

THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2018

(The House of Representatives was called to order at 10:37 o'clock a.m., Speaker Joe Aresimowicz of the 30th District in the Chair.)

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

(Gavel) Will the House please come to order? Members, staff and guests please rise, direct your attention to the dais, where Father Charles Jacobs will lead us in prayer.

DEPUTY CHAPLAIN REVEREND CHARLES JACOBS:

Thank you, Speaker. Acknowledging the presence of our God among us and within us, let us pray.

Heavenly Father, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us in the midst of our struggles for consensus to work together with mutual respect. We ask for a vision that is not consumed in the details and process, but builds for tomorrow upon the progress of yesterday and the possibility of

tomorrow. And to his prayer, let us respond amen.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

There he is. Would Representative Joe Gresko of the 121st, please come to the dais and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

REP. GRESKO (121ST):

Good morning, Joseph. (All) I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

It looks like a short list today, Mr. Clerk. Do you have any business on your desk?

CLERK:

The only business, Mr. Speaker, is the daily Calendar.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Are there any announcements or introductions? Representative Dubitsky of the 47th, sir, you have the floor.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For a quick

acknowledgement.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please do so, sir.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, last night at 1- something in the morning when we got out of here, when everybody was zooming out, I too wanted to zoom out, went into the parking lot to my car and nothing happened. Dead battery. So, I had an option whether or not to sleep in my office or to notify our wonderful Capitol Police. I did the latter. And I have to give them a real shout out. We have the greatest police department in the state at the Capitol. We noticed that -- I don't know if anybody's noticed on their cars, most police cars say "protect and serve." Theirs say "protecting democracy."

Now, I actually thought that I was our job, but the more -- the longer I'm here, I think maybe we need somebody to protect democracy against us and from us. (Laughter) But I do want to give a quick shout out to the Capitol Police and I would ask my

colleagues to give them a little round of applause.

Thank you. (Applause)

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky, I really and truly appreciate you saying that. I'm looking down at my phone for my legendary counter. The other thing is with 12 days, 13 hours, 19 minutes and 1 second, give or take, it really is the staff, the nonpartisan staff, the partisan staff. They all make great contributions and I know the Capitol Police do too. So, if you would, with my indulgence, can we just stand up and give all the staff a round of applause that helps this building run? (Applause) Thank you very much, Representative. Representative Derek Slap of the 19th District.

REP. SLAP (19TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Good morning, sir.

REP. SLAP (19TH):

I am rising to wish my legislative aide and who

also diligently serves many other Representatives in our caucus a very happy birthday, Mary Ann Dilley, wherever she is in the complex. If she's listening on TV or she's here in the Chamber. I don't see her, but I just wanted to let her know how much I appreciate all that she does for all of us and wishing her happy birthday today. Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Happy birthday, Mary Ann. (Applause) Are there any other announcements or introductions?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good morning. Will the Clerk please call Calendar No. 264?

CLERK:

Connecticut General Assembly House of Representatives, April 26, 2018. On page 30, House Calendar 264, House Bill No. 5421 - AN ACT ADOPTING THE INTERSTATE COMPACT TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE - favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Government Administration and Elections.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

So, I ask you to please stay close because this ought to be a quick one. Representative Fox, the esteemed Chairman of the Government Administration and Elections Committee.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good morning, sir. Please proceed.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I'd like to again acknowledge, as I think the Chamber is aware, I have a tendency to speak very quickly. Often times my words may be somewhat misinterpreted. If that's the case, please don't hesitate to ask me to clarify myself or repeat something I've said.

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Representative Fox, you

have the floor, sir.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the bill before us today, which has been debated at the committee level for many sessions, gives the members of this Chamber a unique opportunity to have an effect on and changed federal constitutional law regarding election of the president of the United States. The bill used the authority and power invested in the states -- in the United States to enter into an interstate compacts and that is the constitutional power that the states have. It's a power recognized in the Constitution in a federal case law at the Supreme Court level.

It's also authorized by plenary power for state legislatures to have in the Constitution. More specifically, it's one of the rare times when legislatures like this body are specifically named in the Constitution. We have the plenary power to select electorates to the Electoral College. The interstate compact that's contemplated by this legislation will work in the following way.

States like Connecticut would pass this bill in this form and the compact would come into effect when the number of states whose electoral votes total a majority of the Electoral College, which is 270, and include all the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The compact would come into effect when that number, 270, is reached in terms of the number of states who have passed the compact and have signed it into law. The compact would work in the following way.

Every state that has decided to adopt the compact and be bound by its provisions would pledge that its Electoral College members as delegates to the Electoral College as it were would vote for the winner of the national popular vote. To the effect of this legislation, once the compact is adopted by this requisite number of states, would be that the winner of the national popular vote for president of the United States in any given presidential election would become the president of the United States. And this is different than the way things work now.

I propose that we are not acting outside our

constitutional authority by any means, because as I noted at the outset, we're authorized to enter into interstate compacts, more specifically given broad and sweeping powers by being a state legislature to choose how our electors are picked. Some things to bear in mind about the current system.

There is no question that presidential elections at this time in history and for some time focus on several key battleground states. That is where the resource of presidential campaigns are concentrated in terms of television advertising money, field operations, polling and so forth. The candidates, they also start hoping to have a 50-state strategy. By the time it's over, it's often under 20 states that they're focusing on. That's where most of the money goes and most of the attention goes.

Most of the discussions about issues go on both before, and more importantly, after the election. In a national popular vote scenario, every state -- every vote in every state would matter regardless of the size of the Electoral College. Because if your

state was, say, Idaho, which often goes Republican in presidential elections, and say it goes normally 75 percent Republican and 25 percent Democrat, under a national popular vote scenario it would make sense to try and bring that 25 up to 30 percent or 35 percent with a few visits to the area and some advertising and so forth. So every vote in every state regardless of size would count.

Also, there are some of the large and important states that are ignored in this scenario because they're considered safe states, even under our current scenario. Another to bear in mind, historically, Mr. Speaker, is that there've been several elections in the history of our country in which the winner of the national popular vote did not win the Electoral College. This occurred in 1800, 1824, 1876, 2000 and 2016. They've been proposed over the years with very little action taken.

It's a rare opportunity, when as a state legislature, acting under our constitutional authority; we can make profound change that I think

would enhance confidence, participation and excitement about presidential elections in small and big states alike. So for those reasons, I'd urge the members of the Chamber to support the compact and thank you for your time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Fox. Will you remark further on the bill? From the 134th District, Representative Devlin, you have the floor, madam.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good morning.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

I do have a few questions for the proponent of this bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Well, please proceed.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you very much.

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Could the good Representative explain, like, how would this

actually work for the State of Connecticut?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This would work in a number -- in a few different -- I'll give you -- outline the procedure for you. Once there are 270 electoral -- once there are enough states that represent 270 electoral votes, which is the majority of the current Electoral College votes, committed to the compact, then the national popular vote winner would become the president of the United States.

That would mean that every vote in Connecticut would matter. Every vote in California and New Mexico and Rhode Island and Massachusetts would matter. It would work in Connecticut by way of being a compacted contract between states so that states that are into the compact would pledge their Electoral College votes to the winner of the national popular vote throughout the country.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the good Representative said that this would make every vote count, but the way I understand this is, that should Connecticut vote for presidential candidate "A", but the majority of the rest of the United States chose presidential candidate B. Connecticut would have to put its electoral votes to presidential candidate B, which totally disenfranchises the popular vote in the State of Connecticut. So, could the good Representative please clarify how, in fact, this is representative?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

By all means, I thank the Ranking Member for the question. It's a very good question and a very interesting concern that she has. One that was raised a number of times in our committee level, one that I've thought about quite extensively over the past several weeks.

The MPV compact would not treat voters in

nonmember states differently than voters in member states. Voters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be treated equally by the national popular vote compact regardless of whether the states belong to the compact.

And one point I'd like to point out to Representative Devlin, in her scenario, -- what I think she's getting at, how would the voice of the people of Connecticut be affected or impacted and I think that may be the point that she's trying to get at and I'd like to follow up on that.

Connecticut's current winner take all law creates the illusion that Connecticut's voice was 100 percent for Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election, when, in fact, it wasn't, because it awards 100 percent of its -- Connecticut's electoral votes to the candidate receiving the most votes in Connecticut. However, Connecticut's true voice was about 900,000 votes for Hillary Clinton and almost 700,000 votes for Donald Trump. So, I think the compact would affect Connecticut because every vote would count.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. (Gavel) And I would just ask -
- I know this is an issue that people want to hear
the debate, the questions and the answers and I know
we're all excited about it, but try to keep it down
a little bit so everyone can have that respectful
hearing of each other. Representative Devlin,
please proceed.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We can agree to
disagree on that, but let's just go back to a few
points. If I could ask, through you, Mr. Speaker,
how many states currently participate, have signed
up to joint this compact?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr.
Speaker. Currently, there are eleven states in the
compact.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

And, Mr. Speaker, that equals how many
electoral votes?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

(It's) 165.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And how many states
are needed to achieve the number of electoral votes
for the compact to go into action?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not based on a
state need. It's based on the Electoral College
vote need. So, we need -- we currently have 165

Electoral College votes entered into the compact,
essentially. So we will need 105 more votes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, should the -- a
number of states decide to join and 270 electoral
votes are achieved, what happens to the electoral
votes in the rest of the country or to the -- also
to the voices of those states that aren't
participating? Is -- are we now just selecting the
president of the United States based on those states
that chose to join the compact?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The first clause of
article 3 of the compact provides that the chief
election official of each member state shall
determine the number of votes for each presidential

state in each state of the United States and in the District of Columbia. So, regardless of whether or not a state is a member of the compact, their vote will still count.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, just to clarify, does the good Representative mean that their individual vote will matter because it would count towards the national popular vote, but, in effect, the electoral votes are meaningless for those states? Is that true, Mr. Speaker?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

That is not true, Mr. Speaker. No, through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, if the good Representative could just explain, why would we want to do this in the State of Connecticut?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had an interesting conversation with a colleague yesterday here in the Chamber when we were discussing this vote -- this potential bill. He said to me, "you know what? I wake up the morning after election day. I don't look to see who won Connecticut's popular vote for president. I look to see who won the national popular vote for president." So, I think that's why we want to do this. Just in an effort to have every voice count, every vote matter and every vote go towards the candidate that they wish.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, the electoral process and the way we elect the president of the United States is outlined in our Constitution. So how is this not unconstitutional?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.
REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The compact will preserve the Electoral College. It would not abolish it. It would not affect the structure of the Electoral College contained in the U.S. Constitution.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.
REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But in effect, it does neuter the intent of our Founding Fathers in the Electoral College because, again, if we go back to the example that the good Representative gave of the State of Connecticut, should the State of

Connecticut choose by its state's popular vote, a different presidential candidate, the electoral votes are still gonna go to the other candidate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Well, you're welcome. Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, was that a question or a statement?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Would you prefer to frame it in a question?

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Mr. Speaker, through you. How are minority voices not disenfranchised through this new system?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I think it actually enfranchises voters. It -- if the person happens to vote for the candidate who lost in a particular

state -- or, excuse me. All votes in every state will be treated equally under the compact regardless of whether the state belongs to the compact. So I think that actually enfranchises voters and that the fact a vote made by each person will count.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, that may be a point that we, again, agree to disagree. Because in the State of Connecticut, if we cast our vote for who the State of Connecticut chooses to be president yet our electoral votes go to a different candidate, that's not very enfranchising, Mr. Speaker.

Through you, a question for the proponent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

How does a state get out of this compact?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the manner about which a state was to be removed from the compact; give me one second.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Take your time.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Is identified in line 64-67 of the underlying compact.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Could the good Representative please state that again?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Of course. Through you, Mr. Speaker. The manner by which a state will -- gets out of the compact is identified in lines 64-67 of the

underlying bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and could the good Representative just articulate for us what that is?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Of course, Mr. Speaker. The member states would have to notify and they may withdraw from this agreement and accept a withdrawal and they must notify the other member states, through you, Mr. Speaker, by -- in writing.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So if a state joined the compact, then maybe a month later they decide they no longer want to be part of that compact, they

just state in writing - we're out - and that's it?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The aspect of the Representative's question indicating whether it needs to be in writing is correct. There's a timeframe involved. The timeframe being that they must do it occurring six months or less before the end of a president's term, so essentially by July 20th of the year preceding a president's termination date.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So it sounds like there is a lock-in period where should a state not want to participate that way, they are still forced to elect their -- or, cast their electoral votes, potentially, to a candidate that their own state

does not support. Is that true?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

To the extent that they're forced, it would be a means -- it's not simply -- it'd be -- would've been a process such as this. When the bill gets voted on through the state legislation to the extent that they're forced, I think might be an overstatement.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that from the good Representative. I think at this point, I don't have further questions for the good Representative. However, I do have a few comments.

So, Mr. Speaker, we started this morning with the Pledge of Allegiance. We said "I pledge allegiance to the United States of America and to

the "Republic" for which it stands. Our United States government is organized as a republic. It's not a pure democracy. It is not a monarchy. Our Founding Fathers lived through a monarchy. They studied history. They knew a pure democracy could implode. And, therefore, they deliberately wanted to ensure that majority rule would not overtake minority voices.

Their solution was to create a government unlike any other. They created a federalist republic. Federalist, because states have a voice and a republic that encourages deliberation and compromise. This provides balance between majority and minority voices and also ensures more strongly that individual rights are protected and they're protected better than in a pure democracy.

There is some, I think, common misunderstanding about how the president of the United States is actually elected. There's a two-part system. So first, when we go to the polls and we vote for a president, we're voting on who our state should select as president. And then based on the popular

vote of our state, our selected electorates cast their votes to represent the voices of that state.

The interstate compact to elect the president of the United States by national popular vote is a direct violation at the heart of what our Founding Fathers envisioned and it's an end run around our Constitution.

In a GAE public hearing on this bill, our Secretary of State made the comment that our -- the Electoral College is passé. I would suggest that that is anything but the truth. The Electoral College and the way it functions today was carefully thought out and deliberated as a mechanism to maintain state's rights. It is the fairest system for our country because it ensures that presidential candidates can't just focus on where they can get the most votes out of the most populace states. They have to build coalitions. It requires big states and small states.

The good Representative mentioned that four out of the last 45 presidents of the United States were elected by winning the Electoral College. They

didn't win the national popular vote. And I recognize that two of those elections were in our recent past, but that is no reason to discard the very safeguards that our Founding Fathers put in place.

Further, it's unfair to our State of Connecticut and to our citizens. An elector in the State of Connecticut would no longer vote based on the popular vote of our state! You know, at the Constitutional Convention, just a few hundred years ago, Benjamin Franklin left, walked out, and was asked by a group of citizens, "So what kind of government did the delegates come up with?" And he said, "A republic, if you can keep it."

So, Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, today I suggest we keep that republic and we reject this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Devlin. Will you remark further? The Representative from the 131st District, Representative Labriola. Good morning, sir.

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to this bill. It has some sensibilities of being a good idea. After all, we elect our governors and senators and congressmen and women by whoever gets the most votes, they get elected. So, it seems to have some appeal that whoever gets the most votes in a presidential election becomes president. However, the election of a president is different than other office. Not just because we're electing a commander in chief and the chief executive of our country, but because the presidential election reflects the form of government that we have here in the United States.

We are a nation of states. We are a republic. It's a unique election. There's no other election like it and it's modeled after our Constitution and our form of government. We have the Congress which is elected in relation to the proportion of the population and we have the United States Senate which is composed of two senators from each state. It was a compromise when the government was formed

initially. In order to get the small states to agree to the union, they created the senate where each state no matter the size would have two senators. And this is reflected in the Electoral College.

The Electoral College is composed of the amount of congress people in that state and two senators. So in Connecticut, we have seven electors because we have five congressmen and we have two senators. So, the national popular vote is a bad idea, not just because it's bad public policy, but it's particularly bad here in Connecticut because we're a small state. The Electoral College protects a small state like Connecticut. That's how the initial union was formed, by this compromise.

The large states; New York and Virginia at the time, got two senators just like the small states. And so the smaller states were compelled to adopt the union because they were able to be better represented in the U.S. Senate. So, to -- it just - - it's just math. To adopt this hurts a small state like Connecticut, in particular, because of the fact

that the Electoral College itself reflects two votes for the United States Senate, as opposed to the larger states like Texas or Florida or California now.

And this isn't even a partisan issue. This isn't Democrat or Republican. We're a small state and this is a bad idea for a small state like Connecticut. You know, another major issue that is urged by the proponents of this bill is that somehow Connecticut is not a swing state and that there's a certain amount of swing states and the presidential candidates won't pay attention to a state like Connecticut. Well, that flies in the face of history and in the broad sweep of history, Connecticut, indeed, has been a swing state many times. Even in the last 50 or 60 years Republicans and Democrats for president each were elected. And, certainly, in many of those elections, Connecticut was in play.

So, the exact states that are swing states change. We've seen it even in the last election, and even as recently as ten years ago, here in

Connecticut, in the 2008 election, during the summer at the time of the conventions, Connecticut was in play. The polls were actually dead even for a moment there in the summer of 2008. And so this idea that the presidential candidates won't pay attention to Connecticut is just not accurate.

The basis for this movement is not founded in fact and not founded in the history of our presidential elections. In fact, I would assert that the basis of this, the funding for this national movement, the impetus of this, is the sour grapes from losing the 2000 and the 2016 election. That's what's driving this. It's not public policy and it's certainly not a good idea for Connecticut, a small state like Connecticut. No. It's because the advocates, the billion dollar proponents of the people who are funding this national movement have sour grapes and are upset about the result of that - - those two recent elections.

And as indicated by the Ranking Member, this is a rare thing that somebody would win the national popular vote, but lose the Electoral College. This

is rare. Yes, it happened two times in recent history. But do you know when the last time it was before that? It was 1888. It was 130 years ago that this last happened. That's when Grover Cleveland won the national popular vote, but Benjamin Hayes -- Benjamin Harrison, that is. Benjamin Harrison won the Electoral College. Now how many people are outraged about that one? How many people are upset that Grover Cleveland was denied the presidency that year, in 1888? I'll tell you. Nobody. This is a rare event.

You know, if you want to change the Constitution, and you want to get rid of the Electoral College, do it the proper way. Have Congress act. Have Congress act, have the states ratify it. That's how the Constitution gets amended. Not through this gimmick. Not through this interstate compact. Who knows if this is even gonna be constitutionally sound.

You know, this idea that let's see who wins the national popular vote and then we'll just all agree, we states will agree, and hopefully we'll have a

majority in the Electoral College, because we're gonna agree on the side. This is -- this is not what the framers intended. This goes against the spirit and the letter of our great Constitution.

And, you know, we're a great country. We are the most stable government in the history of the world. We have peaceful transitions of power. We here in America have had these presidential elections time and time again and we have peaceful transitions of power. There's no reason to change this. There's no -- this is a -- an act of political theater. This is an artificial gimmick. This is something that's not necessary. It's not constitutional. It's not needed. And I strongly urge rejection of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The House will stand at ease for a moment.

The House will come back to order. (Gavel)

Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to briefly interrupt the debate on this without PTing the bill. I know we did it yesterday. I actually have a few special

guests up here that were running a little bit late this morning. They are students at McGee Middle School in Berlin, Connecticut and they are up here advocating on behalf of physical education in the school system to ensure we have well-rounded student. So, if the Chamber -- I'll introduce them, they'll stand up, and then if we can give them our -- a warm greeting.

Sam, a swimmer from the Town of Berlin; Gianmichael, plays football for me; Olivia, a soccer player, very well accomplished. We have Toby Lavender, another football player. We have Molly, the best one of all, in my opinion. She's a hockey player. So be careful, she'll check you into the boards. And then we also have Julia, a soccer player. But if the Chamber can give them a warm welcome, I'd greatly appreciate it. (Applause) Again, I greatly appreciate your indulgence on that. Thank you very much. Now we'll return to the bill on the board.

Representative Perillo of the 113th, sir, you have the floor.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. You can learn a lot about a policy effort from its advocates, and I look back at some -- one of the earliest advocates of this, actually, the *Los Angeles Times*. And in one of their earliest editorials on the topic of national popular vote, they said some very interesting things. They called national popular vote -- now these are advocates, by the way. They call national popular vote an ingenious scheme - and ingenious scheme. And in fact, they point out that the individual who invented this scheme is also the same person who invented the scratch off lottery ticket. So, I don't know, maybe they're making a comparison of the two. I don't know. But further, they made a very specific point that I think we need to keep in mind.

