. President, I'd
11 like to speak to Part 0. Now, Part 0 is -- on
12 the bill.

13 Part 0 allows for a private cause of
14 action or a private right of action by tenants
15 under a J-51 program. That is when people
16 actually come in and say, I'm going to make
17 improvements to these apartments.

18 If they don't follow all of the
19 regulations and all of the rules with regard to
20 those apartments and those improvements, it gives
21 the tenant a private right of action. But once
22 again, Mr. President, once again that only
23 applies to rent-stabilized housing. It doesn't
24 apply to NYCHA housing.

25 So if we were going to allow a

1 private right of action, why wouldn't we allow a
2 private right of action to those tenants who are
3 living in NYCHA housing where the systemic
4 failure in heat, water, electricity, vermin
5 infestation, lead, mold, is common?

6 You know, if we're going to protect
7 tenants -- and there are a half-million residents
8 who are living, many of them in significantly
9 difficult conditions, as has been identified and
10 we all know about it -- certainly those who have
11 NYCHA apartments in their districts know about
12 it -- why are we excluding those tenants and not
13 affording them those same protections?

14 And so I would ask and certainly
15 suggest that when we're out there providing
16 conditions for tenants and protections for
17 tenants, why we would systemically fail to
18 include those tenants who are living in NYCHA
19 facilities?

20 Mr. President, I appreciate the
21 time. I want to thank my colleagues for their
22 answers. I'll leave it at that.

23 Thank you.

24 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Thank
25 you, Senator Martins.

1 Senator Helming, why do you rise?

2 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you,
3 Mr. President. If the sponsor would yield for a
4 few questions on Part A.

5 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
6 we're back to Senator Mayer.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
8 Mayer, would you yield for a few questions?

9 SENATOR MAYER: Yes, of course.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
11 Mayer yields.

12 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you.

13 Through you, Mr. President. During
14 an earlier debate I had made a note of something
15 that was said, that sometimes change is good
16 because with change comes improved outcomes. And
17 I was thrilled to hear that, and made a note of
18 it because change is what I want to talk about.
19 Change is what I have questions about.

20 When New York State commissioned the
21 Rockefeller Institute, we paid them to take a
22 look at the way we fund public schools and
23 education. And the institute came back with a
24 number of recommendations. One of those
25 recommendations was that we should look at

1 separating some elements of the Foundation Aid
2 formula, such as special education, as
3 categorical aid, which would be more effective.

4 So my question is, does the budget
5 proposal before us reflect this recommendation?

6 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
7 Mr. President. No, this budget document does not
8 reflect that. But I would note that -- (pause).

9 So let me be correct here. The
10 current budget does not reflect an increase for
11 special ed. I happen to support such an increase
12 and believe that it's necessary for many
13 districts and necessary in order to meet the
14 expenses of profoundly disabled children.

15 That being said, last year we
16 amended several provisions of the Foundation Aid
17 formula in response to the Rockefeller
18 Institute's recommendations -- which I would
19 point out were sort of a menu, as opposed to a
20 specific proposal.

21 But this budget does not include an
22 additional weighting for special-needs students.

23 SENATOR HELMING: Through you,
24 Mr. President, if the sponsor will continue to
25 yield.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
2 sponsor yield?

3 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
5 sponsor yields.

6 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you.

7 The Rockefeller Institute findings
8 also noted a need to modernize how district
9 wealth is measured so aid calculations better
10 reflect the actual financial realities of a
11 community.

12 Does the budget before us
13 incorporate any changes in how district wealth is
14 measured?

15 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
16 Mr. President, no.

17 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you.

18 Through you, Mr. President, I do
19 have a question on Part B, if the sponsor will
20 yield for a few questions.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
22 Gianaris?

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: That remains
24 Senator Mayer.

25 SENATOR MAYER: Yes, I will yield.

1 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
2 sponsor yields.

3 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you.

4 So in prior back-and-forth debate
5 over Part B, which is titled "Evidence-Based Math
6 Instruction," I just want to be clear that I
7 support doing anything that we can to elevate our
8 children, improving their scores.

9 But what I didn't hear during any of
10 the debates, and my question is, how are we going
11 to measure the success of this program? Does the
12 budget include any language?

13 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
14 Mr. President, no. The bill does not reflect the
15 measurements.

