

THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 8, 2018

(The House of Representatives was called to order at 10:37 o'clock a.m., Representative Gentile of the 104th District in the Chair.)

CLERK:

Representatives will convene immediately.
Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

The House will please come to order. Members, staff, and guests please rise and direct your attention to the Dias where Representative France will lead us in prayer.

REP. FRANCE (42ND):

Let us pray. Almighty Father, guide our deliberations as we come together in Special Session to attend to the matters set before us. Assist our Legislators in making the difficult choices that will forever keep the spirit of the state of

Connecticut alive and well for generations to come.
Lastly, help us find blessing in this worthwhile
cause that causes to lead and to serve. Amen.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you. Would Representative Borer of the
115th district please come to lead us in the Pledge
of Allegiance?

REP. BORER (115TH):

(ALL) I pledge allegiance to the flag of the
United State of America and to the Republic for
which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible
with liberty and justice for all.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Are there any announcements or introductions?
Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Nice to see you up
there. Two quick announcements before we get to the
business on the clerk's desk, Madam Speaker. If the
Chamber could just for a little silence for one
second. The first part is serious. One of our
colleagues, Representative Tony Guerrera, since we

were last gathered lost his father, and so I thought it would be appropriate -- I don't see Tony here yet. I'm sure he's on his way -- but I thought it'd be nice if we would give a moment of silence to Tony and his family on the recent passing of his father. Thank you.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

[Gavel]. Thank you. Will the Clerk please call Joint Resolution -- I'm sorry. Our distinguished Majority Leader, Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I got one more, Madam Speaker. Sorry about that.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

You may proceed, sir.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

On a lighter note, the President of our state's Senate, Marty Looney, welcomed his second granddaughter, Isabelle Grace Looney, and Marty is a former House member. I thought I might give a round of applause to the Looney family on the birth of

their granddaughter. [Applause].

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

And, that is the way to start a happy new year.
Will the Clerk please call Joint Resolution No. 401?

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution No. 401, RESOLUTION
CONVENING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN SPECIAL SESSION ON
JANUARY 8, 2018, introduced by Representative
Aresimowicz, Representative Ritter, et al.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Ritter, once again.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I move adoption of the resolution, Madam
Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

The question before this Chamber is on adoption
of the resolution. Representative, you have the
floor. Anything further?

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Nope, all set.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you. Would you care to remark further?

Any further remarks? If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Will members please take their seats and the machine will be open.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Have all members voted? All members voted. Will members please check the board and make sure your vote is properly cast? If all members have voted -- the Chamber will stand at ease. [Gavel]. We will try this one more time. Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will members please check the board and make sure your vote is properly cast? If members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally. Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

House Resolution No. 401

Total Number Voting	130
Necessary for Adoption	76
Those Voting Yea	130
Those Voting Nay	0
Absent Not Voting	19

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

The Resolution is adopted. [Gavel].

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER(1ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that we immediately transmit the Resolution we just adopted, No. 401.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Is there objection? Is there objection? I'm hearing none, so ordered. [Gavel]. Will the Clerk please call House Resolution No. 301?

CLERK:

House Resolution No. 301, RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE JANUARY SPECIAL SESSION 2018, introduced by Representative Ritter, Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I move adoption of the Resolution, Madam
Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

The question before the Chamber is on adoption
of the resolution. Will you remark Representative
Ritter? I'm seeing no further remarks. Would you
care to remark further? If not, let me try your
minds. [Gavel]. Can we please quiet the Chamber
down? All those in favor of the Resolution, please
signify by saying, aye.

MEMBERS:

Aye.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Opposed, nay. The ayes have it and the
Resolution is adopted. [Gavel]. Representative
Ritter. Will the Clerk please call House Joint
Resolution No. 402?

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution No. 402, RESOLUTION

CONCERNING THE JOINT RULES OF THE JANUARY SPECIAL
SESSION 2018, introduced by Representative Ritter,
Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora,
Senator Duff, Senator Witkos.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I move adoption of the Resolution, Madam
Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Question before the Chamber is on adoption of
the resolution. Will you remark? Thank you. If
not -- oh -- if not, let me try your minds. All
those in favor of the Resolution please signify by
saying aye.