Mr. Speaker, I'm having a hard time hearing myself, let alone others.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

(Gavel) I apologize, Representative Perillo. This sounds a little better, or doesn't sound. So,

please proceed, sir.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate it very much.

The *Los Angeles Times*, in 2006, stated, again, in favor of national popular vote. They said "this kind of end run around the Constitution is necessary." The chief advocate in 2006 of national popular vote admitted, without question, that this is an end run around the Constitution.

We will hear other arguments and have heard other arguments here today, stating that it is not. Let us be realistic without ourselves. It is. There is a mechanism by which we can do this. It is a mechanism that was conceived of by the Founding Fathers and exists in our Constitution itself. There is a way we can amend the Constitution. It's been done 27 times. It's been done 27 times; the last time in 1992.

But it seems advocates for this think it's too hard to do in this case. It's too hard because there's not enough support. Well, you know what?

It's supposed to be hard. We're not supposed to take the Constitution of the United States of America lightly. It's supposed to be hard to amend, which is why I think we're here today, because there is not the critical support needed, as demanded, in the Constitution for this amendment.

So, what do advocates need? They need this "end run around the Constitution." As an advocate for the national popular vote, you can support that concept. Many of us do. But I would ask that if you support it, do it in the right way. Do it by using the mechanism that our Constitution lays out. Do it by proposing and enacting an amendment to the Constitution. If you believe - if you believe - then do it right. That's all some of us are asking. Just follow the rules and don't go down the road of an end run around the Constitution, which is exactly what this is.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge opposition. I will not be supporting this bill and I would urge others to do the same. Thank you, sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Perillo. From the 80th District, Representative Sampson, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SAMPSON (80TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good morning, sir.

REP. SAMPSON (80TH):

I'm always surprised when we have this debate and that this bill comes before this Chamber, and its' because the notion of a popular vote is something that flies in the face of our very existence in this Chamber. The first thing I'll say is I want to make clear that what we are discussing is not actually a national popular vote. Rather it is something referred to as the national popular vote compact. But I want to just briefly touch on both things.

An actual national popular vote is when all of the states vote simultaneously, their votes are tallied, and the majority winner would be declared the president. No Electoral College whatsoever. I

understand that some people might in favor of that concept, but there is a legitimate reason which has been discussed by the previous speakers why we don't use that system. And it goes back to an understanding that the United States of America is a collection of individual states.

Each of those states has their own individual government. The people that live in those states live under the laws of those individual states. And going back to the formation of this country, our Founding Fathers recognized that those states were different and that the people that lived in them were different. And that remains the same today.

We have some states that our tourism states. We have some states that are devoted to agriculture. We have other states which might be involved in business. But each of those states has their own interests and their own state governments. And they maintain their sovereignty until today. A national popular vote essentially wipes out that individual sovereignty of the states. And that's why it always puzzles me that I could be standing in a state

legislature with people wanting to do away with our sovereignty to make decisions for our state.

But as I said, this bill is not even about a national popular vote. It's about a game, I would say. This bill is about something called the national popular vote compact. And let me just for anyone watching. Essentially, what it says is Connecticut will still have seven electoral votes no matters what happens. We're not changing that system. But we do have the right, as a state, to award our electoral votes by any criteria that we deem appropriate. And what this bill would to would be to change that criteria.

Right now, we have a popular vote in Connecticut. Whoever wins that popular vote in Connecticut is who we support for president and who we give our seven electoral votes to. This would say that we throw that out the window, our own popular vote, and instead rely on the popular vote of the rest of the country to decide who we're going to give our electoral votes to.

Now the previous speakers have already pointed

out that that is a very dangerous idea because, very simply, we could have a different opinion than the rest of the country, and therefore, we would be obligated under this compact to give our votes -- our electoral votes, that should be awarded to the winner of our state, away to the winner of the national popular vote.

The reason why we are doing this is because we are not Congress. Only Congress can actually enact a national popular vote. And I would venture to guess that if Congress was actually contemplating national popular vote, we would be up in arms. To say hey, hey, hey, Connecticut matters. You cannot be telling us that electoral votes are going to go away. I have just two questions for the proponent of the bill, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, Representative Sampson.

REP. SAMPSON (80TH):

I would just like to know how many electoral votes Connecticut has today.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

I want to thank the Representative for the question as well as the debate in committee session today and in the past. I always respect his opinion on these matters in particular. Connecticut currently has seven electoral votes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Sampson.

REP. SAMPSON (80TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate that answer, and I also appreciate the dialog from my colleague. We both, I think, bring a lot to the table as far as the debate goes.

So, we just established that Connecticut right now has seven electoral votes. Through you, Mr. Speaker, can I ask the gentleman how many electoral votes we will have if this bill becomes law?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

The State of Connecticut the -- would remain
with seven electoral votes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Sampson.

REP. SAMPSON (80TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I have one
more question then. So, if we have seven electoral
votes now and we have -- will have seven electoral
votes if this becomes law, through you, Mr. Speaker,
can I ask, is the number of the total number of
electoral votes changing if this bill becomes law?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Is the
Representative is asking the total number needed for
-- to win, or just an overall in general?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Sampson, would you prefer to clarify?

REP. SAMPSON (80TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sorry if I wasn't more clear. I'm curious to know what the total number of electoral votes is and whether this bill has any effect on that number.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you. Currently, the total number of electoral votes is 538. Through you, Mr. Speaker. And that will not change.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Sampson.

REP. SAMPSON (80TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. That's very interesting. So I guess we are left with the conclusion that we have seven electoral

votes now and we will have seven electoral votes if this bill becomes law out of the same total. So, therefore, our influence is not changed. The only thing that can change is who we award our electoral votes to and why. But wait a second. If this debate is about whether or not Connecticut matters or whether or not Connecticut has a certain amount of influence, then shouldn't we contemplate how our influence does change?

We are only going to have the same seven electoral votes no matter what. But today, we, the voters in the State of Connecticut, choose who we are going to award those electoral votes to. If this bill passes, we will no longer decide that.

Essentially, this disenfranchises the voters in the State of Connecticut; by saying their votes no longer are the determining factor in our influence as a state. I can't for the life of me, Mr. Speaker, understand why anyone in this room who was elected to represent the voters in their district would suggest that it's a good idea to change the current law which says that the voters in their

district's votes matter towards deciding who this state chooses for president, and changes it to a situation where that decision is made by what happens outside of our state.

I keep hearing a lot of slogans. We already talked about - *one person, one vote*. Well, of course this is not one person, one vote. It was already described that the State of Connecticut could vote overwhelmingly for candidate A in a presidential election, but candidate B may win the national popular vote when you tally all of the states. If we are going to take our seven electoral votes and give them to candidate B, how can anyone say that's one person, one vote for the voters in this state? Their votes just went out the window.

I also keep saying he -- *make Connecticut matter*. Well, right now, Connecticut does matter. We get to decide in this state, with our voters, who we want for president. If you pass this bill, we now longer decide that. We give up that choice to what happens outside of Connecticut, as I already mentioned.

I'm gonna vote no today, Mr. Speaker, and I'm gonna vote no mostly because I want my constituents, the people that I represent, to have their rights preserved, to make their vote matters in the next election; that they get to choose how Connecticut votes for president. There are a great many other issues with this policy and I contemplated getting into them. But I'll just leave you with a couple of thoughts.

First and foremost, there are 50 states plus there are a couple of other elections, D.C., Puerto Rico, etcetera. The thing is that each one of those states has their own rules, their own laws governing their own elections. So, in this compact, if we are relaying on a national popular vote, whose rules are we using? Are we using Connecticut's voting rules or Massachusetts or Texas? Essentially, we're using all of those individual sets of rules.

And then ask yourself what happens when people start disputing the value of the votes in Connecticut versus Massachusetts because the rules are different. This is a recipe for lawsuits and

arguments and disaster. It's also a recipe for fraud. It's also, I would say, a potential is created for states themselves to institutionally try and in -- change the amount of influence they have. What I'm saying basically is that states might change their own voter rules so that they get more votes, so that they therefore have more influence in a popular vote compact situation.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, this bill is bad policy. And what concerns me more than the fact that it's bad policy is that it's here for political reasons. I doubt sincerely whether we would be having this debate if it was not for the last presidential election's outcome. That is no reason for us to be making public policy decisions, Mr. Speaker. I encourage my colleagues to vote down this bad policy, which gives away the votes of our constituents rather than counting them so we make up our own minds as Connecticut residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Sampson. Will you

remark further? Representative O'Neill of the 69th District, the floor is yours, sir.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I may, a few questions to the Chair of the GAE Committee?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Of course. Please proceed.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and through you. Is there any provision in this act that would deal with the issue of rogue electors, which -- let me just explain what I mean just to be clear. Every presidential election, it appears that some -- in some cases it's quite a few, several electors who are elected from a state where the popular vote in that state went for one candidate, they choose to vote for another candidate, sometimes the opposing candidate in the presidential election, sometimes someone who wasn't even on the ballot, because apparently they have that freedom to do to. So, that's what I mean by rogue elector. It's someone who votes for someone other than the one that the

state voted for.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Representative for the question. I believe what Representative O'Neill is referring to are often times referred to as *faithless electors*, and my reading of the compact is that -- I believe lines 24-27 address the faithless elector.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the gentleman share with us what those lines say?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Of course. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as

often is the case, when I read loud I tend to go very quickly. So, I apologize in advance to the Representative for that.

Lines 24-27 - Provide that the presidential elector, certifying official of each member state shall certify the appointment in that official's own state to be elector slate nominated in the state in association with national popular vote winner.

Essentially, it's a matter of certifying the slate electors.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, I'm not quite sure I understand how that addresses the faithless electorate issue. Are the electors -- let me back up a step then. Are the electors going to gather as they do now in their respective state capitols and cast electoral votes? I believe it's sometime in the first part of December, maybe the first Tuesday after the first Monday or something like that. It

ties into roughly the same kind of schedule the elections run on. Through you, Mr. Speaker. Are they going to gather? For example, would the ones in Connecticut gather here in Hartford and cast their electoral votes?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you. Yes, they will.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And if an elector in Connecticut, let's say the popular majority, if this compact went into effect -- let me scratch that and start again. At the present time, if someone was elected as an elector with the popular candidate in Connecticut; let's take the last election, an elector for Hillary Clinton. Had an elector,

instead of voting for Hillary Clinton, had that elector voted for Bernie Sanders. Is there any penalty that would've been imposed on that elector for doing that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you.

Currently, in Connecticut, the Connecticut statutes do not explicitly define a faithless elector.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Can I take that as a no?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you. And if we pass the compact and a -- or, let's say the compact had been in effect, so we can just use the facts we know of from the last election. If the compact had been in effect and an elector gathered with the others in Hartford and did the same thing and cast a vote for Bernie Sanders instead of for Hillary Clinton, would there be some sort of mechanism to either -- for us to penalize that elector for doing that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question is would there be a penalty if a faithless elector appeared in Connecticut subsequent to the compact being adopted?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that's another way of phrasing it. Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The compact I don't believe addresses the penalties.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And after the compact were to go into effect and those seven electors gathered in Hartford and one of them cast -- can -- will they still cast ballots where they actually are voting for someone for president so that there is a written ballot with a name on it?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. That process is dictated by state statute, but my understanding is that that will still occur.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And if one of the electors casts a vote for someone other than a person who was the winner of the national popular vote -- however we arrive at that and I'm perhaps gonna have some questions about that later. But if the -- it's been determined that the popular vote winner was candidate X, and one of the people in Connecticut voted for candidate Y, or tried to, is there anything in the compact that prevents that person from casting a vote in a manner other than for the candidate who won the popular vote?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that is a mechanism that will be developed by the states in pursuant to state law.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

But, again, my question is related to what's in the compact. Does the compact itself contain anything that would in effect automatically award those seven votes to the winner of the popular vote as ascertained by those who are charged with ascertaining that fact?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the essence of the underlying compact is that states that are

entered into it will pledge their Electoral College votes to the winner of the national popular vote.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Through -- thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, I want to run the scenario through. If one or more of the electors casts a ballot for someone other than the popular vote winner, will those votes be sent to Washington to be opened, I guess, it's by the vice president of the United States then serving, and they read off the ballots. Will the ballot that was cast for someone other than a popular vote winner be transferred, transmitted to Washington, D.C.?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. No, it would not.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So it sound to me, in essence, that the electors will no longer cast ballots for the presidential candidate in their respective state capitols, but something else is going to happen. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The electors will still cast ballots; however, the states entered into the compact will assign those ballots to the winner of the national popular vote.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, the electors will be elected still, which is what the current system works and the way the Electoral College works. We

elect these seven electors. They will meet in Hartford. They will cast ballots, which is all called for as I understand it under the Constitution, on a particular day. I think it's in December. But those ballots will not be sent to Washington, D.C. Is that correct? To be counted by the vice president. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. That is not correct. What would happen, the electors will meet, the ballots will be cast and assigned to the winner of the national popular vote and then the procedure will remain as it currently stands in the sense that the ballots will be sent to Washington, D.C.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't quite

understand, though, how the ballots are going to be transmitted to Washington, D.C. and counted there and they might be cast for someone different than the national popular vote winner, and yet they're going to be assigned by someone to the winner of the national popular vote. And -- so -- perhaps the Chairman could explain to me how that is going to happen.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. The process by which ballots are transferred from the State of Connecticut to Washington, D.C., should this compact be entered into, will not change. The process will remain the same in the sense that -- and there's a number of key dates in that process. The first has to do with the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November is election day. The second is six days before presidential electors meet at the Electoral

College which is called the safe harbor deadline. The third date is as soon as practical after electors are appointed, the state executive must send a certificate of ascertainment to the U.S. archivist with the names of the presidential slates and number of each votes received. Then there's a full -- the procedural -- the technical procedure after the ballot -- after the electors are assigned with the State of Connecticut will not affected.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because it seems to me that we are, pursuant to the Constitution, either electing electors who will cast ballots and they are apparently, under the terms of the compact and also under Connecticut law, not prohibited in any way from casting ballots in any way they choose. They are free to cast ballots whether under current law in accordance with or not in accordance with the vote outcome in Connecticut, and under the compact,

in accordance with or not in accordance with the votes nationally.

So, they have that right to vote. As electors, they get to cast a vote and -- but somehow the votes they cast are not the votes that are gonna be either -- and apparently those votes are gonna be transmitted, but somehow those votes that they cast are not gonna be counted. Something else is gonna be counted that reflects the winner of the national popular vote. And to me, there's some kind of -- there is a disconnect between the electors voting, those ballots being sealed up; and I remember seeing video of this and TV depictions of this, and then transmitted to Washington, D.C. I don't quite understand how those votes get cast for the winner of the popular vote if they, in fact, are not cast for the winner of the popular vote.

Is there some other step in between the votes being cast in December and the votes being opened on the date that they are opened? I think it's in January, on January 3rd or 4th. Is there some other step that I'm missing?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. I'll attempt to clarify the procedure. I believe what the Representative is asking for is the timeframe by which the electors are appointed; vote, and then the votes are transmitted to Washington, D.C. The process is outlined in lines -- specifically, lines 21-23 of the compact states that - *The chief election official of each member state shall designate the presidential slate with the largest number -- the largest national popular vote total as the national popular vote winner.* Then the -- thereafter, that notice is certified by the secretary of state and transmitted to other member states and then, pursuant to current law, transmitted down to Washington, D.C.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So is the thing that's gonna go to Washington, D.C., instead of the ballots cast by the electors, is it going to be a document signed by the secretary of state that certifies that Connecticut's seven electors are hereby cast for the winner of the national popular vote?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that's what the underlying compact is just that, is that the winner of the national popular vote in Connecticut will get assigned Connecticut's seven Electoral College votes. So what will be transmitted will be a certification by the Secretary of State's office that the electors got together and assigned their -- or voted for the national popular vote winner and that tally will be forwarded to Washington, D.C.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we're getting closer to the nub of the question that I have here, which is if -- and let's say it's all seven. Let's say all seven Connecticut electors, instead of voting for the national popular vote winner, decide to vote for someone else. Can the secretary of state then sign a certification saying they voted for the national popular vote winner?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The essence of the underlying agreement is that the winner of the national popular vote nationally will be assigned Connecticut's Electoral College votes. So, I think the answer -- I'm not entirely sure how to answer the Representative's question, but the winner of the national popular vote on the nationwide will be

assigned Connecticut's seven Electoral College votes and then as part of the compact, the agreement -- the essence of it is that those votes would then be assigned to the national popular vote winner.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand what the Chairman indicated is sort of the end result that they're trying to achieve with the compact, but there are a whole series of steps, some of which are actually in the U.S. Constitution that call for things to be done, and one of the things that I believe it calls for is the electors to gather in their respective state capitols and cast votes, and then eventually for those votes to be transmitted to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., and then for those votes to be opened and counted by the Vice President of the United States, and that's when the election of president is finally actually accomplished.

And it sounds like that we could easily find ourselves in a situation in which the ballots are cast for one candidate and the Secretary of State maybe is going to sign a piece of paper saying the ballots are hereby assigned to another candidate. Is that a possibility under the compact?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. No, because the winner of the national popular vote will be assigned Connecticut's seven Electoral College votes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I'm -- I keep hearing the word "assigned." Is there any provision in the United States Constitution that refers to the assignment of electoral votes?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, and I apologize if my word selection may've -- need to be clarified. I believe Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution allows states plenary authority to dictate how the elector -- elections in the states shall be run.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But my question was is there anything in the United States Constitution that talks about electoral votes being assigned in some way, instead of counted, really, but I'm sticking to the word assigned now. Is there anything in the U.S. Constitution that talks about assignment of electoral votes?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution give states the exclusive control over awarding their Electoral College votes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding, and perhaps I misunderstand this, that the gentleman said that the process would remain the same in terms of the electors would gather in Hartford, would cast their ballots, and the ballots would be transmitted to Washington, D.C. And what happens then, as I understand the way the Constitution works, is they would be counted by the Vice President of the United States and that's when we find out who won the elect -- presidential election, and that none of that was going to change. And now there's this sort of mention or talk about assigning votes and I don't quite see how that fits

in under the Constitution. So, if I could just ask again, is there anything in the U.S. Constitution that uses the word "assignment of electoral votes?"

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, and again, I apologize to the Representative for my word selection. I perhaps should've used the word "award." Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution gives the states exclusive control over awarding their electoral votes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And in the compact, is the word "awarded" used or the word "assigned."

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if either word is used.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

I'm sorry. I didn't quite understand the answer. Could it be repeated for me, please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Would you please repeat it Representative Fox?

REP. FOX (148TH):

By all means. I'm not sure if either the word "awarded" or "assigned" is used.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, let me move on to -- because I think we've exhausted this particular avenue of inquiry. Under the Constitution, is there a -- when a compact is entered into, is there any

provision for someone in the congress or in the executive branch or in the court system, anybody at the federal government level, having to pass judgment or approve or ratify or doing anything to recognize a compact between the states?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, congressional consent -- the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that congressional consent is only necessary for interstate compacts that encroach upon or interfere with the just supremacy of the United States. Because of the choice and method of appointing presidential electors is an exclusive plenary state power, there is no encroachment on federal authority.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, the Constitution says - *No state shall, without the consent of Congress, enter into a compact.* The Supreme Court has said that what that really means is only the ones that I guess encroach. And so the question, then, is has any court ruled on the encroachment character of this compact?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The U.S. Supreme Court has weighed in on the constitutionality of interstate compacts and in particularly the issue of congressional consent. The leading case is *The State of Virginia v. The State of Tennessee.*

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been awhile since I looked at that particular case. Perhaps the

gentleman could explain to me at least some of the underlying facts. For example, what did that compact concern or deal with?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the Representative's question. The case invoked the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, asking it to set aside a survey that both Virginia and Tennessee had recognized in 1803. It was correctly marking a boundary. It had to do with essentially a survey and boundary dispute.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So was this a survey or boundary dispute between two states that entered into the compact between them?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that's my understanding. Yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And has any compact ever been proposed to -- that is sort of like this one that changes the way elections are run across the country?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. No, it hasn't, but I would somewhat be reluctant to indicate that this changes the way elections are run.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And -- so, we're left with -- we're going to change the way the President of the United States is elected. That's what the objective of this compact is. And the Supreme Court has said, well, if Virginia and one of its borders -- bordering states decide that they want to move the boundary to eliminate some anomaly between those two states. They don't have to get permission of Congress to do that.