16 But we have standardized
17 measurements. We have math and ELA tests that
18 are taken in Grade 3 through 8, as well as
19 national standards that reflect other tests. And
20 we have decent data about how our students are
21 doing in math, which needs to continue to
22 improve.

23 So I'm confident that once this is
24 implemented, the direct hope is it will result in
25 higher test scores and higher learning. Test

1 scores are not the only game in town. But that
2 students are prepared to take more advanced
3 classes in math.

4 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you.

5 Through you, Mr. President, if the
6 sponsor will continue to yield.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Will the
8 sponsor yield?

9 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The
11 sponsor yields.

12 SENATOR HELMING: So it wasn't too
13 long ago, in a prior budget, where we included
14 something about the science of reading, a
15 Governor's initiative, and it had to be
16 implemented by our schools by September of 2025.
17 It sounds kind of similar to what we're trying to
18 do now with math.

19 Do we have any data that shows that
20 this new mandate on our schools is having a
21 positive outcome?

22 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
23 Mr. President. Conceptually, the effort towards
24 the science of reading was similar in some ways.

25 This is a much more modest approach,

1 really in every way. But the science of reading
2 implementation did not take place until
3 September 1 of this year, so we have yet to see
4 the results.

5 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you.

6 On the bill, Mr. President.

7 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
8 Helming on the bill.

9 SENATOR HELMING: Thank you.

10 In 2024 the State of New York
11 commissioned the Rockefeller Institute to analyze
12 and modernize the way that the state funds public
13 education. And I remember when that happened
14 being supportive of it, because I felt very
15 strongly, based on information I have heard from
16 my school districts, from taxpayers, from good
17 government groups, that this is an area where we
18 spend a lot of money. You know, the success of
19 our children is very important.

20 And it's unfortunate to me that the
21 budget that's before us, it largely supports
22 continuing the same approach to educational
23 funding instead of addressing those underlying
24 challenges that districts and taxpayers have
25 repeatedly been asking us to fix.

1 We shouldn't be ignoring those key
2 recommendations of the Rockefeller report, we
3 should be incorporating them.

4 When I hear from my school
5 districts, I'm sure it's very similar to other
6 school districts where one of the most -- the
7 highest cost is related to special education
8 costs. They continue to grow dramatically. In
9 one district located in Ontario County, the
10 number of students requiring special education
11 services has increased by 700 percent over the
12 last 15 years.

13 In a small school district in
14 Livingston County, out-of-district placements for
15 high-needs students now cost well over \$1 million
16 annually.

17 These aren't isolated situations,
18 and they're becoming more and more common across
19 upstate New York.

20 The Rockefeller Institute,
21 commissioned by the state, recommended changes
22 that could provide more transparency and
23 flexibility, including separating certain
24 expenses, like special education, into
25 categorical aid streams and allowing districts

1 greater flexibility within the combined wealth
2 ratio calculation.

3 And I just wanted to provide another
4 example. In the Gananda Central School District
5 alone, changes to the weighting of property and
6 income wealth could increase Foundation Aid by as
7 much as \$800 per student. That would help
8 relieve the immense -- and I can't stress it
9 enough, the immense pressure on our local
10 taxpayers.

11 The reality is that this budget
12 continues to provide temporary relief in some
13 areas while delaying more meaningful reforms that
14 many schools have been calling for year
15 after year.

16 And I have to say, on that temporary
17 relief, I fully support the pushback on the
18 EV mandate. But again, it's just temporary. It
19 does nothing long term to fix the challenges that
20 our school districts have.

21 As we move forward, I hope we take a
22 more serious look at modernizing the state's
23 approach to determining fair and adequate funding
24 for smaller and rural school districts. They
25 deserve the same resources, their students

1 deserve the same support, and local taxpayers
2 deserve a break. They shouldn't continually be
3 asked to shoulder more of the burden.

4 Thank you.

5 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Thank
6 you, Senator Helming.

7 Senator Walczyk, why do you rise?

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: Mr. President, I
9 would like to ask a question on Part NN from the
10 one-house budget.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Senator
12 Gianaris.

13 SENATOR GIANARIS: Mr. President,
14 it's a special budget edition of Walczyk
15 Wednesday today.

16 (Laughter.)

17 SENATOR GIANARIS: Seeing how there
18 is no Part NN, I guess I will attempt to answer
19 the Senator's question.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Senator
21 Walczyk, Senator Gianaris yields.