MEMBERS:

Aye.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Opposed, nay. The ayes have it and the
Resolution is adopted. [Gavel]. Representative
Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I move that we immediate transmit House
Resolution No. 402 to the Senate, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Is there objection? Is there objection? I'm
seeing none, so ordered. [Gavel]. Will the Clerk
please call House Joint Resolution No. 403?

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution No. 403, RESOLUTION
CONCERNING THE EXPENSES OF THE JANUARY SPECIAL
SESSION 2018, introduced by Representative Ritter,
Representative Klarides, et al.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I move adoption of the Resolution, Madam
Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Question before the Chamber is on adoption of
the Resolution. Is there remarks? If not, I'll try
your minds. All those in favor please signify by
saying aye.

MEMBERS:

Aye.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Opposed, nay. The ayes have it and the Resolution is adopted. [Gavel]. Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Madam Speaker, I move that we immediately transmit House Joint Resolution No. 403.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Is there objection? Is there objections? I'm seeing none, so ordered. [Gavel]. Will the Clerk please call House Joint Resolution No. 404?

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution No. 404, A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PRINTING OF THE JOURNALS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE JANUARY SPECIAL SESSION 2018, introduced by Representative Ritter, Representative Klarides, et al.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of Joint

Resolution No. 404.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you. Would you care to remark further?
Would you care to remark further? If not, let me
try your minds. All those in favor of the
Resolution please signify by saying aye.

MEMBERS:

Aye.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

All those opposed, nay. The ayes have it and
the Resolution is adopted. [Gavel]. Representative
Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Madam Speaker, I move that we immediate
transmit this Resolution to the Senate.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Is there objection? Is there objection? I'm
seeing none, so ordered. [Gavel]. Will the Clerk
please call Emergency Certified House Bill No. 7601?

CLERK:

Emergency Certification Bill No. 7601, AN ACT
CONCERNING ADJUSTMENTS TO THE STATE BUDGET REGARDING

THE MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM AND ELIGIBILITY

THEREFORE, introduced by Representative Aresimowicz,
Representative Ritter, Representative Klarides,
Representative Candelora, Senator Looney, Senator
Duff, Senator Fasano, and Senator Witkos.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

The Chamber will stand at ease for one moment.
While we are waiting, are there any announcements or
introductions? Representative Godfrey.

REP. GODFREY (110TH):

For purposes for an introduction.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

You may proceed, sir.

REP. GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, ma'am. Ladies and gentlemen, we
have a visitor from the great state of Vermont from
the state Senate, state Senator Christopher Pearson,
who represents Chittenden up there in snow country,
although we've had that share here, so please give a
warm House welcome to state Senator Christopher
Pearson from Vermont. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

[Applause].

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you, Representative Godfrey. Thank you for visiting our Chamber. We're glad to have you here. Happy new year to you. Are there any announcements or introductions? Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of an announcement.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

You may proceed, madam.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Madam Speaker, I would like my colleagues in the Chamber to send their best regards to our esteemed Chair of Appropriations, Toni Walker. She is not here today because she is recovering from surgery, but I know she's watching, so I would like us all to just give her a little wave and hope she feels better soon.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you, madam. Toni, if you're watching, we wish you a speedy recovery. [Gavel]. Chamber will

come back to order. Before we proceed, are there any announcements or introductions? Representative Urban. Representative Urban, do you have an announcement or an introduction? Representative Urban. Thank you. [Laughing]. Will the Clerk please call Emergency Certified House Bill No. 7601?

CLERK:

Emergency Certification Bill No. 7601, AN ACT CONCERNING ADJUSTMENTS TO THE STATE BUDGET REGARDING THE MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM AND ELIGIBILITY THEREFORE, introduced by Representative Aresimowicz, Representative Ritter, Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora, Senator Looney, Senator Duff, Senator Fasano, Senator Witkos.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I move passage of Emergency Certified Bill No. 7601, please.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