But, we're gonna take that precedent and say the Supreme Court has opened the door so that the states can do things like change the way the President of the United States is elected so that the votes in the respective states don't get counted, but we count only the national popular vote, and that that is approximately the same kind of issue that the Supreme Court presumably would rule the same way.

That it's okay for the states to make this kind of change to the way we elect the Chief Magistrate

of the United States; the most important officer of the United States. We're gonna change that so that the electors don't count anymore, so the voters and their state's will is now reversed and the votes are gonna be given to somebody else they didn't vote for, and that the Supreme Court is gonna sit there and say that's pretty much the same thing as Virginia and North Carolina sorting out whether their boundary is 100 feet to the north or 100 feet to the south of where they thought it was before.

Is that about what we're saying here in terms of the Supreme Court's support?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I do not think so. The Supreme Court has held that without congressional consent, agreements that increase the state's political power by encroachment and federal power violate the compact clause of the United States Constitution. However, I would presume -- I

would suppose and argue today that the MPB compact would not withstand -- would withstand a constitutional challenge is an open question as there is not yet any direct case law challenging the proposal.

Further, Mr. Speaker, in terms of whether or not the underlying agreement is an actual compact, I think the court will first decide whether it was political, specifically, whether encroaching on the federal power or the power of noncompacting states. I think, in my opinion, the answer would be no.

The second thing that the court would look to is would then consider whether -- does the underlying compact require congressional consent? The Supreme Court has allowed interstate compacts to stand without congressional consent if they are nonpolitical and fall inside the scope of the compact clause. So, I would argue here that this could withstand a court challenge.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is there any dictum, concurring opinion in any federal court anywhere that said that -- says that a compact such as this would be okay?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I -- specifically, a compact of this nature has never been challenged in court, so I think in terms of dictum addressing this type of compact is not yet been made available to the court. However, I would say that the U.S. Constitution does authorize states to enter into compacts such as this.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems to me that this is something that's going to obviously require

extensive constitutional litigation. If this compact goes forward, the decision about who gets to be President of the United States is once again going to be made by the United States Supreme Court.

After the Gore v. Bush, or Bush v. Gore; I can never remember which one was the plaintiff and which one was the defendant in the case. But there was a great deal of consternation across the nation because the Supreme Court weighed in. And what they did when they weighed in, and again, its' been a while since I looked at that case, was they basically said there is a significant federal interest in what the states do. The court did put a stop to the seemingly endless recount in the State of Florida. And they finally said, you've gotta stop and stop the counting and certify the election results.

Now, I've gotta believe that what we are doing here if we join this compact is we are going to join the biggest lawsuit that's ever been filed in the world when it happens. If the compact gets ratified by enough states so that people start casting

ballots, not on the basis of the way the voters in the State of Connecticut or California or elsewhere voted, but on essentially making the decision rest upon the voters in some other state and rest on the vote counting abilities of the county clerks in states, whether it's Texas or Florida or Illinois or anyplace else, that we're going to cast our electoral votes based on who the county clerks in those other states said won the election in those other states.

And I gotta believe that there are plenty of constitutional basis for electors to bring a legal action to challenge this thing. Certainly, the losing candidate as a result of all of this is going to say that this compact is unconstitutional. That it infringes on the rights of the voters in their respective states to cast their ballots and that you can't have a constitutional system, which calls for the electors to actually cast ballots for people, who they are free to cast ballots for, and then say we're ignoring what you did. We're ignoring what the voters in your state did. We're going to

transmit a different list of vote tallies to Washington, D.C. and we're going to expect those tallies to be the ones that get counted.

That's not gonna happen without a major, major lawsuit, which will create the same kind of constitutional crisis that we had in 2000. Now, the system we had here -- we have here resulted in the winner of the popular vote not getting the win in the Electoral College and the electors of the various states went to their capitols, they cast their ballots. There, I think, were some lawsuits, but they were fairly quickly dismissed. The system worked.

A lot of people don't like the outcome of that system, but that system worked. It worked in other times as well. There was mention made of Grover Cleveland, and we don't mention Grover Cleveland enough. But mention was made of Grover Cleveland. He lost the popular vote -- won the popular vote, lost in the Electoral College. But there was no groups of people marching around Washington D.C. There were no mass rallies saying don't swear in

Benjamin Harrison or anything like that. Grover Cleveland didn't have to be dragged kicking and screaming out of the White House, clinging to the furniture by his fingernails. He vacated the White House and four years later, ran again for president and won and got in a second term.

This system has worked. What happened in Florida was truly an anomaly, where this just went on and on and on. And that's what gave rise to the national popular vote movement, was a response to what happened in Florida. But that happened once in 200+ years, that this kind of uncertainty as to who the real winner was in the one state that really ultimately mattered because of this seemingly endless recount.

This will be challenged and then maybe -- it will probably get a decision from the Supreme Court; I hope we will, in which they will either declare sometime before the vice president has to start counting the ballots who the -- how this system works and whether those ballots will be counted for the winner of the state or the winner of the

national vote. But, every four years, we will probably have a lawsuit because the membership on the Supreme Court will change and the composition of the states will change. And some state which signed onto this thing may very well try to back out of it, and that's an extremely complicated, convoluted process, as was mentioned before.

And so we'll probably have another Supreme Court decision, and again the Supreme Court will be asked to decide who the President of the United States is. What this does is it sets us up, I think, for one Supreme Court decision after another after another, picking who the president is going to be every time there is a disconnect.

Now, there's another aspect of this. And I know there are other people who wish to speak after me, but this may be the only chance I get to talk about this and express some thoughts that I've been harboring for a number of years, since this thing's been floating around. This thing presumes that we're gonna have two-person elections for president. But that's not always the case. In fact, frequently

that has not been the case. We have had situations where we've had three candidates, four candidates that have gotten substantial numbers of votes.

Bill Clinton is one who never got a popular majority of the vote. He got the most votes, but he got about 42 or 43 percent of the vote the first time he ran and then I think he got up to in the upper forties the second time he ran. Both times, Ross Perot ran and he captured, I think, the first time around 20 percent and the second time around 12 percent of the popular vote.

Now, that didn't matter much because the votes that really mattered were the electoral votes, and he didn't get any of those votes because he only got 20 percent, on average, and pretty much he got 15, 20, 25 percent scattered across the country and he never won a single vote in a single state. But, if we put this kind of a system into place, then I think what we are going to be doing is opening the door to very serious confusion about who got the most votes. Because clearly, there won't be a majority winner, and we've had Bill Clinton.

President Kennedy didn't get a majority. In his time around time, Richard Nixon didn't get a majority. Harry Truman didn't get a majority of the popular vote. Woodrow Wilson twice failed to get a popular vote majority. Abraham Lincoln did not get a popular vote majority. In fact, he was down below 40 percent.

And so, it gets harder and harder as the numbers get lower and lower to say we should all be governed because a candidate in a three or four or five-candidate race got 35 percent of the vote and he got one percentage point more than anybody else, so that's the person who should automatically, regardless of what the electors think, be the person who gets the vote that's gonna be cast, somehow, I'm not quite sure how the mechanics are gonna work, but are gonna be cast on behalf of that candidate.

I understand the frustration with the Electoral College. It originally -- and again, a little bit of self-expression here. It originally wasn't planned that the popular vote, even within the respective states, was gonna be the guiding light.

The electors were supposed to come up with, very originally, five names and send them to the House of Representatives.

I think it was expected by the framers that after George Washington, who they assumed was gonna win more or less unanimously, that after that, the various states were going to send some names down. And so, New England might send in a name like John Adams and Pennsylvania might send in a name like Ben Franklin, and the southern states might send in a name like Thomas Jefferson. And other parts of the country would send in maybe a different -- an extra name or two. And then the U.S. House of Representatives would pick the president. That's kind of how this all started.

It was never intended that this was supposed to be first past opposed and certainly that the person who got 30 percent of the popular vote in a four or five-way election gets to be the President of the United States, when 70 percent of the vote of people of the state -- the country voted for somebody else. That this was the least popular person of the three,

four, five candidates, but happens to have a solid block of support that doesn't budge and doesn't reflect any kind of consensus in the country.

And part of that original idea was to prevent a candidate from being chosen regionally. Now, we still have a very strong regional problem in this country. The East Coast is -- northeast is heavily, solidly behind the Democratic candidates and has been for a long time. The West Coast is the same way. There is an almost equal number of people in the middle of the country who don't agree with that, the candidates that are popular on the coasts. We still have a strong regional divide in this country. So much so that recently, as a result of the election of 2016, there were what seemed like pretty serious efforts being made in California to have secession. And in Texas, after the election in 2008, they had a strong move in the direction of secession.

I mean, this is an issue that the Electoral College has the capacity, I think, and has served us generally well to avoid. I think this proposal

before us will in fact exacerbate that regional division in this country.

I really think that if we're going to do something like this, it should not be done as essentially a kind of trick to get around what we've done as a nation for a -- 150 years, and which I think has generally produced a result that has been accepted by the people of this country as legitimate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative O'Neill. Will you remark further? Representative Ferguson of the 138th District, you have the floor, sir.

REP. FERGUSON (138TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to make several comments on the bill that is before us. I am inclined to speak on this legislation due to the fact that I have done much research on the national popular vote compact.

A couple of years ago, I and some colleagues from Western Connecticut State University wrote an article which has now been published in an academic

text book on this exact compact. Although on the surface this may seem fair, there are several flaws.

What's important to begin and recognize is that we are not debating -- this legislation does not debate whether or not to elect the president by the popular vote. What we are debating is whether to join a compact and that's a very important part to this debate that is before us today. And as I said, there are serious flaws within this compact, in my opinion.

During the previous exchange, we heard a little bit about the interstate compact clause, Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution. Although the proponent of the bill had basically mentioned that National Popular Vote Compact Organization does not see a way in which Congress has to actually ratify this compact. In fact, they actually have come out and said that there likely is a constitutional issue with the interstate compact clause, Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution.

And the way this organization, and just to explain -- you know, national popular vote compact

is made up of -- it's an organization that has been around now for several years, a national organization. And they come out with a solution, in their opinion, on how to address this constitutional issue. Their solution is to propose introducing a bill before the congress which grants consent for the District of Columbia to join this compact and they say that this will imply consent to the overall compact, and so therefore, it would be deemed constitutional.

However, this is a very flawed argument. It's flawed because the District of Columbia falls under a very different jurisdiction from the 50 states. It is not a state. And so Congress really needs to be giving explicit consent to this, rather than implied consent, which is what the proponents of MPVC are proposing.

Another flaw is in regards to recounts. So, elections have always been, as we know, basically run by the states. States have their own rule, their own standards on how to run elections. And so what this bill before us today will likely do, and

in fact, what the compact would do if it is to be enacted, is enhance the federal supremacy in elections. And it seems likely that the biggest example of this would be with recounts.

As I said, each state has their own rules and standards regarding elections, and that is the same in regards to recounts. What would likely have to occur is we would have to create a federal system to conduct recounts, which currently do not exist. If we not do this, then even bigger concerns are raised. Because in a very close election, the losing candidate would very likely look throughout the country where the vote may have been very close and petition multiple states to conduction multiple recounts which would lead to endless litigation and could potentially even hold up the entire election process.

You know, another thing to keep in mind is that if the national popular vote compact is enacted, and this has been a point that has been mentioned before, a state's identity and elector role is really at risk. And as has been mentioned, this is

really at the core to our founding principle. Federalists. Federalism is our core governing principle in this country. And in reality, this compact really weakens our state's voice and it weakens our state's power.

And it also weakens, if the compact were to actually become the law of the land, the states who did not vote to join this compact. States who are against this compact would in essence now really have a voice anymore. They would become a rubber stamp for the national popular vote compact. Their importance would diminish. And the argument that states are currently being ignored would continue, as those states would likely be ignored.

Another major concern that I have with this is the precedent that this sets. So, the proponents of the bill throughout, really, who support this compact do not like the fact that the popular vote does not elect the president. So this is their solution to that, to making the president be elected by the popular vote, in their opinion. But it, in my opinion, circumvents the Constitution. This is a

way of getting around our nation's governing document, the United States Constitution.

And so what precedent does this set? That when some states may not like a particular component within the United States Constitution, they create a compact amongst those states to try to change it. Because in essence, that's what this does. And I am very concerned about the precedent that could be created if this compact were to become law. And it is not, in my opinion, how the Founding Fathers envisioned how our country would operate.

At the end of the day, this is not a debate about electing the president by the popular vote, because that is not something that we can do here in this body. Rather, what is before us is debating -- is a debate about joining a compact which is unconstitutional. And that is why I have decided to rise and speak against this bill.

I do believe that a national conversation should be had regarding whether or not to elect the president by the popular vote. I think it would be an important conversation that could be had, should

be had. I think it is a conversation that should be had within the United States Congress. But it is not a conversation for us to have in this body, in our state legislature. What the bill national popular vote compact does, or seeks to do, is to circumvent the United States Constitution. Let me just say that again. The bill seeks to **circumvent** the United States Constitution.

The only legitimate way to elect the president based on the popular vote would be to amend that United States Constitution because that is the only proper and constitutional way of actually addressing this issue. And as I indicated earlier, that I something I think should occur and that is where this debate really belongs. And for reasons, I will be voting against the bill that is before us and I would strongly encourage my colleagues to seriously consider this and to consider joining me in voting no. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Ferguson. Staying in that neighborhood, Representative Cheeseman of the

37th District, the floor is yours, madam.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of questions for the proponent of the bill?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, madam

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

The proponent cited a Supreme Court case, *Virginia versus Tennessee*, which he maintained upheld the right of states to enter into compacts. I'd just like his comments on *U.S. Steel versus the Multistate Tax Commission*, in which the Supreme Court found exactly the opposite.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. I will admit I'm not as entirely familiar with the *U.S. Steel versus Multistate Tax Commission* case from 1978. But I

believe, though the essence of the case was that the court would first decide whether the proposed compact constitutes a compact, I believe that that case looked at the essence of the compact.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

I thank the good proponent for his comments. In fact, in that case, by a 7-2 majority, Justice Powell delivered an opinion that the multistate tax commission by virtue of its compact did in fact violate the compact clause because it impaired the sovereign rights of nonmember states. And I think this is a very relevant case. Because the multistate tax compact was in many ways almost identical to this national popular vote compact as presented.

In 1966, I believe, the multistate tax compact was drafted and once seven states had joined it, was deemed to go into effect and the reason was to regularize taxation over a number of states,

particularly in dealing with corporations that operated across state lines. So, in that way -- at the point of the lawsuit by U.S. Steel, 21 states had joined the compact. So, again, I go back to that Supreme Court opinion. The ruling that because this impaired the sovereign rights of nonmember states, this compact, this multistate tax compact, violated our compact clause, and although I'm not a lawyer, I would presume were noncompact states to enter into a lawsuit objecting to the national popular vote compact, there is strong Supreme Court precedent that would allow this decision to be upheld.

I also would have a question for the proponent about how the compact treats who is the winner in cases, as Representative O'Neill referred, where there is no majority, in fact, simply a plurality.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the

Representative for the question. The answer, I think, is that -- the answer is that the winner of the national popular vote is deemed the winner, whether it be plurality or majority.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you. So again, my understanding that plurality in the case of four or five candidates could be as low as a 30 percentage of the vote.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ultimately, I suppose so, however, my understanding of presidential elections in the past is that it's been very rare that the percentage has been that low for any election having more than two candidates.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I realize we haven't seen percentages that low, but I think we're all agreed we're in a new political environment and who knows what's going to happen in the future.

I'd like to direct a few questions, through you, Mr. Speaker, about if the compact addresses the question of recounts and if there is a level set at which a recount would be necessary.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Give me one second, please? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for the indulgence of the Chamber. If a recount were -- if a recount within an individual state were to occur, that would occur pursuant to the laws of that state and that's why the Electoral College meets in December, in order to give those states time to sort out any discrepancies in their electoral results.

So, the compact itself does not address recounts.

The recounts are dictated by state law.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you very much. So, through you, Mr. Speaker, given that there would be no uniform standard yet the electoral votes would be allocated based on the majority. It would seem to me that this would be grounds for litigation by the losing candidate that he was not -- he or she was not treated equally across all the states in terms of the recount procedure. Is -- would the good proponent agree that might be a possibility?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would say that litigation is a fact of life after any new legislation is passed. So, ultimately, any law

that's passed either in this chamber or other states or on the conventional level would be subject to litigation.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you very much. I guess we've got to keep the lawyers employed. I have a question about possible concerns that have been raised about the popular vote compact with respect to the Voting Rights Act, both in terms of delusion of the minority vote and for those states that are required to get approval from the U.S. Attorney General if they alter their election procedures. Through you, Mr. Speaker. Does the popular vote compact address those possible impacts on the -- with regard to the Voting Rights Act?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I'm inclined to ask the Representative to -- if she further specify or clarify her question in terms of the Voting Rights Act. My initial reaction is that the underlying compact will simply assign the winner of the national popular vote -- will simply assign the Electoral College votes of the states to the winner of the national popular vote. I'm not sure it gets that specific. The language of the compact, I'm not sure it gets that specific as the proponent is asking, but if she can please clarify or rephrase, it'd be helpful.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Would you clarify, Representative Cheeseman?

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, yes. The example which I have here cites Latinos compromise eight percent of the voters in the nation, but 28 percent of the electorate in California, which has more electoral votes than any state. California's impact under the national popular vote compact is reduce, thereby, deluding those minority votes. I'm just -- I'm

interested in the proponent of the bill finds, in the compact itself, if it addresses this possible disparate impact?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The actual compact does not specifically address the language that the Representative is seeking. I will say that the compact does treat voters of nonmember states no differently than voters of member states. All voters in all states would be treated equally under the compact regardless of whether their state belongs to the compact.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And Through you, Mr. Speaker. Again, one of the other parts of the Voting Rights Act where states are still under

supervision with regard to changes in districting and other things, they're required to seek provision before adopting any voting qualification or prerequisite or standard practice or procedure with respect to voting. Would this apply to the national popular vote compact?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. The state election laws are dictated by the individual states and so the actual compact does not -- I do not believe addresses the specific language that the Representative is seeking.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the proponent for his answers and now I just have a few

comments.

It was my great pleasure a few months ago to tour the Houses of Parliament. Despite having lived in London for twelve years, this was the first time I had taken advantage of this, and it was a thrill to be in the mother of Parliaments, to see the original speaker's mace and to know that everything we do here every day is modeled on that great, ancient chamber and building and tradition.

It is, of course, a very different system. They have a parliamentary system in the United Kingdom. They have elections, by law, at least every five years, but can have them should the ruling party decide they're in power and call a snap election or if in fact there is a vote of no confidence.

One of the things I think is a real plus is the fact that once they do have a national election, they only have six weeks to campaign. I think a lot of us would love a six-week presidential campaign. But in looking in that chamber and seeing their traditions and seeing different voting traditions

and practices throughout the world, I come back to some comments my good colleagues, Representative Labriola, made.

We have an amazing system in the United States with consecutive changes of power that are peaceful, that are orderly, that are regular, and I think that is largely due to the system that has been devised. I remember; it was a joke, someone was driving around a former president and they said, "Well, you've got a great system. You have former presidents." And they said, "What do you mean?" "Well, in my country, there are no former presidents. You're either president for life or something happens to you."

So, I think we do have an amazing system that is not to be changed lightly. There is a reason, as has been said before, that amending the Constitution requires great effort. It is not a frivolous matter, yet it has been done successfully 27 times. So, if it is deemed appropriate to alter the manner in which we elect our president, let us do it in the way that has been ascribed and prescribed by the

Constitution.

Therefore, I stand in strong opposition to this bill and I urge my colleagues to oppose it. Thank very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Cheeseman. The esteemed Ranking Member of the Finance Committee, Representative Davis of the 57th District, the floor is yours, sir.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon -- or, Mr. Speaker, good afternoon. Formerly Mr. Chairman of this esteemed committee under discussion here today. Mr. Speaker, I do have a few questions, if I may, through you to the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed. Please prepare yourself.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in line ten of the bill before us here today, I notice that it calls for -- each member state shall conduct a statewide popular election for President and Vice

President of the United States. Through you, Mr. Speaker, will the ballot that is provided to the citizens of the State of Connecticut, will it call for the direct vote for that presidential candidate and vice presidential candidate or will it continue to read presidential electors for such candidates?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. I believe he's asking will the language on the ballot change should this compact eventually be adopted.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Yes. Generally, that would be a general question, if he wants to answer that one first.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox, do you like to answer that?