22 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
23 Mr. President. So in the one-house budget that
24 was brought in this chamber, there was a -- it
25 provided for a 100 percent service-connected

1 disabled veterans' property tax exemption.

2 Is that included in this bill?

3 SENATOR GIANARIS: No, it is not.

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

7 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
8 sponsor yield?

9 SENATOR GIANARIS: Yes.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
11 sponsor yields.

12 SENATOR WALCZYK: And I've heard
13 from a number of veterans that are 100 percent
14 service-connected disabled that were disappointed
15 in the way the Governor did a chapter amendment
16 to basically strip out that benefit for veterans.
17 And I think that's why it was inserted in the
18 one-house.

19 Is there a reason why it isn't in
20 the final bill here today?

21 SENATOR GIANARIS: Well, as the
22 Senator pointed out, that was Part NN. This
23 current bill before us goes up to Part R. So
24 there were 22 or 23 parts that are no longer in
25 this bill.

1 There are eight additional bills to
2 come before the budget is done, so who knows. It
3 may or may not show up before we're done.

4 SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you.

5 And through you, Mr. President, I
6 have some questions on Part A.

7 SENATOR GIANARIS: That would be
8 Senator Mayer.

9 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Thank
10 you, Senator.

11 Senator Mayer, do you yield to
12 questions on Part A?

13 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
15 Senator yields.

16 SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you.

17 Through you, Mr. President. The
18 Governor proposed in her budget a cut to
19 Library Construction Aid this year. The library
20 associations asked for \$175 million in
21 construction aid. Is that what this bill is
22 providing?

23 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
24 Mr. President, I believe my colleague is asking
25 about capital for libraries, which is not within

1 this budget.

2 This budget, with respect to
3 libraries, only deals with school libraries.

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

7 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
8 sponsor yield?

9 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

10 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
11 sponsor yields.

12 SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you, that
13 will be in a later bill.

14 So Library Materials Aid, then,
15 would be in here. They've been at the \$6 mark I
16 think since 1994. The libraries were asking for
17 some additional funds there. I think \$11.33 was
18 their ask. Did they get any additional in
19 Library Materials Aid?

20 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
21 Mr. President, no. That's unfortunate, but no.

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

25 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the

1 sponsor yield?

2 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

3 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
4 sponsor yields.

5 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
6 Mr. President. Not to harp on the EV bus
7 mandate, but I did hear earlier you mentioned the
8 \$500 million Sustainable Futures money that was
9 used, I think by NYSERDA, to help pay for the
10 EV buses.

11 Will that money get returned to
12 ratepayers that it was taken from?

13 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
14 Mr. President. Those funds were direct
15 appropriations or reimbursement to school
16 districts for the costs that my colleagues are
17 complaining about due to the cost of implementing
18 this electric school bus requirement.

19 So it did not go to ratepayers. But
20 to the extent that it reimburses school
21 districts, it reduces the pressure on them with
22 respect to property tax.

23 SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you.

24 And through you, Mr. President,
25 would the sponsor continue to yield?

1 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
2 sponsor yield?

3 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
5 sponsor yields.

6 SENATOR WALCZYK: And this -- I
7 know that it's difficult in the grand scheme of a
8 large budget conversation with multiple bills,
9 but NYSERDA has also had various pots of money to
10 pay in portion for the electric buses for school
11 districts that do adopt them.

12 Will those pots of money be
13 distributed back to the ratepayers that they were
14 overcollected from? Or will they just sit in
15 NYSERDA's coffers?

16 (Pause.)

17 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
18 Mr. President. If I understand correctly the
19 question, I believe the question is about funds
20 that NYSERDA possesses which my colleague has
21 suggested should be returned to ratepayers.

22 These are funds that are off-budget.
23 NYSERDA is off-budget. NYSERDA has allocated
24 these funds, many of which are being used by
25 school districts for planning for the

1 implementation of the electric school bus
2 requirement.

3 And they're not going back to
4 ratepayers, they're being used for projects as
5 designated by NYSERDA. But NYSERDA has been a
6 key player in the effectiveness of moving towards
7 electric school buses.

8 SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you.

9 And through you, Mr. President, will
10 the sponsor continue to yield?

11 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
12 sponsor yield?