The question is on passage of the Bill. Will

you remark? Representative Abercrombie, you have the floor.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, we are here today to vote on putting the money back in the budget for a program that is near and dear to all of our hearts.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Excuse me. [Gavel]. We're trying to transact some business here. If you have conversations, can you please take them out in the hall. It's difficult to hear the speaker. Representative Abercrombie, you may proceed.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the Medicare Savings Program is a program that is near and dear to all of our hearts. This is a program that provides insurance for people that have Medicare. It's a supplemental insurance policy. Individuals are able to get their prescriptions paid for, their office visits, blood work. Without this program, a lot of our seniors and people with

disabilities will not be able to get those services, so I thank my colleagues for being here today, for voting on this. I think it's really important. I think that our constituents are gonna be very hopeful in the future when it comes to services for them, and I move adoption.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you, madam. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Bill? Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just a few small points while we're here today. We're here today to fix some small bumps in the road or one small bump in the budget, the MSP, the Medical Savings Program. Being the Ranking Member on Human Services, this did come up in front of us. We had very limited people come before us to talk about it. This is very near and dear, as the good chairwoman said, to many people. This was in the governor's original budget. This was in the Appropriations budget that didn't get a vote on April 24, so we didn't have a chance

to talk about it. The public hearing, as I said, had very limited testimony. When we had meetings in the past few months with AARP, it didn't really hit their radar, and here we are today to fix a program that affects over 100,000 people. It is a necessary program, the way the cut was rolled out through DSS with a letter sent to all people who are affected by this and given 30 days notice. When we don't pass a budget at the due time in June but we do at the end of October, these are some of the implications that come out of a budget that isn't perfect. The MSP program, as the good chairwoman stated, affects some of the most near and dear people that really need this money to help get them through. Unfortunately, you know the implications that we heard once this came into effect and the number of calls that all of our legislators have gotten have prompted us to be here today to put a fix on this program and in speaking with the good chairwoman earlier, I have her word that we will keep working forward on this in Human Services to make sure that this program has a way and a path to work going forward, but with

that, just so people know, in the past few months, the good chairwoman and myself and a few others have been meeting with Chores, AARP, Connecticut Legal Services to research other ways that we can fund this and that we can make sure that those people who need just a little bit of help and to us it might be a little bit of help but to those who have it it's a lot of help, so today I urge my colleagues to vote for this, to put it forward. I urge my colleagues to stay and to work with us to further this program so with that, Madam Speaker, I thank you.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further?
Representative Staneski.

REP. STANESKI (119TH):

Sorry, accident.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you. Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON (49TH):

Thank you, Madam Chair, and I just want to briefly thank leadership, thank the chairwoman of the Human Services Committee and the Ranking Member

for their work in making sure that we are able to restore the cuts that were made to the Medicare Savings Program. You know, the Medicare Savings Program has been in effect since 1988 under the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act, which was put into effect then. At that point in time, the Part B premium was around \$34 dollars a month. Then, in 1997, the Balanced Budget Amendment of that year created a different system for the financing of the Medicare Part B program so what happened then is there was a change in the Medicare Part B program where the homecare services were put into the Part B program for unlimited coverage, which increased the cost of the Medicare Part B premiums. Those Medicare Part B premiums went up to \$134 dollars a month, so when you take a look at the brief history here of why we need to have the Medicare Savings Program and why under the federal rules the savings program has allowed states to expand coverage, not only for the qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program but also for some other higher levels of income, we can see that when you have a couple that has saved

\$134 dollars a month that comes out to more than \$3000 dollars a year, which would really put us in a situation where they're losing almost \$3000 dollars a year when we cut back on this program to 134 percent of poverty from 234 percent of poverty, so we really need to be very thankful that we're able to keep people in their homes, that we are in a situation now where we have a program that supports money follows the person, which keeps people out of skilled nursing facilities, keeps people in their homes with home care. This is something that we need to continuously need to take a look at, yes, but we really must continue to fund the Medicare Savings Program if we want to continue to save money from people going into the skilled nursing facility at 100 percent of poverty under the Medicare program, because these programs keep people in their homes, so thank you so much, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you. Will you remark further?

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Good morning, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Good morning, sir.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Happy new year to you.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Happy new year to you, sir.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you. Madam Speaker, I can understand why some of my colleagues would be voting for this today. I just had a few questions for the proponent, which may clear up some of my confusion.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Abercrombie, you can prepare yourself. You may proceed, sir.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Good morning, Representative. I noticed that is part of what's before us here today we are repealing section 698 of 1502, which was previously passed. Am I correct in that? Through you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Through you, Madam Speaker, yes.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and my understanding looking at that language it appears to be at the end of this fiscal year \$17.8 million dollars would be used in fiscal year 2019. Through you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Can the good Representative repeat -- used for? I'm not exactly sure. Used for what? If you could break that down?