REP. FOX (148TH):

Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the clarification. I do not believe the language on the ballot will change.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, actually, that is interesting because currently when the citizens of Connecticut and I believe every other state go to the ballot, they are in fact casting ballots for electors of individuals. In fact, our ballot in 2016 said *presidential electors for* and then you voted for that person. With the drafting of this language for this bill, it would be my interpretation that the ballot language would have to be changed and instead the citizens of Connecticut would not be voting for electors, but instead voting directly for those candidates. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you. I thank the Representative for the question and I think I now have a better understanding of what he's getting at. My best answer to that question is that the state laws governing elections would still dictate the ballots. So I understand his question about the wording on the actual ballot. It's a very interesting concept and an interesting question. To be honest, I had not thought of it previously, but I believe that the ballots -- a state election would still be governed by state statute. So, should a changing to be made pertaining to this question or any other state laws that may be impacted by this compact; that would be done at the state level.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So then perhaps, if this law were to be passed and signed by the Governor, then this language would be conflicting to other state statutes. Is there any language within this bill that says, notwithstanding those existing state statutes, this is the new law for the State of Connecticut?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you. Through you, Mr. Speaker. And again, should this law pass this chamber and the Senate and signed by the Governor, it still will not be put in play until the requisite number of states sign onto it. So, again, that ultimately could be several years from now. So, should there -- I don't believe there's any notwithstanding language in the compact.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And that could be a concern for me because currently we're voting for electors to fall into the Electoral College and elect our President of the United States. In fact, with the language of the bill, through my interpretation, which obviously could be incorrect, but from our dialog seems to be correct, is that this bill would actually change that and make it so that they're voting directly for a presidential candidate and not for those electors that actually elect the president. So we would actually be disenfranchising, potentially, the citizens of the State of Connecticut because they would no longer be electing electors to the Electoral College, but, in fact, casting a ballot that is meaningless, that has no actual rule in law because they would not be voting for electors at that point. They would be voting for a candidate that has no say into the Electoral College process. And that is a concern of mine, in particular, in this bill.

And through you, Mr. Speaker, would this

compact require that every state have the same voting laws, if you will, that govern the voting process in each state?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. No, it would not.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, are there different voting laws in each state that have -- would be required to sign on to this compact? And I ask that -- are there voter ID laws in some states? Are there laws that franchise felons, but don't franchise felons in other states?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Representative for the question. Individual laws -- state laws -- there are 50 sets of state laws governing elections in the country. States are given the authority to establish their state laws on their own.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And that is also a concern of mine. Because my understanding, the general argument as to why this bill would be so essential for people of Connecticut is that it gives one person, one vote across the country. But, unfortunately, with the way that this compact is drafted, every vote is counted differently. Some people get to vote in some states, while they would be disenfranchised here in Connecticut, or visa versa, they can vote here in Connecticut but they'd be disenfranchised in another state because they have a felony conviction or they don't have a photo

ID, or they have no way to prove citizenship, or th
various different laws across the country.

And through you, Mr. Speaker. Is there
anything in this compact that require that the vote
take place at the same exact time on the exact day?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Is the
Representative asking about the vote by the
Electoral College or the individual election day?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And a fair question.
It would be about the actual vote by the individual
citizens and be for those electors.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize to the Representative. I was looking something up. Could he please repeat the question?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis, please repeat the question.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It'd be concerning the actual vote by the citizens on election day.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you. That day would not be of impact.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So that's an interesting concept, because if every vote -- if we're going to be now saying our electoral votes are

tied to the electoral votes of another state -- for instance, we open polls here in the State of Connecticut at 6:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time. We close those polls at 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. California, I don't know, may not open until 10:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time. They may not close until 10:00 p.m. or 11:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. So they would not be voting at the same time across the country. In fact, they'd be voting at different times.

And during this election, that could be used to manipulate the vote against how the people of the State of Connecticut voted because they would have an additional three hours, perhaps, in a western state or four or five hours in a state like Alaska or in Hawaii to then get out the vote and actually suppress or diminish the vote that was taken here in the State of Connecticut because our electors would then be tied to the electors of those states rather than the true representation of the vote of the people of Connecticut.

And earlier some speakers had asked some

questions about recounts, and I apologize if this particular question had already been answered. But if every single vote is to be considered the same; one person, one vote, and every single situation that there could be a recount required, similar to the 2000 election, would every single precinct in the United States in states that are part of this compact be required to have a recount if a recount is triggered in any one of those other precincts? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the Representative is asking the impact of the recounts on then underlying compact.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Yes, my -- and my specific question is, if a recount is triggered in a specific precinct and if

all the votes are tied to the popular vote, then then under this compact, would every single precinct that is part of this compact have to hold a recount as well, because it's all tied to the popular vote?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The answer to that question is every county or town or city that's involved in the compact would not be required to perform a recount.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis, would you please rephrase the question?

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you. And he answered the question, but you know, the idea of, you know, if there's a recount in one spot, should there not be a recount everywhere? And I ask that because if it's gonna be tied directly to the popular vote, is it not in the

best interest of the United States of America, the members of this compact, to then require that recount throughout all of the precincts so that we do have the true and fairest popular vote?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. I think the way I would answer and look at the situation, is let's say there was a recount required in the City of Stamford, Connecticut, where I am, and the manner by which that would impact the national vote.

The City of Stamford, let's say there was a discrepancy of 200 votes or 300 votes. My response would be that that would have very little impact ultimately on the national popular vote winner and because the spread by which individuals have historically won the national popular vote has been somewhat significant. And so a recount in the City of Stamford, which may only be a limited number of

votes, may not ultimately have an effect on the overall winner of the national popular vote.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate that answer. And Through you, Mr. Speaker. For instance, say in a perfect world Marco Rubio had won the Republican nomination and went up against Hillary Clinton and the popular vote voted for Senator Rubio, but Connecticut overwhelmingly voted for Secretary Clinton. In that case, would Connecticut, under this compact -- if this compact was adopted by enough states, would Connecticut have voted for the Democratic nominee that did not win the popular vote, or would they be voting the non-- the individual from the Republican Party that won the popular vote?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again, I thank the Representative for the question. The way I would answer that question is that in a national popular vote scenario, should this compact ultimately be adopted by the requisite number of states, is that ultimately there will be a single pool of votes. And so, in the Representative's scenario, whether Connecticut voted for Hillary Clinton, but the national popular vote went over to Marco Rubio, Connecticut Electoral College votes would go towards Marco Rubio.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And that is very interesting and one that I bring up often to those who support this. Because often times I have found that many of them are not supporters of George W. Bush. And in the case in 2004, where George W. Bush won the national popular vote, but lost by ten

points here in the State of Connecticut, we would not have sent our electors for John Kerry, which was overwhelmingly the desire of the populace here in Connecticut. In fact, almost, I think, 850,000 people voted for Senator Kerry at that time. But instead, we would say that's meaningless. It doesn't mean anything because we're gonna send our electoral votes for President George W. Bush. Is that scenario correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I think the scenario being in 2004, with John Kerry and President Bush, are -- if this compact were in fact in place then and George Bush had won the national popular vote and Kerry won Connecticut, our votes, should this compact be in place, would've been directed towards George Bush.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And that is my greatest concern with this compact, that it would truly disregard the votes of the people of Connecticut. In any scenario going forward if this compact were adopted and enough states collectively adopted it and it went into effect, year after year and election after election after election, Connecticut could be voting for one candidate, but have their electors, given to us, granted to us in the United States Constitution, be given to somebody else; somebody who the people of Connecticut, through a plurality, chose not to send our electors for.

And to me, that is fundamentally wrong. The purpose of the Electoral College was to grant states rights. States would have the ability to choose their own electors and have the ability to choose the way in which those electors are chosen. That is a fundamental piece of the United States Constitution. And if you read Federalist 68, is the

fundamental reason why we have the Electoral College.

And my concern is that by doing this, we are throwing that all away. We are saying states no longer have those rights. They are coming together. They are giving their rights. Granted, perhaps, they can under the Constitution give away their rights if they wanted to. But I don't think it's in the best interest of the State of Connecticut to do it. Because I would gladly send seven electoral votes for John Kerry to the Electoral College in 2004 if that was what the people of Connecticut wanted rather than send those same electors to George W. Bush when the people of Connecticut clearly did not want those electors sent on his behalf.

And that is what's fundamentally wrong with this compact. It goes against everything that the people of Connecticut potentially will want and hands it away to where there is bigger and greater and perhaps more population. That is not what we should be doing here today. That is not what we

should be doing as a state.

We should be protecting our rights as a state. We created the federal government as states and we should be preserving our rights under our federal Constitution to choose our own electors and choose them in the fashion in which we like. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Davis. Will you remark further? Representative Sredzinski of the 112th District, the floor is yours, sir.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again we find ourselves in this Chamber dealing with a situation that should be dealt with at the federal level, but instead we're here in the State of Connecticut and I believe the term used earlier was "end around."

I'm all for state rights. I believe strongly in having states having the powers to create laws and enforce their own laws, but some things are best left to the federal government, and I believe this

is one of those things.

One of the arguments I've been hearing about the reason that this is important and the reason this is our best option is because of our influence. Often people will say Connecticut is left out of presidential election, that Connecticut is not important enough for visits. While I may not agree with that, I think that recent evidence has showed that people have come. Candidates have been here. I think it's more important to look at the numbers.

Now, I'm a data person. I've always been a data person and I think it's important that we look at the math of that argument that Connecticut will gain influence in some way by enacting this -- by entering this compact. As we all know, Connecticut has seven electoral votes, and as we also know, the total number of electoral votes across the country is 538. Quick math on that, that's 1.3 percent, which means Connecticut has 1.3 percent say in the Electoral College. It's not a lot, but, you know, we're a fairly small state. But that 1.3 percent is what we have, that's what we have had.

And by listening to those who would say that we would gain influence by entering into this compact, you would think, well that's gotta -- that must increase. That must be going up. We must be getting more of the authority in that. Well, if you look at the numbers going back to 2008, there were a total number of popular votes of 132,454,039. The number of votes in Connecticut that year was 1.6 million, roughly. Quick and dirty math on that, 1.24 percent. That means in 2008, 1.2 percent of the national popular vote was cast by Connecticut citizens. I think most of you would argue and understand that 1.2 is less than 1.3, which means we're casting less popular votes national as a percentage than the rest of the country than we would get in a Electoral College situation.

And so you may, well, that was 2008. It was one year. Maybe it was an outlier. Since I've had time during the debate, I've looked up the numbers from 2012 and the numbers are remarkably similar; 1.2 percent of the national popular vote was cast by Connecticut citizens. Once again, 1.2 percent,

still less, still less than 1.3 percent. (In) 2016; I think we all can remember 2016. I did the numbers on that. Also, once again, Connecticut voters cast 1.2 percent of the total votes in the presidential election.

So, if we're here today saying that Connecticut is gonna gain influence by entering into a national popular vote compact, I would argue just the opposite. We are going to lose influence. Right now, we have 1.3 percent of the total authority influence on the Electoral College and that would drop. So, if I'm a presidential candidate or if I'm running a presidential campaign, I'm gonna look at the numbers and say, well, now that Connecticut has entered into the compact, we're certainly not gonna go there. They have less influence overall. They're gonna focus on the large states, because that's what this bill does. This bill gives a lot more authority by percentage, by the numbers to the large population states.

I just got done reading a biography on James Monroe. You may say why. Why do you pick James

Monroe? Well, I'm from Monroe. I represent Monroe and I wanted to know a little bit more about the president and the man that my town was named after. And as you can imagine, as one of the Founding Fathers, he was instrumental in a lot of what happened in the Constitution and some of the early works of our country and the compromises that were created were because large states versus big states.

Now, James Monroe was from Virginia. He was a big state guy. That's something we probably would debate if he was still here with us. But it's important to realize that those issues were argued and debated. And even in the 1700s, in the early 1800s, when our country was founded, they were wise enough to know that they needed to balance that power out and the best way to do that was with a system that would allow for that influence to be spread across the country - large states, small states. It might not be one person, one vote, but in Connecticut, we would actually lose under this compact.

And I'm afraid that today we're just giving

more influence to the larger states with more population, like Texas, California, New York, Florida, and were ceding our responsibility. We're ceding our authority as a state. And I really would like to believe that this Chamber would be unanimous in that we feel Connecticut should have a greater influence in a national election. That we should greater say, greater authority, more power to say who our next president should be regardless of political party.

If you've been listening for the past five minute or so, I haven't mentioned a candidate. I haven't mentioned a party. Because that's now what this is about. This is about a legal compact which Connecticut would get itself into which would harm our ability to have influence in the national election.

The numbers that I gave are simple math. It's not political spin. It's not rhetoric. It's simple math. If anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to go into more detail. I feel I'm not gonna bore the rest of the Chamber with more of my statistical

analysis on this.

But we're simply here playing games with the Constitution. We're playing games with our election process and I'm afraid that it is not what we're trying to do. We're trying to move our state forward. I think everyone in this Chamber, again, would agree we're trying to improve the State of Connecticut. This entering into this compact would move us backwards. We're being deceptive with the Constitution. We're being deceptive with the way we're going about, the way we work our election process here and the way we have our final say.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's why I'm opposed to this bill. I encourage my colleagues to vote against it and I thank you for your time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative, and your comments weren't boring at all. Representative D'Ameilio of the 71st District, the floor is yours, sir.

REP. D'AMEILIO (71ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good afternoon.

REP. D'AMEILIO (71ST):

I just -- I rise just to add a little more to this debate, as my colleague that just spoke talked numbers. Numbers don't lie. And I was able to Google a few numbers here dealing with this issue. If you look at the U.S. population, we have about 325.7 million people that live in the United States of America; 175 million, approximately, of these people live in the ten top states in the United States. That leaves 150 million people spread out throughout the rest of the forty states.

Connecticut ranks 29th, with a population of a little bit above 3 million people. So, it's interesting that we're even having this debate being a state as small as we are. Numbers don't lie. I mean, we're gonna give the ten top states, and I'm gonna add the metropolitan areas of those states, the right to determine the President of the United States. We'll become totally irrelevant.

When you look at where -- how these numbers

fall within the states and if -- you know, all you have to do is Google populations of the United States and you'll see the rankings. I mean, this is absurd to me. I think our Founding Fathers were probably the most genius people of our -- on this planet when they came up with this Electoral College, because they didn't it to be where the most populated states would determine the fate of this country. I think what's in place right now is working. As was brought out, it only happened four or five times in our history where a president was elected that didn't receive the popular vote.

So, what are we really trying to achieve here? We want Connecticut to become relevant or irrelevant? To me it's a question of numbers and if you look at the population of our state versus the other states out there, why would we want the top ten states in this country with a few other players to determine the President of the United States?

We'll get no play here in the State of Connecticut. No one would want to come visit this state if we allow this to happen. So, I urge my

colleagues to really look at this. It's simple math and to me it's really simple that it's a bad idea and shouldn't happen. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative D'Ameilio. From the 136th District, Representative Steinberg.

REP. STEINBERG (136TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good afternoon to you.

REP. STEINBERG (136TH):

Just a couple of comments.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed.

REP. STEINBERG (136TH):

You know we all bemoan the extremely low turnout we have for voting in this country. As even compared with most of the western world, our voting levels are extraordinarily low. People don't think their votes matter. They disengage from government because they don't believe government works for

them. I submit their vote should matter. I submit that people should be voting.

Why is it that the League of Women Voters, an independent organization, year after year after year makes the national popular vote one of their top priorities? Because they're dedicated to the proposition of getting people to vote. You know, I would love to believe that this issue could be dealt with in Washington where it belongs. I agree. But I submit the people who are in Washington right now are not those kind of states people who are going to bring about the change that needs to happen, which is why the states have taken this on and why we now have momentum with a growing number of states prepared to do what is necessary to protect our individual votes.

You know, some people believe that we only have a vote every four years - presidential votes. And even though this would only affect the presidential vote, I would submit this will engage people. This will motivate people to vote and that will not only benefit the vote when we have a presidential

election, I believe it will involve more voting in every election cycle every year.

That's my America. That's the America I believe our forefathers intended us to have and would be proud of. We hear a lot of talk about our forefathers. Our forefathers were innovators. They created from nothing a new nation based upon a new model. I believe that if we want to honor the spirit of how this nation was created, we ourselves need to honor that tradition by being innovators ourselves.

The national popular vote is a natural and necessary evolution of our country to assure that every vote counts and every vote in Connecticut counts. So, Mr. Speaker, thank for you're the opportunity to stand tall for the national popular vote and I hope today we bring Connecticut into the fold of those who will be part of the new spirit of individual rights and responsibilities and involvement in the election process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Steinberg.

Representative Lesser of the 100th District, the beautiful City of Middletown, the floor is yours, sir.

REP. LESSER (100TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it will be of no surprise to you that I rise in strong support of the bill before us. Certainly, this bill is a good bill for Connecticut.

Connecticut is ignored by national candidates for the office of President of the United States, whether you're a Democrat or you're a Republican.

For too long, the issues of this state have been overlooked. While we hear presidential candidates talking about coal mines and soy beans and online gaming, issues of concern to voters in swing states like Ohio and Iowa and Nevada, Connecticut issues, student debt, insurance transportation, our ports, our manufacturing; those issues go ignored because Connecticut isn't a swing state and our votes don't matter.

When Barrack Obama had the choice of funding a

new research hospital, he had the choice between building it in Connecticut or in the swing state of Ohio. Now I don't know why that hospital wasn't built at the University of Connecticut, but Barrack Obama chose to build that in Ohio. Guess which one is the swing state?

But that's not why I'm supporting this bill. There'll be other people who'll talk about the amount of money the presidential candidates raise in this day and age, the billions, now, of dollars that candidates and special interests pour into elections, and how in 2012 the two major party candidates spent a grand total of \$100 dollars in the State of Connecticut. I'm sure if we were a state that mattered. If our popular votes counted as much as the votes of everybody else in this country, we'd get a little bit more money and I'm sure that would be good for our economy.

But, friends, that's not why I'm supporting this bill either. Some say this is an attempt to re-litigate the outcome of the 2016 election, and I won't lie, I didn't like the outcome of the 2016

election. I didn't support Donald Trump. But people who've been in this Chamber for awhile know that this isn't the first time I've supported this legislation. I've supported it for many, many years. I supported it as far back as 2009, not because I questioned the outcome of the 2016 election, but simply because this is the right thing to do.

There are other people yet still who say this is right and proper. This is a good thing, but this is feel good legislation, that there are more important things that the legislature should be dealing with. Issues like restoring the Medicare Savings Program, funding veterans, dealing with our unfunded liabilities, and those are all important issues and those are all things that we have to tackle in this building. But this is maybe the most important issue that I think is before the State of Connecticut right now, and I want to say why that is the case.

Because this isn't just an important bill for Connecticut, it's an essential bill for the country.

Our country, and frankly, the western world, is in the midst of a crisis of democratic legitimacy. All across the world, in Russia, in the Philippines, across Eastern Europe and Turkey in the Middle East, democratic institutions have been weakened.

Representative democracies are increasingly being replaced by the rule of strong men. Those threats have come from a variety of different sources, from dark money, from foreign interference, from an alienated public, from the rise of populace movements.

But, I want to focus for a minute on the key question. What is it that makes a government legitimate? What is it that we do in this building that gives us respect and influence and meaning? What separates this group of 151 legislators from any other group of 151 people in Connecticut, any PTA, any bowling league, any debating society? The only thing that separates us from them is that each of us has a popular mandate, that each of us has an election, that 23,000 Connecticut residents have chosen us to represent them. We speak for them. We

have been chosen by them, we work for them.

That idea of representative democracy that government works when it has the people's will isn't a side note, it isn't an asterisk, it's the core idea behind this country. You know, there's been talk about the Constitution, and Representative Fox noted the Constitution clearly gives us the power under Article II, Section 1 and in other places to allocate electors as we see fit.

The Constitution reflects a political compromise not between big states and small states. The rights of small states are protected not by the Electoral College, but by the United States Senate. Instead, the Electoral College reflects a political compromise between northern and southern states over the issue of slavery. Don't take it from me, folks. Take it from James Madison, the man more responsible for the drafting of the Constitution than anybody else. Who wrote that *"the right of suffrage was much more diffusive in the northern than the southern states and the latter could have no influence in the election on the score of Negroes."*

Black slaves were counted in southern states' electoral totals, enhancing the political power of the south.