13 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

14 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
15 sponsor yields.

16 SENATOR WALCZYK: I know that
17 two-thirds of New York State school districts,
18 roughly, are hold-harmless at this point. Are
19 they receiving the minimum of a 2 percent
20 increase in Foundation Aid? Is that what I
21 understand?

22 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
23 Mr. President. You know, at the urging of the
24 Senate Majority and the Assembly Majority, the
25 1 percent which the Governor proposed was doubled

1 to 2 percent. So every district that's on the
2 save-harmless will get at least 2 percent. And
3 some districts are obviously getting more because
4 of other changes that occurred.

5 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,
6 Mr. President, will the sponsor continue to
7 yield?

8 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
9 sponsor yield?

10 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
12 sponsor yields.

13 SENATOR WALCZYK: My esteemed,
14 distinguished, and well-respected colleague from
15 the Finger Lakes asked some questions about the
16 Rockefeller Institute's suggestions for changes
17 to Foundation Aid and the way that we distribute
18 school aid.

19 One that's always -- and I think
20 we've had some conversations about it. The floor
21 of the income wealth index, has that been
22 eliminated to show how poor a school district
23 actually is?

24 Have there been any changes to the
25 way that the income wealth index is calculated?

1 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
2 Mr. President, no. That recommendation or
3 menu -- in the menu of suggestions by the
4 Rockefeller Institute, was not implemented last
5 year when we made the changes.

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

9 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
10 sponsor yield?

11 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
13 sponsor yields.

14 SENATOR WALCZYK: Does it change
15 the formula for schools with high state ownership
16 of land or nontaxable land within their school
17 district?

18 For example, I represent a number of
19 schools in the Adirondack Park, which means they
20 have a very small amount of property that they
21 can actually tax. Has there been any calculation
22 changes as far as that goes in this proposal?

23 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
24 Mr. President, no, there haven't been.

25 But I would point out -- and I think

1 my colleagues on both sides of the aisle know
2 this -- this conference and our leadership, and
3 myself as chair and Senator Liu as chair of the
4 Committee on New York Schools, have fought to
5 expand and modify the Foundation Aid provisions
6 to provide even more relief to every district,
7 including the ones you're discussing,
8 Senator Walczyk.

9 We recognize this is not a perfect
10 formula. We fought for more changes. We will
11 fight for more changes. We want the best. But
12 this budget is a compromise, and this is the best
13 we could get. And this is significantly better
14 than we started with or could have anticipated.

15 And so with that, I'm here defending
16 this budget.

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

20 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
21 sponsor yield?

22 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

23 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
24 sponsor yields.

25 SENATOR WALCZYK: Through you,

1 Mr. President. School districts had also
2 requested a change in the capital projects outlay
3 for the smaller construction projects that they
4 do, an increase from 100K to 250. Was that
5 included in this budget?

6 SENATOR MAYER: Through
7 Mr. President, no, it wasn't, although it was in
8 our one-house and something we supported.

9 SENATOR WALCZYK: And through you,
10 Mr. President, would the sponsor continue to
11 yield?

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
13 sponsor yield?

14 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
16 sponsor yields.

17 SENATOR WALCZYK: We've also
18 discussed the 4 percent in undesignated reserve,
19 at times showing that small, poor, rural school
20 districts, one student moving into their district
21 can have a huge budgetary impact.

22 Have we increased at all or changed
23 at all the 4 percent in undesignated reserve?

24 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
25 Mr. President, no, that's not included.

1 I have a bill that moved through
2 committee last week, as you know, that for
3 purposes of the increasing cost of special ed
4 students, we recommend that a significantly
5 higher reserve be authorized.

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

9 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
10 sponsor yield?

11 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
13 sponsor yields.

14 SENATOR WALCZYK: What about -- the
15 one-house had \$10 million for civic education.
16 Did that make it into the final budget here?

17 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
18 Mr. President. I hope it does. That would be in
19 an appropriation bill. That's not before us
20 today.

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

24 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Will the
25 sponsor yield?

1 SENATOR MAYER: Yes.

2 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: The
3 sponsor yields.

4 SENATOR WALCZYK: There's also been
5 a number of proposals on financial literacy. Is
6 there any instruction -- I know there was a long
7 discussion about math changes. Anything on
8 financial literacy in the State of New York?