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein, could you please repeat your question.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Sure. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Reading from

the language of section 698 of what was SB1502, it says that the controller shall credit \$17.8 million dollars of the unappropriated surplus to the resources of the general fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, so I read that to mean that a surplus from this year is being appropriated for use in the general fund in 2019. Through you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Through you, Madam Speaker, yes. It's a transfer from the funds from 2019 back in 2018, but it's a one-time transfer. If that's your question? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, so then I note what we're voting on here today the bottom line for the second column fiscal year 2019 shows no change, so am I to understand that we are ending up with a hole

if we are to vote on this today of \$17.8 million dollars in fiscal year 2019? Through you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Through you, Madam Speaker, yes. That is correct.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I'm supportive of the program. I don't think it should have been cut in the first place. I understand voting to restore it here today but I'm just not in favor of creating a hole in 2019, so thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further?

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and Madam Speaker, I

am incredibly supportive of our seniors, our disabled, and the Medicare Savings Program and I think that within my district I met with many of them and we were certainly concerned about what we had done in the budget, but Madam Speaker, I have to tell you today that in my other life as an economist I'm wondering why we're here today. It's my understanding that this program is safe through July because the governor has made it safe through July and we are creating, as my colleague across the isle has just indicated, a \$17.8 million-dollar hole. We are coming back in in February. We have a huge deficit that we're looking at then and the right way to budget is to budget all at once, looking at all these issues together. Piecemeal budgeting can only create problems for all of us. I listened to the Ranking Member and he said that they were negotiating right now with interested parties as to how we keep funding this because there is no guarantee that we will be able to continue along this trajectory and that's why I would recommend that we don't do this today, that we shouldn't be

here today, that we should be looking at this when we are looking at the deficit that we all know we are facing as we come back into session, and from that, I look at it from the perspective of fiscal responsibility and fiscal accountability, not from the perspective that we need this program. We need this program. It's a sort of black mark on us that we didn't see what was coming on this, and I think everybody in this Chamber realizes that we want to support our elderly and our disabled and we know how draconian this cut is. What I'm saying is it's taken care of through July. The governor has said that. We have the time to do this thoughtfully, to make sure that we do it correctly this time, not the way that we did it the last time, so I reserve my right to vote against this today, and Madam Speaker, I would also say I've taken some heat for saying that we shouldn't be funding the Amistad when we're looking at the budget deficits that we're looking at and for people here who don't understand where I'm coming from, the Amistad is a symbol of the tough budget decisions that we're gonna have to be making.

We have spent \$9 million dollars on the Amistad, a wonderful, wonderful symbol that movies have been made about, that really celebrate Connecticut's role in the freedom of the slaves, something that we should all treasure, but there comes a point in time where we have to say where are we going to spend our money most effectively and that's what I'm talking about this morning. We have some tough decisions coming and I really believe that it makes sense for us to do it in a holistic manner, not in a piecemeal manner. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you, Madam. Will you remark further? Representative Pavalock-D'Amato. Thank you. Will you remark further? If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members please take your seats and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast? If all members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally. Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

Emergency Certification No. 7601

Total Number Voting	133
Necessary for Passage	67
Those Voting Yea	130
Those Voting Nay	3
Absent Not Voting	16

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

The bill passes. [Gavel]. Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Madam Speaker, I move that we immediately transmit LCO No. 10582 to the Senate.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Is there objection? Is there objection? I'm

seeing none, so ordered. [Gavel]. Are there announcements? Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Good morning. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Purpose of Journal notation. Representative LeGeyt is away in illness. Representative Polletta, Dauphinais, Sredzinski, and Wood are also away because of family business. I just wanted to put that in for this Journal. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you, sir. Any further announcements? Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that we adjourn, sine die. Prior to that -- back up. We're gonna have a quick Democratic caucus in the caucus room. Now that I've made that announcement, I would move that we adjourn, sine die. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Thank you. [Gavel]. Without objection, the House will adjourn, sine die.

(On motion of Representative Ritter of the 1st
District, the House adjourned at 11:43 o'clock a.m.,
sine die.)

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 30 pages is a complete and accurate transcription of a digital sound recording of the House Proceedings on Monday, January 8, 2018.

I further certify that the digital sound recording was transcribed by the word processing department employees of Alphatranscription, under my direction.

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