The idea at the time was that wise, property-owning white men would get together and choose the president. And that political compromise worked as intended precisely twice - in the election of 1788 and 1789, and the election of 1792. Shortly thereafter, the compromise started to break down. And time and time and time again, Congress has amended the Constitution to try to fix that broken compromise. The 12th, the 13th, the 14th, the 15th, the 19th, the 22nd, the 23rd, the 24th and the 26th Amendments of the Constitution all attempt to fix the problems inherent in the initial political compromise that set up the Electoral College.

At various times that compromise and its failings have led to major constitutional crises in this country. Not just in 2000, which we all remember, but in 1824, in 1876 and 1888. In 1876, the constitutional crisis led to the collapse of Reconstruction and the emergence of Jim Crow in the

south.

Throughout the 19th century, there were major efforts all across this country to switch to a national popular vote, caused by those constitutional crises. It remains the unfinished task before us. But frankly, I don't really want to go much into the messy political history. I want to get back to what I was talking about before.

What is it that makes a government legitimate? Because a political compromise isn't what this country is about. Instead, I want to take a step back a generation before the drafting of the U.S. Constitution to talk about the founding generation. The founding generation; the generation before the Constitution who objected to taxation without representation. Who petitioned King George and who felt ignored by parliament. And when they rebelled against the government of the United Kingdom, they listed their reasons why.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that

among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness, - That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

That's the issue here. That's the issue here. Governments derive their powers from the consents of the government. Twice in our lifetimes presidents have been elected without the consent of the government.

In 2004, that nearly happened a third time. If a handful of votes had switched in the State of Ohio, John Kerry would've been elected president without the consent of the government. One-third of the United States Supreme Court has been elect -- has been nominated and appointed by presidents who lacked that democratic legitimacy. This morning, Donald Trump went on *Fox and Friends* and he announced his support for a national popular vote, and the reason is very simple. The reason is that that democratic mandate is important. It's what gives us legitimacy, what makes the office of president a powerful office; the ability to speak on

behalf of the voters of this country, of the people of this country. Because, frankly here, if we get away from the consent of the governed, then we're no better than any other debating society.

We need to strengthen the office of the presidency. We need to give President Trump and all future presidents the legitimacy they need to do their jobs, to go onto the world stage and represent our country. This bill will do that. Mr. Speaker, I urge support.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Lesser.
Representative Wilms of the 142nd District.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions for the proponent of the bill, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox, please prepare yourself.
Please proceed, Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My comments are gonna -- not gonna be that long. They're gonna focus on

two main areas. The one is related to the technical aspects to be able to achieve this result nationally in terms of obtaining the 270 electoral votes, and then secondly, I'm gonna have some questions around the exit mechanism if a state wishes to change their mind at a later point.

So, in relation to the first point, could the proponent please state when this compact idea got started and when the first state voted to join this?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. it's good to see you again. I saw you late last night.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Yes, yeah.

REP. FOX (148TH):

The compact I believe originated -- I believe the first state to enact it may have been Maryland in 2007.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So this started eleven years ago, if I understand correctly, and it started with Maryland. Could the proponent please list the states that have joined since that point?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Of course, by all means. I thank the Representative for the question. There are eleven states - California, Washington, D.C., Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the

proponent for that answer. Does the proponent concur with my calculation -- I agree with those eleven states. They're on my list as well here. And the way I add up their electoral votes, they add up to 165. Does the proponent agree with that one?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I do.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that in order for this compact to become effective, we need to get to 270 elector votes. Is that correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that's correct.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So okay, quick math here. We need to get another 105 electoral votes that we need to achieve, and I'll just assume that that's the correct number. We don't have to go back and forth on that one. So, okay. So, looking at the -- one thing I couldn't help but notice is that the states that approved it so far could be considered, well, blue states. Would the proponent agree with that assessment of those state that have approved so far?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I would and I would also add the caveat, if I may, that it has passed at in at least one house in 12 additional states with 96 Electoral College votes including Arizona,

Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina, New Mexico, Nevada, Oklahoma and Oregon. So, although currently the chambers which entered into the compact are typically blue states, there is significant evidence, I believe, that this is a nonpartisan, bipartisan issue that's moving throughout the country.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Well, thank you for that. Well, you know, I understand what the proponent just said, but just looking at who's actually approved so far, my understanding is it's these entities at 165. So, I'm gonna make the assumption and maybe the proponent may not agree with me, that this initiative seems to have elicited a great deal of enthusiasm among more of our democratic friends and colleagues throughout the country and maybe a little less so republican aspects of the country.

So based on that assumption and, you know, people may have different opinions on that one, I'm going to make that assumption and I'm gonna take note of the fact, well, how -- if we're gonna get this accomplished to 270, what kind of roadmap do the proponents of this initiative face in order to get from 165 to 270? Is it gonna be an easy roadmap? Can they knock this one off in the next year or two even if we join, or is this gonna be a longer haul?

And so sort of doing some research in that venue, it came across to me that 26 states in the United States are considered all red in that -- in other words, the governor is a Republican and both houses of legislature are Republican. And so I'm gonna make the assumption that this initiative may not get the best possible reception in those 26 states and maybe we can kind of take them off the list of potential, you know, ratifiers.

So that leaves -- there are seven states, however, that are considered all blue. We're one of them. They are Delaware, New Jersey, Connecticut,

Rhode Island, Oregon, Washington, California and Hawaii and then the rest of the states are -- the other 17 states are split, you know, republican governor, democratic legislature or visa versus or whatever.

If I counted the elector votes of all the split states that have yet to ratify and the three blue states that have to ratify, including ours, they add up to a total of 113 and they need -- the proponents need 105 to get to the magic 270. And so it seems to me that they pretty much are gonna flip every state, almost, that is not considered an all red state. So, it would appear to me that they've got - - you know, it's taken eleven years for the proponents to get this far and, you know, it's included states like California, New York, things like that. But now to get the next 113 is gonna be a rather challenging road and, you know, I don't know how far this one's gonna go, quite frankly.

Moving on to my next point. Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the proponent. What happens if a state -- let's say we approve this this year and let's say

two year from now, four years from now, eight years from now, we decide -- are successors decide, you know what, we want to get out of this. Could the proponent explain the exit mechanism for that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will. And before I do, may I make brief comment on the fine Representative's statement concerning the timeframe involved in this procedure and the states that have chosen to enact it, and have thought about and considered it and those that have not? I will mention that recently the bill has been passed by a 40-16 in the republican-controlled Arizona House of Representatives, 28-18 in the republican-controlled Oklahoma Senate, 57-4 in a republican-controlled New York Senate and 34-23 in the democratic-controlled Oregon House, 26-16 in the New Mexico Senate. So, although it may appear to be an uphill climb and require some additional efforts and time to get this

matter to the ultimate 270 mark, I will indicate that the energy is there. The movement, I think, is afoot.

And also, as a side note, I will also say that other legislation such as the Civil Rights Voting Act legislation took upwards of 30 years to ultimately get enacted. So, while there are some, obviously, roadblocks and potential time limits that may be involved in this process, I think it's a worthy fight for us to have.

Moving on to the second question the proponent asked in terms of withdrawal. The withdrawal. It's a very good question and procedurally, I think an excellent question and a very good point to make. The withdrawal scenario is addressed in lines 64-67 of the compact. And if the proponent -- if the Representative wish, I can read that to him.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Well, no, you don't -- we don't read the whole

thing, but I would just be interested in a brief summary, if the proponent wouldn't mind.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Of course, by all means. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Representative for the question. Lines 64-67 of the compact provides that a state may withdraw at any time except that a withdrawal occurring six months or less before the end of a president's term shall not become effective until the president or vice president shall be qualified to serve the next term. So essentially, the withdrawal process, the new president takes office on January 20th of every four years. So if a state were to withdraw from the compact prior to July 20th of the prior year. The idea being that, ultimately, any campaign events, any debates, anything of that, any nominating procedures that typically occur after July 20th, so it would allow for states going to withdraw, it would offer time

for there to be essentially a six-month period -- six-month window in with which they could not withdraw.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the proponent for that answer and I appreciate that. One last question. This is more of a technical question that just kind of came to me. As I'm sure we all know, every ten years when we do the census, the electoral votes get reassigned to states, and states lose, you know, and they also gain. I mean, I grew up in Illinois and I remember when I was a boy in Illinois we had 26 electoral votes. And now I believe Illinois has 20. And I -- you know, and I think Connecticut, we've also had some more.

So what happens if before the -- you know, the states reach the 270 mark, before the compact kicks in, let's say, you know, state has voted to be part of the compact, but then they lose electoral votes,

which electoral votes count then as far --for purposes of the compact? The ones that existed when they originally voted it or the ones that would have to be there when the compact got ratified?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Representative for the question. Again, it's a very good question and it goes to the nuts and bolts of the underlying compact. For the compact to work, just states that are members of the compact would have to have up to over half, a majority of the total Electoral College votes. So let's say now the total Electoral College votes is 538. For the compact to be enacted, we have to have states that comprise 270 Electoral College votes.

So let's us if by the next census something -- the population changes and we suddenly have 600 Electoral College votes in the country. For the compact to exist then, we would need 300 Electoral

College votes for it. So it would always require that the states that are members of the compact have at least a majority of the total amount of Electoral College votes available.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you for that. And I apologize. I think I didn't phrase my question, perhaps, clearly. Let's say we join and now we have seven electoral votes and let's say ten year from now, a state is about to ratify that would bring the total, you know, to 270.

But in that interim period, let's say, hypothetically, we lost an electoral vote and we're now down to six. So, when sort of the finish line is reached here, if you will, to say, okay, we're at 270, what 270 are we talking about? Are we talking about the 270 that exists at that time, when they all crossed the finish line, or is it what existed when the states originally voted to join?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. And again, I thank the Representative for the question. We're looking at the number of votes -- so long as there is a majority of the Electoral College votes total overall and then the compact will be. So, if Connecticut -- let's total remains 538. For some reason, Connecticut lost an Electoral College vote, then we would -- and Connecticut is still a member of the compact, we would still need to get somewhere a state that would allow us to have one more vote. Do you understand what I'm saying? So, ultimately, the compact will not go into effect until member states comprise a majority of the total Electoral College votes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Okay. Well, I think that concludes my -- it

seems to me, then, there needs to be 270 at that time, whatever the electoral allocation is at that time. Well -- I don't know if I'm hearing that correctly. Just maybe to confirm.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. What needs to be is the majority of the states -- let's say this compact is entered into on Thursday of next week. Thursday of next week, there will be a total of 538 Electoral College votes. That will not change. Thursday of next week, there has to be at least 270 Electoral College votes from member states. If that ultimate number changes, let's say ten years from now, five years from now, whatever, it'd be the 538 number. If it changes to 540, then we'll obviously need 272 votes. Is that -- I'm not sure that clarifies my --

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Wilms.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Well, thank you. I think we've pursued this line of questioning. I thank you for your answers. I'll just conclude by that I'm gonna vote no. You know, at the end of the day, I don't see this as an end-of-the-world kind of thing. You know, in my experience in life, you know, there's some times it seems like, gee, you know, if we don't get the results that we want, maybe we need to sort of tweak the system a little bit and maybe then we'll get some more results that we would like. Candidly, in my experience, I haven't found that to be the case. But, you know, I get what's being attempted here.

You know, I think, primarily, my opposition stems for the fact that, you know, we've had a system in place now since the founding of our country and we've turned out to be the greatest country that the world has ever seen. And so, I think that that's contributed to that and I think that we should stay with it until, perhaps, we no longer are that kind of country. So anyway, thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you for your comments, Representative Wilms. From the 151st District, the hometown of Mike Moreno, Representative Camillo, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CAMILLO (151ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Always good to see you and always good to hear the name of Michael Moreno in this Chamber. Mr. Speaker, as I sit here and I listen to the debate from friends on both sides of the aisle, these are things that we've heard, good points, for days and weeks and months and, yes, even years. But I always, you know, keep falling back to what the Constitution says, you know, Article I, Section 10 or Article VI, saying that any pact among the states to circumvent the Constitution is in fact unconstitutional.

So, are we wasting our time here today doing this if we're not talking about, in fact, amending the Constitution. The session's ending pretty soon, in less than 2 weeks. So, it's a great debate to have. I just want to know what the end of this is.

Because if this unconstitutional, lots of legal scholars around the country over the years have said it is, then I just think we're wasting our time.

But the -- a lot of proponents, Mr. Speaker, have emailed me said that, you know, the same thing we've heard here today, that candidates around the country are ignoring Connecticut. You know, it's really just a few battleground states that they go to now. And it got me thinking years ago, and I thought, well, if that's the case then why not award electoral votes by the proportion of the votes that they get here in the state. So, if a candidate gets 40 percent of the vote, you would give them 40 percent of the electoral votes. That would encourage any candidate running to come to every single state. That would solve that problem.

And every time I've said that to people, mostly Democrats, but there's been a few Republicans, no one has disagreed with it. You know, they say you can't do that because of A, B and C, but they think -- they all say well, it's an interesting idea. I think it answers the question and solves that

problem of getting people to our state.

Because, lets' face it, the Founding Fathers pretty much got it right when they got together a few decades -- decades ago -- a few centuries ago and, you know, the Connecticut comprise that Roger Sherman spoke to, you know, protecting smaller states. I think that's kind of the same idea with this Electoral College. Because remember, in 2016, as in every four years, if you really look at that electoral map around the country, it's pretty red. The majority of the country is red in those maps.

But in 2016, one county in New York City and one county in Los Angeles would've out voted -- did out vote the rest of the country, that the plurality, the 2 million votes was right there. So it does make you wonder. Even though we are elected by the popular vote here, we are not the country, and certainly the Founding Fathers took into consideration that they did not want every -- any region to be discounted or outvoted.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to give my thoughts on that and hope that, you know, if

we truly want people to come here, candidates to come here, and thing that they're ignoring our states, which they are, and that's a very valid point, then maybe we ought to think about the way we award electoral votes rather than to just discard them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Camillo. Will you remark further? From the 106th District, Representative Bolinsky, you have the floor, sir.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to see you up there. I have comments, not questions. I may have a question for the proponent, but. I want to start with a pretty bold statement.

Everybody's giving a lot of analysis, but what I'd like to do is just sort of bring this back to the principle of the matter in the most basic terms. Because most of the people watching this discussion at home are not politicians and most of the things that we're making as points don't exactly resonate with them.

I completely and totally agree with the principles expressed by Representative Steinberg a few moments ago. It's the dream of every American to participate in our democracy and have their vote count. In concept, I completely and totally agree and believe that one vote should be no more important than any other vote. So, technically, you could actually say that I support the national popular vote.

However, the truth of the matter as I see it is that this bill does not accomplish that. This bill itself is silly. Actually, this bill is a lie. This bill allows us as the citizenry of Connecticut to follow misstatements and, yes, lies, and act like a bunch of lemmings and follow somebody right off the edge of a cliff. Because what it does is it erodes the influence of Connecticut.

So, a lot of very powerful people in large states, they have spent a lot of money convincing a lot of people that this bill creates a utopian goal of one vote being counted as one vote. But that is this egregious lie because this bill gives 100

percent of the electoral representation for a state to the person that has the most votes in that stage.

So, for instance, if candidate A wins the general election for the State of Connecticut and carries the presidency vote and they get 50.1 percent of the vote and candidate B gets 49.9, we would assign all of our delegates, all of our electors to the person that got 50.1 percent of the vote, which in an of itself is a great disservice to the people in the 49.9 percent. So, that's not representative at all.

So, I do believe that every vote should be equal. So, instead of creating this ground up, cobbled together, heavily special interest financed by people in large states compact, why don't we let Congress do its job and give us a national popular vote? Why should it be any different than voting for a governor where a vote is a vote? But to be able to let the whims of a state like California or Illinois carry 100 percent of our votes away from the 50 percent or the 49.9 percent of the people in Connecticut that might've voted otherwise? That's

cheating. That's not honest.

So, I do believe that the national popular vote, in concept, is a wonderful idea. But this bill doesn't do that. All it does is rejigger into a different system that will be dominated in a way very similar to the current process where the money will go where the votes are and ultimately will have miscarriages of justice where somebody that does not win the popular vote, perhaps, does win the electoral vote. Not that that is what I'm advocating at all, but I think electing the president should be something that does require a change in the Constitution. And if that is what the framers intended and we have, through population and politics, outgrown that system, it should be considered, but not in a way that actually dilutes the influence of the State of Connecticut.

So, those were my comments. I urge my colleagues to take a really close look at this bill and then think about what your hopes are for what we're trying to accomplish with it and understand that this bill does not accomplish that in any way,

shape or form. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Bolinsky. From the 19th District, Representative Slap, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SLAP (19TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to touch on one argument for this bill that I haven't heard a lot about, and I will be brief. And that's foreign meddling in our election. I don't think it is hyperbole to say that our democracy is under attack. In fact, the current CIA director said that he expects there to be Russian efforts and influence in the 2018 cycle and in additional cycles to come.

So, we know what happened in 2016 and it's really undeniable that Russia did try to influence and influence somehow the presidential election. We don't know the extent of it yet, but we do know that. That is a fact. At the same time, we know that we don't have a national election. That it's concentrated in a handful of states. I think it stands to reason that it's much easier if you have a

foreign entity, whether it's Russia or North Korea or China, who knows, but trying to influence our election. That it's much easier to do that if the election takes place in a very small area and just a handful of states.

And I do have one statistic that I want to share. We know that in the last presidential election, both Mr. Trump and Mrs. Clinton's campaigns spent about \$81 million dollars all told on social media advertising. We know now, because of the recent Mueller indictment, that Russian interests spent a tiny, tiny fraction of that, just about, at the most, really, a million dollars a month on social media, Facebook and advertising. But we know that that was concentrated and we know that they got a lot of bang for their buck because they were able to concentrate in just a very small, select group of states.

We also know now that there were seven states, a few of them that are considered the swing states, where their election systems, the integrity of the system was hacked. So, again, I think it stands to

reason that by having a national election where every person's vote matters the same amount, just as we do in gubernatorial contests all across the nation, not only is the fairest thing to do, but it's the best thing to do to strengthen our democracy and protect it against the attack that we are now under. Thank you very much, and I am eagerly supporting this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Slap. Will you remark further? From the 90th District, Representative Fishbein, you have the floor, sir.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I too have some questions for the proponent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed. Representative Fox, please prepare yourself.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Sir, I've been listening to the debate, very scintillating, all day here today and I just want to

get down to some foundations and ask, where the authority for us to follow the current procedure with the Electoral College, where that comes from?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would present the opinion that the authority rests in Article II, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And may I ask if the speaker -- if the good Representative is familiar with Article I, Section 10 of the U.S. Constitution?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

I believe so.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Particularly with the provision that says that no compact between states is valid without authority of the U.S. Congress.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

That's correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker -- Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And am I to understand that Congress has not authorized us to engage in this compact?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker -- Miss -- Madam Speaker. I presume -- not presume. I would suppose that -- I would state that congressional consent is not necessary for compact to become effective.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me ask this question a little bit more directly. Is there a document that memorializes the legal authority given by Congress for this body to enter into this compact?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. The compact -- is the Representative asking if the compact's been approved by Congress?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein, could you clarify please?

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Now, specifically I'm saying, did Congress give us a document that said yes, you can entertain -- yes, you can enter into this compact?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. The document I refer to is the U.S. Constitution.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Is the proponent of the bill of an opinion that Article I, Section 10 does not apply to this compact at all?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. No, I'm of the opinion that Article I, Section 10 permits a compact of this nature.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And what portion of Article I, Section 10 permits expressly us entertaining this compact?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. The portion that states that authorized enter into interstate compacts, which states "*no state shall, without the consent of Congress, enter into any agreement or*

compact with another state or foreign power."

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I heard the portion that the good Representative that said "*without the authorization of Congress.*" Am I to understand that we are just throwing that portion of the U.S. Constitution out or -- what is the applicability to what we're doing here today?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. The reason I bring that phrase is I believe that the Supreme Court has held that the -- the Supreme Court has held that this compact would not need congressional approval.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And may I ask the good Representative what particular case did the Supreme Court say that this particular compact does not need the authority and authorization of Congress?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. And I apologize. Is the Representative asking where? Through you, Madam Speaker. Can the Representative please repeat the question? I apologize.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein, could you please repeat your question?