9 SENATOR MAYER: Through you,
10 Mr. President. As I think you know, SED and the
11 Board of Regents implemented a plan in which
12 financial literacy is much more included in every
13 grade level. And that has to be implemented.

14 But I think the concept of
15 increasing financial literacy is top of mind in
16 the State Education Department, they're going to
17 move in that direction.

18 SENATOR WALCZYK: Thank you.

19 Thank you, Mr. President.

20 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Thank
21 you, Senator Walczyk.

22 Are there any other Senators wishing
23 to be heard?

24 Seeing and hearing none, debate is
25 closed.

1 The Secretary will ring the bell.

2 Might I make a programming note that
3 the vote explanation time is two minutes per
4 member. If you are -- please adhere to the
5 two-minute limit. We will ask you to explain
6 your vote as you approach the two minutes or
7 shortly thereafter.

8 With that being said, read the last
9 section.

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

12 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Call the
13 roll.

14 (The Secretary called the roll.)

15 ACTING PRESIDENT BAILEY: Senator
16 Stec to explain his vote.

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

19 This electric bus mandate that we
20 are delaying five years in this bill was approved
21 in the Senate ELFA bill in 2022. Not one member
22 of this side of the aisle voted for the ELFA
23 bill. I suspect that a big part of that was the
24 inclusion of this electric bus mandate.

25 Since that time, I know I and a lot

1 of people on this side of the aisle, and I
2 suspect on both sides of the aisle, have had the
3 opportunity to hear from our school districts.

4 I have 48 school districts in my
5 Senate district. In the last three years, I have
6 not heard a single school district tell me that
7 they thought the EV bus mandate was a wise idea
8 or a workable idea or certainly an affordable
9 idea.

10 I'm encouraged that three or four
11 years after its inclusion in the budget that we
12 are delaying it five years. I'd prefer to see it
13 go away completely. This one-size-fits-all
14 approach -- very rural, very large school
15 districts in the very, very cold North Country
16 are a completely different proposition than a
17 highly congested, urban area to the south of
18 Albany with short runs. And you've been hearing
19 that for years.

20 Again, I'm encouraged that we're
21 going to go with the delay. But with my
22 background in engineering, I strongly suspect
23 that the physics, engineering and economics won't
24 appreciably change in the next five years. And
25 five years and two gubernatorial elections from

1 now, it will still be a bad idea.

2 And I will continue to be pushing --
3 until technology changes, I will be pushing to
4 make sure that we repeal this mandate on all of
5 our schools.

6 And I will be voting in the
7 affirmative on this bill, but I still think that
8 this EV mandate is something that needs to go
9 away completely.

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

12 Senator Harckham to explain his
13 vote.

14 SENATOR HARCKHAM: Thank you very
15 much, Mr. President.

16 I just want to respond to a couple
17 of things very quickly.

18 The comment was made about the need
19 for tax relief for our taxpayers and school
20 districts. It was this Majority, under the
21 leadership of Senator Mayer and Senator Liu and
22 Senator Jackson, that fully funded Foundation
23 Aid -- billions of dollars more for our school
24 districts, billions of dollars more that our
25 local property taxpayers don't have to pay.

1 I also want to just comment on the
2 EV mandate. Yes, the marketplace had some
3 problems, and we acknowledge that. And that's
4 why this five-year delay is so necessary. But
5 let's remember why we need to do this.

6 Students on school buses breathe
7 19 times more harmful pollutants than folks not
8 on those buses: Benzene, formaldehyde,
9 acetaldehyde. These are toxics that are linked
10 to cancer and other serious health effects. The
11 particulate matter on the buses in terms of
12 asthma and other respiratory illnesses.

13 And our school districts are now
14 complaining about the high cost of gasoline. The
15 price to operate an electric school bus is
16 actually far lower. Yes, they're more expensive
17 up front, priced to operate lower.

18 I vote aye.

19 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
20 Harckham to be recorded in the affirmative.

21 Senator May to explain her vote.

22 SENATOR MAY: Thank you,
23 Mr. President.

24 I rise with some compassion for my
25 colleagues across the aisle who every year need

1 to use the budget debate to preach fiscal
2 responsibility. I imagine that's difficult to do
3 when the leader of your party is engaged in
4 wasteful spending and corruption at a scale that
5 we have never seen in this country before.