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Sure. Thank you, Madam Speaker. If the good Representative can please direct us all to the

particular case that the U.S. Supreme Court said that this particular compact does not need Congress' authority.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. I would direct the Representative's attention to a case that was briefly discussed earlier, *Virginia v Tennessee*, 148 U.S. 503 from 1893.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I've reviewed that case. And may I ask the Speaker -- the good proponent of the bill where anywhere in that case the word "Electoral College" -- the words "Electoral College" appear. Do they appear anywhere in that case?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. They do not. That case involved a boundary dispute between two states.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So, my specific question previously was what particular Supreme Court case says that this body can deliberate and perhaps vote on this particular compact?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. I think the Representative for the question. I believe I now understand what he's getting at. This compact has not been brought before the U.S. Supreme Court. So, I presume that should it be brought before it, it

may be a matter of first impression.

Through you, Mr. -- Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And just so that those that are watching, a matter of first impression is one that our courts have not addressed.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. That's correct. The U.S. Supreme Court has not addressed the validity of the underlying compact.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And am I to understand, in my review of *Virginia v Tennessee*,

that that case solely had to do with the charters of those two states and where those two states -- where their borders were. Is that a fair interpretation?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. That is a correct interpretation.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And am I to also understand, and I pulled the portion of that case out, where the court expressly found that because the compact did not impact the full United States of America, it did not need Congress' approval. Is that a fair interpretation of that case?

Through you, Madam -- Mr. Speaker. Sorry.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

No offense taken. Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. That's also my reading of that underlying case.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just to take that forward, is the good Representative aware of the case out of Kentucky, *Dixie Wholesale versus the Commissioner of Revenue Services*, which is 278 Kentucky 78. It's a 1939 case.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I have some limited knowledge of that case.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And the limited knowledge, does it extend to the fact that that was a compact between Kentucky and Ohio for the reporting of those that were buying cigarettes in Kentucky so that Ohio could tax them?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I will take the distinguished Representative's word for it.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And given all of this discussion about the Constitution, which is very important to me, have we sought an opinion of our AG on the constitutionality of this compact?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware of an AG opinion.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the good Representative why, since I think we debated this a bit last session and the Constitution came up, and we're almost a year later, why one has not been sought?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. It's a very interesting question and valid inquiry. I would start -- I would say that the AG would start from a default position that his job is to defend the laws passed by this body and give deference to it.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, I've listened to a lot here today and I know we've got a budget that we have to deal with and I really can't past the politics of this. I don't know why we would pass a law. There's been a lot of question about the Constitution here, this session, last session. Why we would cross our fingers that what we're doing is legal without seeking an opinion. I mean, we sought an opinion on the casinos from the AG's office and the memorandum of understanding. And I'd love to know what the AG has to say about this. I'd like to analyze that.

Off the cuff, today, I was doing legal research. I don't know that that's the proper way to deal with such an important issue as a constitutional issue, so. I guess ultimately I'm gonna have to vote against this, but I'd like to be more informed. So, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Fishbein. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? From the 101st District, Representative Dubitsky, you have the floor, sir.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

I hate to correct the Speaker, but it's the 47th District.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

You don't have to hate to correct me. I was wrong. I apologize, sir.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

That's okay. Well, thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

I was looking at the seat number.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Mm, mm, mm. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as most of us know, we've seen this bill before and I spoke last year on this same effort to destroy the U.S. Constitution, and I would encourage everybody here and everybody at home to watch my video on You Tube of this very -- my speech

last year. But it seems like since we're back again talking about the same thing again. It seems like we might need a little refresher.

So I'm gonna briefly go over some of the key points I made last year, which I think are still pertinent because they clearly have not sunk in and I have some new comments on things that I don't think, perhaps, people have considered in their attempt to push this bill through.

As we know and as we've heard before, Article II is where we start talking about the Electoral College. And I talked last year about the men, the Founding Fathers, the giants of Connecticut who worked on the Constitution and worked on drafting the Electoral College - Samuel Huntington, Oliver Ellsworth, Roger Sherman and William Williams.

Samuel Huntington was from one of my towns in Scotland. Roger Sherman was from New Milford. And they designed a system with two legislative bodies, like the Connecticut system, but with a different voting system, as we know. In Connecticut, both the Senate and the House are based on population. In

the federal system, the House is based on population exclusively and the Senate is based on two senators per state.

And again, that system was designed to protect the minority, to protect the small states and that's exemplified by what happens if there's a tie in the Electoral College. The vote goes to the House of Representatives with each state casting one vote. So, even the small states, like Connecticut, get the same vote as the big states.

Now, what we're trying to do, essentially, is make the federal system the same as the state system where we're not going to pay attention to the two senators per state and give the small states an advantage. We're just gonna do it straight by population. Whoever gets the majority in the country is going to get all of our electoral votes.

And what I said last year, which I emphasize this year, is that this would essentially give us zero electoral votes because we would just be comingled with all the other votes in the country. So, if you think that there's a problem attracting

presidential candidates when we have seven electoral votes, just wait to see what happens when we have zero.

Now, last year, I explained and talked about the laws that we have enacted to prevent voters from being disenfranchised. We were talking about same day registration, early voting, stopping people from having to show IDs, all things that people on that side of the aisle want to implement to make sure that everybody gets a fair vote. Presumably, those proposals are designed to prevent disenfranchisement. But this bill is the ultimate disenfranchiser.

No matter how the people of our state vote, their vote gets counted by the people in California and Texas. Their vote gets counted by the most populace places in the country, not by Connecticut. So no matter how we vote, even if every single person votes the same way in Connecticut for one candidate, if the populace areas of the country for somebody else, that's how our votes are counted.

Now, last year, I wore a necktie which had the

names of all my towns on it. And last year, I stood here and I begged you not to disenfranchise the people of my towns and not to allow the people in Dallas and in Houston and in Sacramento to take the votes away from the people of my towns. The fact that we're here now says to me that the proponents of this bill still want to do just that.

This year, I wore a different necktie. This has the signatures of all the people who signed the *Declaration of Independence*. From the State of Connecticut was Samuel Huntington, Roger Sherman, William Williams, and Oliver Wolcott. Now, I wore the same tie yesterday. I thought we were gonna actually do this bill yesterday. So, I know that the fashion police have already gotten me and gave me a ticket for wearing the same tie twice, but I think I'm willing to pay that ticket because it's worth it.

And when I think about the *Declaration of Independence*, and the men who fought to get it through, the first person I always think of - Samuel Adams. Samuel Adams essentially took independence

as his life goal. He dragged and pushed, kicked and screamed that declaration across the line, and over incredible odds, got the *Declaration of Independence* and got a vote on independence in the Congress.

Now, Sam Adams was a staunch abolitionist. He hated slavery. He understood it for the horror that it was. And I have a picture of Sam Adams on the wall in my office, in the legislative office building. It sits right next to the pictures of Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglas. All people who fought for the equal protection and equal rights of African Americans and all people.

Now, the *Declaration of Independence* almost didn't happen. It was very close. And what happened was before the vote, there was a committee formed. They called it the *Committee of Five*, and on that Committee of Five was John Adams, Ben Franklin, Robert Livingston from New York, Roger Sherman from Connecticut and Thomas Jefferson from Virginia, and each of those men hated slavery.

Benjamin Franklin formed the first abolitionist

society in North America. Sam Adams fought every day to have slavery abolished in this country. Robert Livingston and Roger Sherman also opposed slavery and did everything they could to make sure our founding documents did not contain slavery, did not allow for slavery. Thomas Jefferson, from Virginia, although he was a slave owner, he did decide ultimately that he was going to free his slaves and that slavery a horrible, horrible institution.

In fact, when the Committee of Five originally drafted the *Declaration of Independence*, Thomas Jefferson actually wrote right into the Declaration, a very, very long paragraph about slavery and how it must be abolished.

Now, in the *Declaration of Independence*, for those who understand it, there's a whole section in the middle with what I call the list of horrors, which has also been called the list of oppressions, which is a list of things that King George has done to the people of America that warrant the people breaking away from Great Britain. Such things as

"He obstructed the administration of justice by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers. He has erected a multitude of new offices and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out our substance. He has affected to render the military independent of and superior to the civil power." So, there's a whole list of things in the *Declaration of Independence* as to what King George has done.

And in the original Declaration, Thomas Jefferson wrote in a paragraph. Just -- I'm not gonna read the whole thing, but I do want to give you the sense of what that paragraph is. "*King George has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere and to incur miserable death in the transportation hither. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or*

to restrain this execrable commerce."

The Committee of Five - Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and the others were determined to get rid of slavery. That provision in the *Declaration of Independence* as well as others were eventually removed prior to being enacted. Why? Because the southern states objected, South Carolina, in particular. Edward Rutledge refused to allow it to be in the Declaration.

The southern states had power, had veto power over independence. They held independence hostage. They made the northern states remove the passages about slavery. Now, why is that important? It's important because the very same people who put those prohibitions of slavery and who were the staunch abolitionists of that time were the same people who drafted the Electoral College. And they did it for the same reasons. In fact, Sam Adams was ready to allow the independence vote to go down because he was refusing to allow the provisions about slavery to be removed. He was refusing to allow that. He said "slavery must be abolished in this country."

Benjamin Franklin convinced them that they should take the slavery parts out of the *Declaration of Independence* and deal with them later in the Constitution. Deal with them later, because without independence, what was left? Everybody was left under British rule. Because, remember, up until independence, every single one of them was a British subject. Slavery was enacted in North America by the British. And if the Americans did not become an independent nation, slavery would never have been abolished in this country.

So, Franklin convinced Adams to allow that provision to be removed. Thereafter, the southern states voted for independence. Now, that's important right now because we are trying to undo that work. Now, Roger Sherman, from Connecticut, from New Milford, worked on drafting the Constitution. He was the one that developed the Electoral College. James Madison's notes on the Constitution say he gave 135 speeches, most of which were defending Connecticut and the small states.

And with Oliver Ellsworth, from Windsor, he

came up with the Electoral College. And the way -- the reason why they did that was because they opposed slavery and the southern states had power in Congress. The slave-owning states in Congress had the power to essentially veto much of what the northern states were doing. They had the power to elect a president who favored slavery.

So, Roger Sherman, from Connecticut, tried to figure out a way to prevent the southern states from electing a president that would support slavery and along with Oliver Ellsworth, they developed the *Connecticut Compromise*. The Connecticut Compromise says that while the House of Representatives is going to be determined by population, the Senate will have equal representation among the states.

The problem was that if it was just done by population, which is what is being proposed now, the slave-owning states would be able to build more power and would be able to maintain slavery essentially in perpetuity. They would be able to elect a president and vice president who supported slavery. And the slave states also had the power to

kill the fledgling Constitution before it was enacted.

So, the Connecticut Compromise. The Connecticut Compromise allowed for equal representation in the House and by state in the Senate. Now, the reason why the southern states wanted complete proportional representation for president is because they wanted all of the slaves counted as residents and that -- and then they would have -- they would be able to essentially bring in more and more slaves to build up the power of the slave owners and build up the power of the slave-owning states. Our founders wrote about this extensively, about how one of the most horrible things was how the slave owners and the slave-owning states were just bringing in more and more slaves to bolster their own power.

So, one of the things that they developed, Roger Sherman, they came up with - *The Three-Fifths Compromise*. The slave-owning states wanted full representation of all slaves. The northern states wanted no representation of the slaves at all. They

said slaves should not vote -- should not be counted at all towards representation in Congress and the -- and electing the president. The southern states wanted full representation, so there was a compromise. The compromise was three out of every five slaves would be counted towards the vote -- towards representation in Congress.

Now, the northern states were not happy. Sam Adams was furious. Roger Sherman wasn't happy with it, but he thought that that was the only way that they were going to get the Constitution through.

Now, Representative Lesser stated that the three-fourth -- the Three-Fifths Compromise was intended to give the slave-owning states more power. It is a misconception. I understand that. There are people who believe that if you read the writings of the founders, you can see that that compromise was designed to allow the Constitution to pass while at the same time preventing full representation of the slave owners who could then essentially keep slavery going and keep -- and elect a president that was proslavery.

So, Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth designed this system as a firebreak, as a stopgap. We have a lot of stopgaps in our system. Now, Representative Lesser also mentioned that over the years, the United States has tried to fix the problems of the electoral system with the 13th and 14th Amendments. But if the Congress believed that the electoral system was a problem, during that time that they were enacting the 13th and 14th Amendments, they could easily have changed the electoral system then. That was right after the Civil War. It was during Reconstruction.

The north controlled most of the governments in the confederate states. They could have easily gotten through a repeal of the electoral system. But they didn't. They didn't even try, because they knew that the electoral system was a protection against mob rule. They knew that the electoral system protects minorities and protects the small states. They were making wholesale changes to the Constitution during Reconstruction in the wake of the Civil War because the victorious abolitionists,

the victorious north won over the slave-owning confederate south and they deliberately chose to preserve the Electoral College. It wasn't a mistake.

Now, our law recognizes many laws that protect minority representation. We have -- in this state we have contractors set aside rules. We have affirmative action. We have voting districts drawn to ensure minority representation, whether in the state or at the federal level. Many of our towns and cities have laws requiring that town boards have members of the minority party, even if they don't get enough votes. And we do this to give the minority, whether it's a party or gender or race, we want to do that to set up an even playing field, to prevent the majority from ignoring the minority, to prevent mob rule.

Mob rule has not worked out very well for minorities in this country. And we have constitutional protections in place to help keep the mobs at bay. You know, there's a new emphasis on state's rights. It used to be that conservatives

would push the term "*state's rights*." They would preach it. Well now it's the liberals. I guess it all depends on who's in power and whose ox is being gored. But, liberals now are pushing the term "*state's rights*" with regards to things like marijuana, immigration and guns, and now, how to elect the president.

Well, some of these things are pretty easy to change back if it turns out that we messed up. Pass a law legalizing hemp and legalizing marijuana. You can just change the law. Find out that some other law that you believe that you're -- immigration, let's say you believe that, you know, sanctuary cities are a good thing. You pass a law for sanctuary cities. It turns out it's either unconstitutional or it turns out that it's not working. You can just pass a law and change it. But some things are far more permanent and do far more damage, like breaking down our constitutional protection.

Giving up Connecticut's electoral advantage is something that will be very, very difficult to

restore if we do it. You know, the compact that this bill would have us join says we would make up a group with 270 electoral votes and we'd vote together as a block. But remember, those electoral votes change. We have seven now. We used to have more. Other states have more. They used to have less. Of the states that are involved in the compact, most of them are either not growing very fast or they're actually shrinking. And eventually those states will make up far less than 270 votes.

You also have to think about something like California seceding from the Union with 55. Well, you've got states that are shrinking or growing very slowly - Puerto Rico, Connecticut, Illinois, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey. And then you've got states that are growing very quickly - Texas, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Utah, Idaho, North Dakota, all growing very, very quickly. The deep south and the wild west are growing. The blue states are shrinking.

So, the question is, if we give all of our votes to the general population at large, will we

eventually be ruled by the deep south and the wild west? Do you want your president chosen by Texas, Florida, North and South Carolina and Georgia or Idaho and Utah?

And let's say for a second that this compact is constitutional. I don't believe it is. But let's say for a second that it is. So that means that states can get together and they can decide how they're gonna allocate their electoral votes and who they're gonna vote for. Well, in this particular compact, the group would have decided, well, we're just gonna put all our electoral votes towards whoever wins the general election. But there's nothing to say that they have to do that. They can pick any determining number.

So, let's say, for example, that the deep south and the wild west decides they're gonna join a compact and they grow large enough that they've got their 270 votes and they're gonna vote as a block, and they're not gonna vote for whoever wins the general -- the majority in the country. They're not gonna vote for whoever wins the popular vote.

They're gonna vote for whoever wins the popular vote among that block. So they're gonna say that regardless of the popular vote in the nation, they're gonna vote for whoever Texas went for. Is that how we want our president elected? Well, at the moment, they probably don't have the electoral votes to do that. But they're growing, and we're shrinking.

So, look at the long-term. Look at where we've come from. Look at what could be ahead. Let's not look right in front of our noses. And what happens if Texas and Florida start bringing in millions of people who don't vote? What does that do to their country -- to the country? It gives more and more power to the people in those states that do vote.

The Electoral College stands as a stopgap. It's a firewall. It's a protection against mob rule. It's not perfect, but it ensures to some degree minority representation. It prevents mob rule. Now, mobs, just like political parties, can turn on you in a heartbeat. Last year, I said to you, watch out what you ask for. Let's not forget

history.

It was only a few years ago that the Democratic Party was not very friendly to minorities, especially African Americans. The Ku Klux Klan was the militant arm of the Democratic Party not too long ago. Republicans from the north tried to break up the Klan. Jim Crow laws and brutality - were brutally enforced by Democrats in the south. The entire south was democratic.

After *Brown versus Board of Education*, Democrat Orval Faubus from Arkansas tried to prevent African American children from attending school and the Republican president had to go and send in the 101st Airborne. Things can change.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Excuse me. Pardon me, Representative Dubitsky. Just for the Chamber's edification, we -- I'm gonna ask you to bring us back to where you want to be. We often give our members latitude, but I think, maybe in the Chair's opinion, there's a little -- we need you to get closer to where you want to get to at the end result, closer to what this bill --

proposed bill is depicting and your arguments for or against. So, I'd ask you to please frame your, either comment or questions, more in line to the legislation. Thank you, sir.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, parties change, positions change, mobs change their targets. The Constitution and the Electoral College are designed to protect from mob rule. Now, I understand that many are upset about Donald Trump and before that, George Bush.

But I ask you, are you that angry that you'd give up your constitutional firewall of the Electoral College that protects the small states because you happen to think that the mob is on your side at that moment? And consider the dire consequences if the mob -- if the firewalls are down and the mob changes its target, or someone else builds a bigger mob.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Representative Ferraro of the 117th

District, you have the floor, sir.

REP. FERRARO (117TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, all I can say is wow; we've had a heck of a day today. We were here late last night, as everyone knows. Most of us arrived here tired today and right out of the blocks we were hit with the national popular vote.

I have to say that listening to the debate today and hearing the different opinions, I have found a lot of folks here in this Chamber to be extremely knowledgeable about the issues at hand and many of them extremely educational in bringing forward their experience and their knowledge. I sat her today, in some cases, in awe of the people who spoke because of their command and their knowledge of the issue surrounding the Electoral College and the constitutionality of this bill.

I can't even begin to approach the level that some of these folks talked on. I can only talk about how I personally feel, and to begin with and on the onset, I would say that I am strongly opposed to this bill for a lot of reasons. And there were a

couple of things that were said today that I would like to just briefly touch on before allowing others that want to speak to say their piece.

It was brought up about the Supreme Court today and the Supreme Court, I think Representative Fishbein very clearly pointed out that the Supreme Court has not weighed in on this compact, which is true. In fact, the Supreme Court has declined to discuss issues regarding these kind of issues in the past.

And the question would be, would they continue to decline to take this issue up in the Supreme Court? Well, personally, I believe that since the compact that we are discussing now, should it pass and should it become a reality where the 270 votes are achieved and the compact comes into existence or the compact begins to take authority, there's not doubt that that compact of 270 states would change the way we elect our presidential -- our President for the United States. In which case, it would be probably feasible that the Supreme Court would then take up the issue of the national popular vote.

If it should decide to take up the issue of the national popular vote, I believe the issue would be decided on whether or not the compact followed the amendment process of the Constitution. And I think clearly from what we've heard today and from where the description of the compact is going that this is an obvious attempt to circle around the amendment process of the Constitution. And as we know, in order to get a new amendment in the Constitution, it must be ratified by two-thirds of the states.

So, I do not think that the result of the Supreme Court decision would be in favor of this compact, but again, I'm not a legal authority. So that's one of the reasons why stand in opposition, is because why are we trying to do something like this that more than likely would reach an unconstitutionality with our Supreme Court

I also heard some discussions about the battleground states and the thing that comes to mind with me is that we've all heard, you know, every election analysis, pre-election analysis, which states are going to decide the presidential

election. And from my point of view, it hurts me to know that the state I live in will not have anything to do with deciding the presidential election.

And so I do understand why some folks might look to an alternative solution or another method of deciding how our presidential election should go, and I just don't think that the compact is the way to go. And I really feel that if legislators were truly interested in another system that would more adequately reflect the feelings of the voters within their state, then why do I not hear commentary regarding a new system in which electorates would be decided in each state on a basis -- on a distributive basis based on the percentage of vote achieved in that state?

For example, if the State of Connecticut were to vote 45 percent with one party and 55 percent with the other party, then the seven electoral votes would be distributed accordingly instead of a winner take all. Now, I do realize that there are a couple of states that already do that, but if every state in the country did it, then the num -- the

electorates would be decided based on how that majority in that state voted. And then at the end of the day, we would be able to decide on a majority basis which party would deserve the presidency.

Now, that creates a problem that some folks have brought up here today regarding majority and plurality. Because some mentioned that maybe there's more than two candidates. Some mentioned that in close races it often does not result in a majority plus-one. And so, what I've noticed in this compact that there's no provision for a close race. For example, some states say that if you get -- you need to get at least a 40 percent vote for the race to count or there has to be a re -- election has to be redone. But I don't see anywhere in the compact where there's a provision for at least a 40-percent vote.

So, in that regard, I think the compact is in danger of not accomplishing its stated goal to get the majority of voters to represent the 270 electoral votes.

I think it's the wrong approach. If

effectively does an end around run from the amendment process, as I stated earlier, and I think that such things as were kind of brought up and touched on. But I think when you look at elect -- you know, election fraud and voter suppression, I think that when we look at it today, in our current elections, it's usually confined to small areas, battleground states, and it's a little bit easier to get a handle on and to control. But if you go to a majority rules type of situation, then voter fraud would be more ubiquitous throughout the country and it would be harder and more difficult, I believe, to get a handle on it.

And, consequently, I believe that if we look at our structure as a country, we were not founded as a democracy. We were founded as a constitutional republic. And if we meant to be rules by the majority, then our framers would've set it up that way in the first place. And quiet frankly, if we look at our history, some things would be really different if we were based strictly on majority.

For example, I do not believe that President

Clinton ever won a majority. And if he was never President of the United States, I'm not sure we would even have a Hillary Clinton in the last couple of elections. And quite frankly, if we look at our colonies and the way they were originally constituted and how they came together, if majority ruled, we probably wouldn't have the country we have today because we wouldn't have gotten a majority in the 13 colonies in the early days of our elections.

So, I think that the current system as set up by the framers to give our small states an equal opportunity to compete against the larger states, I believe the wisdom behind that has stood the test because there have been over 700 challenges to the Electoral College, either to ban the Electoral College or to change it, and through all that, the Electoral College has stood tall and every one of those 700 attempts was defeated. And I would say that over the history and over time, when 700 attempts are made to change something and each one of them has fought back, this compact becomes yet another attempt and it too, I do not believe, will

succeed.

So, I urge my colleagues in this Chamber to stand tall against this amendment -- this bill and to strongly oppose this bill. Because I know that I will and I cannot support any bill that would change the direction and the original intent of our framers. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Ferraro. My neighbor from the 31st District in Glastonbury, Representative Srinivasan, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good afternoon, sir.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've been listening to this debate, which, obviously, has been going on for a few hours. And just a few questions to the proponent of this bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. What would be the legal implications with our own Attorney General and down in D.C. from the congressional point of view if this bill were to move forward?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. The requirements of the Attorney General here and in D.C. would really be nothing if this bill moves forward from just this House. There's still a difference of electoral votes that still need to be accomplished and there's still a number of other steps that need to be accomplished for this bill to become effective.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

So, through you, Mr. Speaker. Article I, Section 10, would not have any impact as far as the movement of this bill through the Chambers?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I may need to ask the Representative to rephrase the question. I was under the impression his first question was what would happen if this particular bill gets out of this Chamber and becomes law in Connecticut. Can the Representative please rephrase the question?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please rephrase the question, Representative.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. So, if this bill were to move forward and knowing what is said in Article I, Section 10, which would be obviously in

opposition to what was happening here, how would that play out?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Is the Representative referring to the compact clause?

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Article I, Section 10.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Give me one moment, Mr. Speaker?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Of course.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is -- the proponent is

inquiring as to -- I'm trying to understand what the proponent is trying to inquire. Is he trying inquire if because of the 10th Amendment, can our states be prevented to do this?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. What I'm trying to get my hands around is that if this bill were to move forward, knowing what is said in Article I, Section 10, how could this bill then move forward? That is my question. Because -- but it would be challenged. It would be challenged in court. And so my question is have we looked into the fact that we are setting ourselves up to a challenge?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for the question. In terms of what

was mentioned earlier if there was litigation, I will say that litigation is a fact of life after any legislation is proposed. So should this compact move forward and ultimately be approved by the 270 electoral votes, litigation is in fact a possibility, as it is with any other law or statute that's passed by this body or others.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

So, through you, Mr. Speaker. If this compact is approved and moved forward, what I'm hearing is litigation is inevitable.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I'd be hesitant to use the word "inevitable." It's difficult to say what litigation may come from this or for that matter any other piece of legislation that comes

forward. It's difficult to say at what point and time legislation may be challenged in court. So, just this -- for this piece of legislation or any other piece of legislation that would be passed today, tomorrow or next week could be challenged potentially.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31ST):

Mr. Speaker, I'm very concerned with this -- where we are at this stage. Yes, we want to make sure that our voters are not disenfranchised. I'm just -- I definitely accept that. But when you have a national popular vote on the one hand, and if that is the basis by which our electoral votes, through this compact, will have no choice but to be given away to the national popular vote even though we, as a state, would've voted in another direction. Then I find that unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

So, we, as a state, have spoken, have come up with a majority and have decided that our seven

electoral votes go to "A" person. But if that "A" person is not who heads as far as the national popular vote is concerned, what will happen is, as I understand this, through the compact, we will have no choice but to give those seven electoral votes to the person who we, as a state, did not choose, but have no choice but to give that away. That, to me, goes against the very grain of what elections are all about, the voice of our constituents, the voice of our citizens. And for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I will not be able to support this legislation today. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further? My good friend from the 72nd District, Representative Larry Butler, you have the floor, sir.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wasn't planning to speak today on this issue. I was --

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

(Gavel) I'd ask you to keep the -- I'd like to

hear what the Representative has to say and I'm sure other people would as well. So, please keep your conversations down or out into the hallway. Thank you. Thank you, Representative Butler.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

Mr. Speaker, I wasn't planning to speak today. I was fine with just casting my vote for the merits of this bill and I'm very much in favor of it. But to tell you the truth, when I heard some of the commentary earlier and to hear the term "slaves and slavery" invoked about 600 or 700 times by one of our members and how they want to apply that to this debate today, you know, I felt compelled to get up and actually respond to some of that.

But first, I'm gonna just take it down a notch and just talk about the merits of the bill. Each year I try to have a mock congress with high school students and I try to give them a bill that we're debating here and have them debate it. And one of the bills that I gave them was the national popular vote. And these students actually debated this bill and they came up with the merits of it was important

because the swing states get most of the attention. They came up with the fact that, you know, for smaller states, some of their interests aren't heard in the national debate.

And they also felt that, you know, the person with the most votes should actually win an election. They felt that it was time to actually give the national popular vote a chance to prevail because, let's try it and see if the outcomes could work better for the country. So, they actually passed the bill overwhelmingly. So I was pretty proud of them about their participation, but also the fact that they used logical arguments to reach their decision.

I too share many of those same concerns and that's why I'm supporting this. But now I want to talk about this mention of slavery. In my life, growing up as a black man in America, I get a little tired of people talking about our forefathers and how brilliant they were. Yes, they came up with a great system for a new nation and I am so proud of what they did to form this nation. But they weren't

geniuses. They were very bright, but they weren't always right. And if you look in this Chambers, it's a reflection of where they were wrong many times, especially when invoke slavery into the conversation.

Because many black and brown people wouldn't be in this Chambers if it was left to them. The women in this Chamber wouldn't be in these seats if we listened to them. As a matter of fact, if you go back and look at some of the early pictures of this General Assembly, you tell me what the people in those seats look like. It looks nothing like it looks today.

So -- and I'm not gonna belabor this, but I'm just saying I am -- you know, for somebody to invoke slavery into this conversation and how it applies to this whole conversation, and then actually talked about back then they were protecting against a mob mentality. Well, the mob mentality over the history of this country didn't protect black people or slaves. There was a lot of people in that mob mentality was lynching people up to -- in big

numbers in the 1950s, '60s, and I would say even through the '70s.

I visited relatives in Alabama and, you know, they actually, you know, not too long ago and they're saying that, you know, some of the black people lived down there when they disappeared. There's not even an investigation. That's what goes -- that's what I have had to live with with my lifetime. So, please, I hope that for future bills that we stick to the merits of the bills And I swear, if I have to hear slavery, slaves invoked 5 or 600 times and try to apply it to something in front of us, you know, I don't know quite how I'm gonna act again.

But again, our forefathers were bright, they weren't always right, and I'm telling you, black and brown people who have these seats and women who have these seats, if it was left to our forefathers, we wouldn't even be here. So, they weren't always right about everything. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Butler. Will you

remark further? Will you remark further? The Deputy Speaker Pro Tem from the 110th District, Representative Godfrey.

REP. GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've been asked to sum up and close this debate because I'm a presidential elector. There were seven of us elected in 2016 and we were all nominated. I'm sorry, we're all appointed by the state parties, Republican Party and the Democratic Party appointed electors. Obviously, Mrs. Clinton won, so it was the Democratic electors that met on the second Sunday in December to cast seven votes for President of the United States. It's certainly the highest honor I've ever received. It was just astounding. It was a day of ceremony. It was a day of patriotism and it really warmed my heart to be a participant in that.

It's -- I'm not unique in this room. Representative Rosario was also an elector. And if you know Barbara Gordon who works in the LOB, she was also an elector. So, three of the seven came out of the General Assembly employees. And, you

know, we met on that day. We elected a chair. We elected a ballot counter. I learned that the Secretary of State actually has a special ballot box only used every four years for the presidential electors. To some of the debate, the ballots were preprinted, folks. They were on parchment and it was all very formal; a lot of gold seals and that kind of thing. We all signed them and put them in the ballot box. They were counted. And, yes, they were transmitted to the U.S. Senate. They were mailed. Even in the 21st century, we still rely on that.

And because of that, I had the opportunity to think about this whole system much more than I had ever before. And I learned that when the Founding Fathers put together the Constitution back in 1787 in that very hot summer in Philadelphia, they were using as their model the Roman Republic, which was ruled by what they call the Optimates, the best men, and indeed they were men. There's no question in my mind. And so, when you get things like the Connecticut Compromise, you get things like the

Electoral College. They had in mind a government that had no political parties, that was run by, you know, the best and the brightest. And, obviously, hardly before the ink was dry on the signing, that all kind of went by the by.

And that model remained through most of the 19th century, until Abraham Lincoln, at Gettysburg, changed it from this Roman Republic to a government of the people, by the people and for the people. And if you want to know more about that speech, I recommend a book by Garry Wills specifically on that topic that was just -- I found just fascinating. So, and since then, that has pretty been the driving point of how we conduct business in the governments of these United States.

But there's this remaining piece, this archaic Electoral College. This is the only time I've had a job and wanted to do away with subsequently. That is still there. And you've heard all of the debate. I'm not gonna rehash the debate on the hows and the whys and the whos. But the focus of the people of America have changed. And yes, there's been a lot

of discussion about Connecticut's influence. Well the whole point of this is to remove state influence and turn it over to the people! Abraham Lincoln was right. They should decide who the President of the United States is. Not us, not the other states, not anybody but them.

And frankly, in Connecticut, 78 percent of the voters have said they want a national popular vote, 92 percent of the Democrats and 62 percent of the Republicans. So, I like to try and stay with the people and not drag them back. I know this is the land of steady habits. I know that means we're for progress, so long as no change is involved, but I think we should listen to them.

There's also been a lot of discussion about the *Tennessee versus Virginia* case and national compacts. You shouldn't be surprised. There is actually an organization called the National Center for Interstate Compacts and you can go there and you can look over the dozens and dozens, if not hundreds of compacts, none of which needed the approval of Congress because that 1883 case still applies.

And then, the other thing I've learned being here in the legislature and being in politics and being in the civic life, there's also a sense of irony. And about 15 minutes before we started this debate today, Donald Trump voiced support for doing away with the Electoral College for presidential elections in favor of a popular vote. I think this is the first time I've agreed with him on anything, and it might even be the last.

But there's no question in my mind, for all my years in public life, in public service, that the people should make up -- should decide who is the President of the United States, not any other body, not any other group, not any other government, but the people for the United States of America should elect, directly, the President of the United States of America, and this is the way to do it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a yes vote on this. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

(Gavel) Thank you, Representative Godfrey.
Will you remark further? Will you remark further on

the bill? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House? Will the members please take your seats? The machine will be opened.

(Ringing)

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.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

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

CLERK:

House Bill 5421,

Total number Voting	150
Necessary for Passage	76
Those voting Yea	77
Those voting Nay	73

Those absent and not Voting 0

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

(Gavel) The bill passes. Are there any announcements? (Applause) Well then. Are there any announcements or introductions? I believe there might be one. Representative Zupkus, for what purpose do you rise, Madam?

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

I rise for the purpose of an introduction, please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please continue.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like for all of you to welcome Sarah Rioux. She is Miss Maritime, a local --

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

(Gavel) I'm sorry, Representative Zupkus, but I would ask the Chamber to give their full attention to you and your guest. Thank you.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So everyone, I would

like to introduce to Sarah Rioux. She is Miss Maritime, a local prospect title holder in the Miss America organization. Her platform is Bright Beginnings, which promotes quality and affordable child care for low-income families. Sarah is a good friend of mine and her mom, Kate, brought her up today. And I would -- I ask that you all welcome her. And the other good news is she will be entering UConn in the fall semester for finance. So, if you all please help me welcome Sarah and her mom to the Chamber. (Applause)

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Zupkus, thank you very much. Sarah, welcome to the Chambers, and to your mom, and we wish you great success in your future. Any -- Representative Wood, for what purpose do you rise, madam?

REP. WOOD (141ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A point of introduction, please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please continue.

REP. WOOD (141ST):

I would like to very much introduce Emily Larkin who is head of Darien's Thriving Youth Task Force, and Emma Dahlquist, a senior at Darien High School, who just won the YWCA Women of Distinction Award. They are here to present to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. I guess around here, I can use the acronym - DMAS, on one of their projects. I'm very happy to welcome them to the Chamber. Thank you. (Applause)

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Wood. And ladies, thank you for joining us and we welcome you with open arms. Further introductions? Will the Clerk please call Calendar No. 446? We'll go on to Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. I move that we suspend the rules for immediate consideration of Calendar No. 446.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Is there objection? Is there objection?

Hearing none, so ruled. (Gavel) Now back to
Calendar 446.

CLERK:

On page 56, House Calendar 446, House
Resolution No. 9 - RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF
A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE
GRADUATE EMPLOYEE UNION LOCAL 6950, INTERNATIONAL
UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE AND AGRICULTURAL
IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA - favorable report of
the House Standing Committee on Appropriations.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The esteemed Chair of the General Law
Committee, Representative D'Agostino, you have the
floor.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. I
move adoption. I would like to summarize the
resolution.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the Chamber is on
acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable -- oh,

never mind. The question is on adoption. Please proceed, Representative.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we have before us isn't just a contract, Mr. Speaker. I would characterize it as an economic development proposal. One of the strengths of the Connecticut economy is, of course, our highly-skilled workforce. And the linchpin to that workforce is our flagship university system at UConn.

The backbone of that system are the graduate students there, in particular, about 2,150 of them who serve as teaching assistant and research assistants that provide services such as lead instruction to thousands of students across all the UConn campuses. They bring in \$250 million dollars a year in research revenue to the university. Every dollar of that research revenue that they help bring in generates about \$12 dollars in economic activity for the state.

They are a remarkable engine of the UConn machine that really is, as I said, a core piece of

the strength of the Connecticut economy of that highly-skilled workforce.

This is a competitive contract. It's an affordable contract. The cumulative total costs are \$1.6 million dollars in the upcoming fiscal year, \$3.6 million dollars in fiscal year '20, \$4.7 million dollars in the following year and \$5.7 million dollars the year after that. It's a four-year contract.

The nice thing is that none of those costs are coming out of our budgetary appropriations. It's entirely borne by UConn through a combination of tuition and significantly the research grants that fund a lot of the work that the graduate students do. So what do they get?

They get free tuition when they attend UConn and serve as a TA or an RA. They get stipends and there are modest increases in their stipends in this contract, two percent a year. It works out to about \$10 dollars a week for each of them. They get health care. They're part of a very stable health care fund. This is a young group, obviously, and

therefore we expect minimal costs to insure them. And they get some fee waivers that cost about -- that accrue about \$1,500 dollars a year. All paid for, as I said, by grants and tuition.

Importantly, they remain students and all of the UConn management rights are preserved by this agreement - when they teach, how they teach, what they teach, the hours they teach. That is all determined by the university. None of the graduate students that are part of this contract are part of the SEBAC Agreement. That is completely independent. They do not get pension and they do not get health care through the SEBAC architecture.

You know, in sum, we talk a lot about keeping our younger population here, attracting a younger population here to the state. Seventy-eight percent of these graduate students are under 30, 58 percent are Connecticut residents. They either stay here or they come here. They settle here. They work here. They raise their families here and they're part of the economy here. So this is exactly the kind of economic development I think we need, and again, I

move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further on the resolution?

Representative Ziobron of the 34th District, please proceed.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to you, sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good afternoon to you.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you so much. I appreciate the very brief synopsis of this contract and I stand with several questions about it and I also would like to just say a few comments before I begin with my questioning

I don't agree that this contract is affordable. I don't agree with the explanation that this is in fact an academic workforce bill. What I would say about this contract is it continues to put in peril the ability for UConn to be sustainable with their funding. And the reason I say that is because my good friend on the other side just talked about

SEBAC briefly. And we know in the Appropriations Committee that the SEBAC contact is costing the State of Connecticut taxpayers hundreds and hundred of millions of dollars that is unsustainable.

And so, for instance, at UConn, we've had many requests because their fringe benefits rates are skyrocketing. In fact, it's gonna cost the taxpayers of this beautiful state an addition \$30 million dollars a year just in fringe benefit rates. And while this very hard-working group of residents -- or, students are not part of the SEBAC Agreement, I think their ability to be -- have that long-term commitment to our state is certainly questionable because of the underlying SEBAC Agreement that affects everything else within the university.

So, first, let's talk about how these increases are paid for and let's again talk about those increases. Again, my good friend and colleague talked about that out-year cost. So, let's highlight what that out-year cost is. It's over \$15 million dollars, \$15 million dollars to the University of Connecticut. You heard me just

mention the unintended consequences of SEBAC and the fringe benefit rates. We could go on and on, and because we are being forced to make some tough decisions, and last night we had a very long debate where we heard that over 15 percent, as much as 17 percent of our tuition that students are paying into is not going to the core functions of UConn - upgrades, landscaping, cafeteria improvements, rec hall improvements, additional courses to be offered. That's not where the 17 percent of tuition goes to at UConn. It goes to scholarships.

So if you're taking out 17 percent of the tuition that's paid by thousands of hard-working students, UConn is gonna be left with less and less flexibility in their off-budget accounts, meaning not appropriated funds.

And so I did a quick look through the endowment fund balance, and coincidentally, over the last ten years, while the stock market has had 100 percent growth, the endowment has only had 30 percent growth. We should be very concerned about the sustainability of additional contract costs and this

agreement is a line to SEBAC because it has two percent, two percent, two percent.

But in addition to not just their stipend, there was points made on the record in Appropriations that these hard-working graduate assistants make less than legislators. I had to correct the record because that's not true. These graduate assistants who work 20 hours a week make more than a sitting legislator. They pay less for their health insurance. And I think we need to be honest about the benefits that they get for their hard work, and they should get some benefits. No one is disputing the work that these graduate assistants do. But I think we need to be very clear and transparent about exactly what they are.

So, through you, Mr. Speaker, my first question to the proponent is, exactly what is the salary, stipend, benefits, not only through the stipend, tuition and fee waivers, of a typical graduate assistant?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, and just to put the answer I'm about to give in context. When we talk about the core mission of UConn, of course that's teaching and research, and these 2,151 graduate students who perform those core functions really enable the university to compete and live up to its mission of both teaching and research. That is what they do. So this isn't -- these aren't, you know, unnecessary services. In fact, by doing what they do and not only generating and bringing in that economic revenue, they are freeing up professors to do additional teaching and research, of course. And if we didn't have that, there would be a commensurate cost to UConn of paying the professors, who obviously cost a lot more to do that work.

But with respect to the specific question, it's a range. We're talking about -- mostly, graduate students work 20 hours per week over the course of an academic year, but some work less. So, if you're at the max range, if you're just starting out,

you'll make \$22,909 dollars in a stipend. If you've got a masters and are coming to UConn to teach and perform as a graduate student, as GA or a TA or an RA, you'll make \$24,106 dollars as a stipend. That's, of course, over the course of the academic year.