6 I am proud to defend spending
7 billions on education, educating all of our
8 children; on supporting childcare workers; and on
9 other items that really support the people of our
10 state, rather than some of the things that we're
11 seeing at the federal level that are, you know,
12 billions being spent on a golden ballroom or a
13 slush fund for January 6th insurrectionists.

14 I proudly vote aye for this bill.

15 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
16 May to be recorded in the affirmative.

17 Senator Ryan to explain his vote.

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

20 So I want to rise in support of this
21 bill, and I want to specifically talk about the
22 inclusion of my bill, the five-year pause on the
23 electric school bus mandate. I want you to know
24 that.

25 So throughout my tenure here, my

1 short tenure, what I heard loud and clear
2 specifically for the last year and a half, and
3 also heard it actually when I was trying to get
4 this job, is about this bill and the mandate,
5 mandate.

6 What I heard consistently through
7 the districts, feedback that it was unmanageable.
8 Countless hundreds and hundreds of conversations
9 through the last year and a half at least. I
10 heard from school superintendents, school boards,
11 school members, financial administrators,
12 transportation directors, those that drove the
13 actual school buses, that the mandate just wasn't
14 possible; the current mandate timeline burdening
15 taxpayers; the cost of electric buses, charging
16 and infrastructure upgrades, electrical capacity,
17 and on and on and on.

18 I am really happy that we were able
19 to get this done with this five-year pause. It's
20 practical, it's responsible, it's common sense.
21 And obviously it adds some temporary relief,
22 much-needed temporary relief. This gives our
23 districts time to plan, allows the -- allows the
24 buses to catch up to technology, providing
25 infrastructure to catch up, and also protects

1 taxpayers, in maintaining the safe, reliable
2 transportation for our students, our kids, which
3 is actually the most important thing.

4 So I'm happy that we have a balanced
5 approach. I'm happy that there's a sense of
6 pragmatism. I'm happy that this is getting done,
7 much-needed relief, which we heard.

8 And I will say that really I have to
9 just acknowledge some of the people that actually
10 we've been working with for almost the last two
11 years: Our New York State United Teachers, the
12 New York State School Boards Association,
13 Council of Superintendents, School
14 Administrators, Conference of Big 5 School
15 Districts --

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
17 Ryan, how do you vote?

18 SENATOR RYAN: -- and most
19 importantly, Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

20 Thank you.

21 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
22 Ryan to be recorded in the affirmative.

23 Senator Kavanagh to explain his
24 vote.

25 SENATOR KAVANAGH: Thank you,

1 Mr. President.

2 I'd just like to comment on a few
3 elements of this bill. There's a lot of great
4 things in this bill. I want to comment on a few
5 of the things related to housing.

6 First of all, this bill includes a
7 very substantial expansion of the J-51 program,
8 extends it for 10 years. This will be a very
9 valuable way of investing in the quality and
10 sustainability of our housing throughout New York
11 City. About half of all co-ops in the city will
12 qualify under this bill, and many, many of our
13 rental units.

14 This will require adoption by the
15 City of New York, but it's a huge step forward
16 and a very much more generous program than we've
17 seen in many years.

18 Secondly, on tenant harassment.
19 Contrary to what one of my colleagues suggested
20 across the aisle, the activity that's going on in
21 Chelsea, in New York, would not constitute
22 harassment under this bill or any other bill.

23 We are not exempting NYCHA from
24 being responsible. In fact, the tenants in
25 Chelsea have been protected by federal standards

1 for determining when they can be asked to leave
2 their apartments. And of course that is about a
3 project of building lots of new housing units and
4 moving the tenants in the existing units into
5 brand-new buildings.

6 Whatever you think of that project,
7 this bill is about landlords who intentionally
8 cut off the power, intentionally make apartments
9 uninhabitable in order to intentionally push
10 people out of their apartments. It's very
11 important that we take this step, and this is a
12 very good way of protecting tenants.

13 Thirdly, the NPP and RPP programs,
14 these are the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation
15 Programs across our state. This bill finally,
16 after many years, will make sure that every rural
17 community has an RPP. We're expanding the
18 program to make sure there can be additional
19 organizations serving parts of the state that
20 haven't been served.

21 And it also, as we did last year,
22 expands the amount of money available for those
23 programs. They are the backbone of protecting
24 many of our communities, and I'm very proud that
25 we're able to do that today.

1 And with that, I vote aye.

2 Thank you.

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

5 Senator Ortt to explain his vote.

6 SENATOR ORTT: Thank you,
7 Mr. President. You know, I wasn't going to
8 speak, I just came out here to enjoy the fun.

9 But I am supporting the bill, along
10 with a lot of our members, largely because of the
11 EV mandate delay, which this conference, the
12 Minority Conference, has advocated for, fought
13 for.

14 The delay certainly I think
15 highlights the flaws in the original legislation.
16 And I suspect the delay won't be enough and we'll
17 continue to have to correct this and ultimately
18 get rid of the mandate. Because as was mentioned
19 by Senator Ryan and others, our school districts
20 were the ones saying, This isn't going to work.

21 And that's what we said from the
22 very beginning, and now here we are on another
23 episode of "We Told You So."

24 But Mr. President, I want to add --
25 I want to respond to something my colleague

1 across the aisle said. Don't feel bad for me to
2 preach fiscal responsibility. You make it so
3 easy in the Majority Conference, because you're
4 spending \$15 billion over last year on a budget
5 that's two months late and counting. And it's
6 100 billion over the last seven years.

7 So when it comes to preaching fiscal
8 responsibility, it's never been easier,
9 Mr. President.

10 I vote aye.

11 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
12 Ortt to be recorded in the affirmative.

13 Senator Gianaris.

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: Thank you,
15 Mr. President. To explain my vote.

16 I guess this is the part of the
17 conversation where I stand up and point out to my
18 colleague the Minority Leader that the first word
19 of his title is "Minority" for a reason. It's
20 because the voters of this state have chosen the
21 leadership that we have provided, now going on
22 eight years, with a record-setting-size majority.

23 So I think that what we're doing
24 here is something that the people of this state
25 have supported over four, now going on five

1 election cycles.

2 I proudly vote aye, Mr. President.

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

5 Senator Martins to explain his vote.

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

8 I vote to support this bill as well,
9 mostly because of the increased spending. And I
10 want to thank certainly my colleagues here for
11 all the work that they've done to push back on
12 the EV bus mandate. It makes a big difference in
13 our communities, certainly in our school
14 districts.

15 And I concur with my colleagues when
16 I say we should just get rid of it. It's not
17 going to make sense. It won't make sense
18 tomorrow. The weather doesn't permit for it.
19 The technology's not there. And just putting it
20 back five years is not going to resolve this
21 issue.

22 And a word of advice for our school
23 districts that are out there who may go out there
24 and purchase these school buses in anticipation
25 of meeting that deadline. Please don't.

1 You know, the real victims here are
2 those school districts in our state that went out
3 there and actually purchased these buses and
4 burdened themselves with the cost of these buses
5 because they understood that the Majority had
6 imposed that on them. And although they didn't
7 agree with it, they went ahead and did it at the
8 expense of spending that money on education, on
9 books, on facilities for their kids, and now
10 they're stuck with these things and they're not
11 able to actually use them.

12 So as we approach this delay, please
13 don't buy them, because this will be delayed
14 again.

15 I vote aye.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
17 Martins to be recorded in the affirmative.

18 Senator Mayer to explain her vote.

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

21 I think it's quite extraordinary
22 that this debate was all in this extremely
23 negative tone.

24 This is an extremely positive
25 development, given the moment we are in. We not

1 only got the full funding of Foundation Aid, as
2 our Senate deputy leader acknowledged. This year
3 we doubled the amount the Governor was
4 allocating.

5 All of us want more money for our
6 school districts. So in addition to getting at
7 least 2 percent more, also we have updated the
8 Foundation Aid formula this year. And it's too
9 bad we didn't talk about it, because the biggest
10 district in New York and in fact in the nation,
11 the New York City School District, is going to
12 benefit by an additional weight for students
13 experiencing homelessness, foster care, and the
14 increased weight for English language learners --
15 as well as districts outside of New York City.

16 These are our children too. Not
17 only do -- I don't represent New York City, but I
18 care about those kids. And we have done
19 something very positive for them.

20 And for all of us outside New York
21 City, we have made a profound investment in
22 full-day pre-K for 4-year-olds which never
23 existed as a universal requirement until this
24 budget will make it happen in the next two years.

25 We've given flexibility on the

1 buses -- thank you, Senator Ryan, for your
2 leadership. But I think we have to thank our
3 leader, Senator Stewart-Cousins, for ensuring
4 that this budget reflected our collective
5 commitment to every kid.

6 And it's a shame that my colleagues
7 complained about the additional cost when they
8 actually all want additional money for their
9 districts. I've worked with them all to try to
10 get money for their districts. This budget, not
11 perfect, gives money to every district, improves
12 the outcomes for our children, and expands
13 accessibility for every child in New York,
14 including the places we don't represent that we
15 have an obligation to speak up for.

16 I vote aye.

17 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
18 Mayer to be recorded in the affirmative.

19 Senator Fahy to explain her vote.

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

22 I too stand in support and will be
23 voting aye on this bill. And incredibly grateful
24 to the leader and all of those who played a part
25 in many parts of this, starting with the

1 Foundation Aid.

2 I now have about 17 school
3 districts. Many of them will really use that
4 additional Foundation Aid. I'm proud of our
5 colleagues for pushing that.

6 I also think it was incredibly
7 important to tweak the formula to add in
8 homeless, ELL and foster care students.

9 I'm also very pleased that we will
10 now make large renewable energy projects state
11 aid-eligible, reimbursable.

12 And I know the electric -- I have
13 certainly heard a lot about the electric buses.
14 I thank the Majority Leader for listening to us
15 and Senator Ryan for his leadership on this.
16 They needed time. Many are trying to do the
17 right thing here. We may need some changes as we
18 go forward as well, because this has been a
19 challenge.

20 Finally, I also want to mention that
21 probably my favorite part of the entire budget is
22 that we are delivering on the financial promise
23 from years ago of the universal pre-K. All of my
24 districts benefited, many of them to the point of
25 doubling the UPK funding per student, which has

1 been nothing short of extraordinary.

2 And again, I vote aye. Thank you
3 again for this budget.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: Senator
5 Fahy to be recorded in the affirmative.

6 Senator Borrello to explain his
7 vote.

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

10 Yeah, I am supporting this bill
11 today, largely because of the extension of this
12 EV mandate.

13 But, you know, I do find it a little
14 rich to listen to folks talk about giving
15 themselves credit. I mean, it's kind of like the
16 arsonist taking credit for coming back to fight
17 the fire.

18 This was a mandate that you put in
19 place. It's been in place long enough -- you
20 could have suspended it a while ago. But now the
21 Governor's in a reelection fight and we've got to
22 learn about the fact that these school districts
23 have not been able to meet this mandate.

24 And I'm wondering, if we're thinking
25 that the technology's going to improve, like if

1 they kept their receipt, can they get their money
2 back for the buses that they bought that are
3 obviously going to be better in five years? I
4 don't think so.

5 So this is still a problem. We
6 still have to address this. But I'll take the
7 half a loaf today, and I'll be voting aye.

8 Thank you.

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

11 Announce the results.

12 THE SECRETARY: In relation to
13 Calendar 1284, voting in the negative are
14 Senators O'Mara and Walczyk.

15 Ayes, 59. Nays, 2.

16 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: The bill
17 has passed.

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

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

22 Returning to motions for a moment,
23 on behalf of Senator Parker, on page 34 I offer
24 the following amendments to Calendar 637,
25 Senate 9433A, and ask that said bill retain its

1 place on Third Reading Calendar.

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

5 Senator Gianaris.

6 SENATOR GIANARIS: On behalf of
7 Senator May, on page 23 I offer the following
8 amendments to Calendar 238, Senate Print 7131A,
9 and ask that said bill retain its place on
10 Third Reading Calendar.

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

14 SENATOR GIANARIS: At the request
15 of the sponsors of the resolutions we took up
16 earlier today, they are all open for
17 cosponsorship.

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

22 Senator Gianaris.

23 SENATOR GIANARIS: Is there any
24 further business at the desk?

25 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: There is

1 no further business at the desk.

2 SENATOR GIANARIS: I move to
3 adjourn until Thursday, May 21st, at 11:00 a.m.

4 ACTING PRESIDENT COONEY: On
5 motion, the Senate stands adjourned until
6 Thursday, May 21st, at 11:00 a.m.

7 (Whereupon, at 5:23 p.m., the Senate
8 adjourned.)

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