And if you've got a Ph.D., it's \$26,800 dollar a year stipend. That's the stipend piece and then that is prorated down based on your load. So, if you're at 70-percent, 75-percent time or 50-percent time, it's less. The average for the GAs in this group will be about \$20-21,000 dollars a year. And I should note that that is middle of the pack, competitive with other public universities across the country.

When UConn negotiated this contract, they looked at comparable universities, about two dozen of them, public universities with unionized GA workforces, and this is right in the middle of the pact. And in fact, the two-percent increase off of the stipends is actually less than the average of 2.8 percent. So, that's the stipend piece.

As the Representative and Ranking Member of Appropriations mentioned, they also get a tuition waiver. That is commonplace across the board. Again, keep in mind here, this is a competitive environment. We are competing. UConn is competing to attract these high-quality graduate students to come to UConn. They can go to UMass. They can go to Harvard. They can go to Berkley. They can go to all these other places. And every single other place they can go, the free tuition is part of the package. So that is a necessary element here and I believe the free tuition works out to about \$24 or 25,000 dollars a year. Important to note, room and board not included in this at all.

And then the other component to this, of course -- components are the health care and the fee waivers. The fee waivers total about -- it depends if you're an international student or not, but if you're not an international student, maybe about \$1,500, \$1,600 dollars in fee waivers. That's maybe \$400 to \$600 dollars additional that they would have left to actually pay.

And then the health care, yes, it's low, absolutely. The single payer pays about \$200 dollars a year. Single plus one I think is \$1,400 dollars and a family is maybe \$1,800 dollars a year. But again, important to note, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, they are part of a discrete health care plan, a partnership plan maintained by the comptroller's office. And this risk group is actually segregated and we expect very low claims because it's a young, healthy group.

So the entire package when put together has the stipends, the tuition, the fee waivers. There's some other pieces to it as well, such as some parking benefits, etcetera. All in all, as I mentioned, a very competitive package. And again, - and that's important I think for people to understand. It's not just "rewarding", if you will, students performing this work. We are actually competing to attract them here. We want the -- I mean, people with science, technology, engineering, mathematic degrees, coming here, completing their degrees, bringing in research revenue and then

hopefully staying here, to continue that research, to be part of the Connecticut economy.

These kids, and I say kids, they can go just about anywhere and so they look at the packages that they have on the table. And that's why I call this an economic development package, because that whole suite of benefits that we've just talked about are a part of that competitive package to actually bring them here.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Well hello, Madam Speaker!

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Hello to you.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

So nice to see you. So, I really do appreciate that very deep dive into the details. So, let's break it down. What did my colleagues hear? My colleagues heard that we have graduate assistants whose mission is to do teaching and research, who

work 20 hours a week or less, and who are making, when add all of the benefits together, over \$40,000 dollars a year to work less than 20 hours a week. And I want you to think about that for a second.

Because what my good friend did not mention are some additional benefits which I must share with my colleagues so you have a full understanding of the universe of this package that, certainly, we are very fortunate to have talented graduate assistants here in our state, but we also very generous, very, very generous with that package. Because in addition to making over \$40,000 dollars a year, working less than 20 hours a week, they also now, with this new agreement, get paid vacation for a total of four weeks off.

So I just want to make sure I understand that that's correct before I continue, Madam Speaker. So, when I look at the contract, is there a new clause, a new article, in fact, at the end of the contract guaranteeing a right to having four weeks paid off?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Just to put that clause -- the short answer is yes. But to put that clause in context, again, remember, these are not just teaching assistants and graduate assistants, they are also full-time students. So they're doing both those things. And just -- I would quibble with the characterization that they're paid this. They don't get a check for the tuition. It's that they just obviously don't have to pay tuition. Just like a lot of scholarship students don't pay tuition.

But nevertheless, with respect to the time off, very important to note that they, according to the contract, it's discouraged and actually they cannot take the time off during the academic year except without negotiating that with their advisors beforehand, because we don't want, obviously, a gap of four weeks off during the academic year.

So when we think about this sort of outside the realm of private employment and in the university

setting in which they sit, they are working in the fall semester, working in the spring semester, being full-time students, doing their TA responsibilities, doing their RA responsibilities, in some cases doing both. And then over the summer, when there aren't full-time class work, that's when we expect, pursuant to this contract, them to be able to take that time off. That doesn't always happen.

Research doesn't always abide by a fall and spring semester schedule, particularly critical science technology, engineering and mathematics research or lab work, especially, when you've got that going on.

So anytime that that time off needs to be taken, particularly during the school year, it has to be approved by the supervisors and the university. Again, that core mission is still within the management rights of UConn. So, it's not like they could just take the four weeks off in the middle of a semester, dump a class, not show up and nobody's teaching it.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So, I appreciate, again, the drilling down into this, but I'm gonna bring us back to just keeping it a little simple so we understand.

Students who are getting paid for learning on the job, which is exactly why we have graduate assistants, it's to help them develop the skills necessary for them to be successful further on in their careers, whether they want to become professors or, God knows, what they can become with their wonderful education opportunities at UConn. Certainly, the sky is the limit.

So for 20 hours a week, they're gonna get paid over \$40,000 dollars a year in benefits. They're getting a four-week vacation and new in this contract is an additional time off, five days for bereavement. So, that's in addition to -- that's in addition to the four weeks off. Now they get five days so that they can mourn the loss of a family member, which they certainly should have the

opportunity to do.

We have a colleague in our building today that lost her mother. She is still here working her tail off. She happens to be on the other side of the aisle, a good friend of mine. She doesn't have five days off today. She's here, dedicated to her work. But, five days off.

And I was shocked when I continued to read in article XV, section 8, where this provision is, that the university may - not shall - may require the pertinent paperwork to verify that time off. So, Through you, Mr. Speaker, does the good gentleman agree that if you're gonna get five days bereavement paid, that in fact you should be providing that documentation. In fact, I would submit, every other employer would probably require it.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I just -- just stepping back just to put a little context

here. I mentioned that about 60 percent of these students are Connecticut residents, almost a third are international students. That's significant. We do a great job recruiting from other countries. And I think this -- the five days bereavement is a recognition not only of, of course, the emotional toll of losing someone close to you, but a recognition of the fact that we have a significant international population within this GA group and it's going to require likely international travel, going to other countries, making arrangements there. In many cases, probably being gone at least those five days.

With respect to the documentation, again, I would just step back on this a little bit. This is not through your typical -- there's a very close relationship between these students and their advisors. So they're gonna know where the family is from, if this is an international student and they've gotta go travel for those five days to take care of family business in another country.

I think it's perfectly acceptable to trust that

relationship, a relationship that's borne over the course of the academic year and involved in both the student's study and the workload, to sign off on that leave. I'm sure the university will require the appropriate documentation when they think it's necessary. But that just helps with -- in terms of the context of where this is coming from and why I think it's a "may" rather than a "shall."

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I certainly can appreciate our dedicated international students. We certainly have a wide variety of diversity at UConn and probably at many of our college campuses across the state and we're fortunate to have those opportunities to learn from each other and really get into understanding the culture of our friends around the world.

If this wasn't simply a provision to address our international friends, then why not have a

contract that separates that bereavement time? Why not say international GAs have five days and in-state GAs have a couple days? Why not make that distinction? And I still submit to you, I don't know anyone in the private industry that would give this kind of benefit that wouldn't ask for documentation.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Again, you know, not being part of the negotiating team, I really can't answer the specifics of that. I can only assume that UConn is again very well familiar with this student population. They trust the relationships between the advisors and the students and they're gonna require appropriate documentation in the circumstance -- whether they're international students or not, they're gonna -- if they've got any kind of suspicion or they don't have that kind of trust level, they'll require the documentation.

But I think, you know, the way that they've chosen to do this is probably, again, more -- if nothing else, just an administrative simplicity from UConn's standpoint, knowing the relationships that they have, trusting the graduate departments to administer this appropriately.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So, moving on in other areas of the contract. In article XVIII, in various sections, there's all kinds of new parking fees and other fees that have been waived. I believe there is a one-time fee credit of \$300 dollars included in that section.

Further down, when you look, you talk about another new fee that the contract recognizes that's yet to be assessed on all of our students, called the student recreation fee. All of the students at UConn will be facing this new fee, which should be paying for our investment in providing a state-of-

the-art, updated facility for UConn at taxpayer expense through our bond side of our budget. Why wouldn't the graduate assistants be responsible for paying into this new fee so that they can too help to support the operating expenses of our flagship university in this new facility? And that is another example of how I don't think you can clearly state that no taxpayer funds are being used.

Because while those over 2,000 students won't be paying the fee for the upkeep of this new building, everybody else will be.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, with respect to the fees, it is a bit of a mix of old and new. The parking waivers were -- are a part of the old contract. And, again, when we talk about the fees, it's a combination of waivers or credits. With respect to that student activity fee -- excuse me, the general university fee, there's a \$300 dollar

credit that they get under this contract.

Keep in mind, the university has the authority every year, every year, to raise those fees and assess new fees. They can do that, both with the graduate population and the student population. Their right to do that as a university is not infringed by this contract. So that credit remains the same over the contract term, even if next year, UConn decides to raise that fee to \$500 dollars, for example.

All in, we're talking about for noninternational students maybe about \$1,500 dollars in total fee waivers out of maybe, say, \$2,000 in fees that they would charge. So they're still paying. They've got some skin in the game on the waivers. The international students get an additional stipend, if you will, for some repatriation and some insurance parts of what they need to do, but they do get that supplement with respect to parking. Again, that's part of this sort of attraction package. This idea that we want to say okay, here's -- you know, if you're working on a

lab, you can park close to the lab. But that's the overall fee package.

And again, in terms of affordability, and I want to be very clear here. I mentioned it in my opening remarks, but the Representative just touched on it, so I think it's worth us sort of just taking this -- a second on it. This does not come out of the university's allocation that we give them and that goes primarily toward the undergraduate students.

When you look at how this overall amount if paid for for these GAs, according to UConn, it comes from two main sources. First is those research dollars. So that is just research dollars coming in from federal grants, other state grants, private institutions, private company grants for research. That money comes in and in part funds exactly what these GAs do when they do research work.

Separate and apart from that is the tuition that UConn charges to students. Under-graduate tuition is over here in a different bucket, not touched. Every year, UConn brings in about \$42-\$43

million dollars in graduate tuition. A piece of that graduate tuition helps pay for, in addition to those research dollars, this allocation -- the contract costs for the GAs here. So we're not touching the operating budget, the money we give to UConn each year. This is entirely self-contained, according to UConn, mainly through those research dollars and the tuition for the graduate students.

And so the fees are indeed part of that, but when we're talking about an overall, if you will, incentive package to bring them here, this is a -- I would characterize it as a modest package when I look at the comparables to those 25 other public universities, some of which give 100 percent fee waivers with respect to the graduate students performing TA and RA work.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I think that's really an interesting way to describe this

package, as moderate. I wonder if those other universities that were in the kind of benchmark series were also facing a \$5 billion dollar budget deficit in 2020, if they would be as generous as the state is in this contract.

When we look at the two-percent increase in each year; that sounds like maybe a little reasonable, of course, until you realize it's every year over so many years and you have to compound that up. But when I read further in the contract, in article XXI, section 6, it talks about that stipend potentially being a minimum. I'd like the good Representative to explain and give some confidence to the taxpayers of this state and to my good colleagues in the room why that kind of language would be in the contract as a minimum and not a maximum.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate that

question. Yes. So the stipend amount set forth in the contract, it does say minimum. I can tell you two things. One, I've been told -- I don't have a document to back this up, but I've been told that no one makes over the minimum. But the university, again, thinking of this in terms of that package that being able to attract people, let's say you've got a Ph.D. candidate who's doing molecular research and the kind of thing that's gonna bring in literally hundreds of millions of dollars in research grants to the university. And that person has got options on the table - Harvard, Yale, UConn, etcetera. Maybe the university does want that ability to go above the minimum in a stipend for that particular candidate that they want to attract, just like any employer in a competitive environment may want that flexibility.

So that is why I think that the minimum is in there. But I've been told, and I can assure the Chamber that no one, at least currently, is above the minimum. And I believe, historically, no one has been above the minimum. But, again, it's that

option -- this is frankly a management rights issue. That they want that option should the appropriate candidate present herself or himself.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I think appreciate my colleague answering these questions. I only have a few more before I'm sure maybe some of my other colleagues do as well. Again, we use the term moderate to talk about this contract. Yesterday, I joined with my colleagues to support some health care conversations that we had in this building very late at night. Some of my colleagues and good friends on this side of the aisle were very concerned about the increased cost of health insurance unintentionally in that debate.

So when I look at this health insurance package, I can't help but say to you that there is nothing moderate about their health care package. Their health care package is one every single one of

my constituents would beg for. So, let's talk about exactly what it is.

So, an individual is \$200 dollars per year - per year. That's not per month. That's not per week. In fact, the first time I read that fiscal note, I thought it was a misprint and I had to go get clarification. So, on top of making \$40,000 dollars a year, getting four weeks vacation, they pay \$200 dollars per year for health insurance.

If they have a spouse, they're paying \$1,440 dollars per year. Again, not per month, like many of my constituents are, per year.

And if they have a family, if they're so fortunate to have a beautiful family and there up at Storrs, doing their good work, that cost is \$1,822 dollars per year - per year. And I think it's important to understand that because the negotiated agreement, if you just were to read the headlines, it would say, hey, we have an increase in insurance co-pays.

But if you read the fine print, the increase happens in 2021 and it's \$40 dollars per year - per

year. So instead of that hard-working graduate assistants paying \$200 dollars a year for their health insurance, in 2021, they're gonna be paying \$240 dollars a year.

I listened to the debate last night. My good friend, Representative Ackert, my good friend, Representative Cheeseman, talk about the concerns that they had and the stories that they had regarding health insurance. And I think when we talk about the benefits that these hard-working students provide; you have to at least be able to say that we are very generous in our benefits that we give to them through this contract. To say it's a moderate contract is not, I don't think, a full description of the benefits that they are receiving.

Then, when we were in the Appropriations Committee, I asked some other questions, like, how long is the average graduate assistant working for? How old is the average graduate assistant? When we hear the terminology that it's kids, I don't think that's fully reflective when you hear the breakout of the percentages.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the fact that this was a fair negotiation with unions to provide these benefits, but I don't think we can call it a moderate package.

And then the last thing I just want to point out for colleagues is this. In addition to all of these benefits, this group of students, within their body, have three union stewards that they are allowed to have on college campuses. So in addition to all of those benefits I just talked about, there are three individuals that never have to go to work. That can do union business on college time and still get those benefits. And if you recall, in one of our agencies in this state budget, we've heard horror stories how we've had one union steward paid over six figures a year, their supervisor has yet to meet them because he's never gone into the office.

Having three GAs on union time in addition to all of the other things I talked about clearly pushes this package from the moderate category into another category. And it's for that reason and all the reasons I laid out that I just cannot support

this contract at this time. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Ziobron. We'll follow that up with Representative Davis of the 57th District. The floor is yours, sir.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with a very unique perspective, perhaps. I was a graduate assistant at the University of Connecticut when I was elected to this very position and resigned from that position minutes before I got sworn in standing in the back row of this very Chamber. So I understand the issues that these graduate assistants are facing and what they do when they are on campus and how they operate and the services that they provide, not only to the professors that they might serve under, but also the students in which they help teach and perform research with.

And I attended the University of Connecticut for my undergrad. I then went back for my masters' degree and paid out of pocket for that as well, and then received a graduate assistantship when I

entered the Ph.D. program at that time. And I understand how much of an impact it has to be able to have that tuition waiver. And when I went to the University of Connecticut for that program when I became a graduate assistant, we were not unionized. There was no union in place. So I did receive the stipend for the class that I helped teach and I did receive the union -- or the tuition waiver as part of that package.

However, I have had the opportunity to read through this agreement and I feel like it -- that there's a lot in here that gives me concern. And I actually went into this with a very open mind, understanding where they were coming from and how a stipend can make the difference between your ability to go to that graduate school or not and whether that tuition waiver makes the choice between going there or not.

And I understand the important of perhaps giving that two-percent increase in that stipend. In the cost of living and the changes that you have in your life, that is very important. But there's

many other things, as described by the kind Ranking Member of the Appropriations Committee, that go above and beyond what traditionally in the past might've been what you received as a graduate assistant.

I have concerns about the waiver of some of these fees. As far as I know, I don't believe I had any of those fees waived. And through you, Mr. Speaker, if I may ask a question to the proponent of the bill. The waiver of the recreation fee that they would be able to apply; would they still have access to the student recreation facilities and programs?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, they would have

access to the programs, but they wouldn't have to pay for them, while all the other students would. Through you, Mr. Speaker. Currently, under their current agreement that they have, do they pay the full price for parking fees?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. You know, as I mentioned, yeah, parking is part of the package here. There's a reduced fee for parking and also some closer parking to where they're working, again, part of the overall package.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I certainly understand that. Anybody with a perspective of where the university was, I had to park up at the hockey arena's parking lot and walk all the way down to Arjona and Monteith. So, I do understand that

concern, especially in those cold months up there in the Storrs campus, but.

They are currently paying the fees at the student level or would these GAs be paying the fees at the employee level currently and then how was that changed in this contract?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I -- the way I think about it in my mind are the graduate fees -- the overall fees that are both undergraduates and graduates share in the undergraduate fees. So, obviously, the fee waivers here apply only to the university-wide fees and graduate-specific fees.

And again, as I mentioned, we're talking a net amount here of maybe \$1,500 dollars a year in fee waivers, and again, the university has the complete authority to increase those fees, add new fees each year, graduate-specific or not. They've retained that entire right.

So, you know, -- and I guess I understand the issue of okay, well, they're not paying for a rec fee but they can use the recreational facilities. Well they're -- yeah, they're not paying for tuition, but they're also students at the university. I mean, it's a little bit of a false dichotomy.

I mean, the idea here is, again, an overall package and when we're talking about the fees specifically, it's not a 100 percent waiver of top to bottom of all the fees, but it is a selection of them negotiated with the university. Some are waivers and some are credits, and at the end of the day, we're talking-- their still out-of-pocket may be \$400-\$500 dollars in fees, which again, I should note, could go up next year, go up the year after that and the year after that. The contract does not float with those fees. The university has the complete ability to manage that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you. And I certainly understand the kind Chairman's perspective on that. And through you, Mr. Speaker, do -- under the professor's contract, do they have a waiver of their parking fees or a 50 percent waiver of their employee parking fees?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I confess this is the only contract I studied on the way here, this one and the prior one. So I am not familiar with the arrangements that the professors have off the top of my head.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I understand that and I won't belabor the differences between the graduate assistants and the professors and the work that they do that's similar and dissimilar. So,

I'll move onto another topic.

I understand in this contract they receive a child care waiver and its' capped, and I understand that as well. And perhaps, with his unique perspective on the SEBAC Agreement, through you, Mr. Speaker, are there any other state employees that would receive a child care cost or waiver.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. So, it's not a waiver. This is something that was part of the existing contract. Originally, it was about \$80,000 dollars a year put aside for child care. Again, we're talking about -- most are single, but those with families; these are young couples with young families, and so child care is an integral part of freeing them up.

And again, as I mentioned, 100-percent full-time students, and then on top of that working as a research assistant and teaching assistant or both.

So, freeing that up was a very important part of the negotiation for this particular group. I'm not familiar off the top of the head with other state contract provisions that have a fund, if you will, that's dedicated to child care like this one is here. This was part of the original contract. It's been expanded into this new contract. That was important to the graduate student population that's part of this contract. Again, I think it was important to the university to make sure that they were freed up, again, to be full-time students and essentially full-time employees during the academic year.

A couple of other notes about that child care fund, if you will, the provision in the contract. It does not carry over. Nobody gets a check or anything like that. You get reimbursed for your child care. If it's all not used; let's say \$100 thousand dollars of it is not used in a particular year, that is [inaudible - 05:14:51] back to the university. So it's use it or lose it. It doesn't rollover each year and nobody gets a check cut to

them, etcetera.

But because of the unique nature of this population and what they do, they obviously felt from a negotiating standpoint that that was very important, and of course they gave up other things to get something like that, i.e. increased stipends, which I mentioned are more in the middle of the pack when we look at other universities. So, that's how I would characterize this. It's not so much a fee waiver, but that fund was an important core component to this population.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I certainly understand, you know, being a full-time student and having to still teach a course, having to read, you know, several books, full-length books, sometimes in a week and still write papers and still grade other students' papers. Sometimes -- in my class, I think was over 200 students that I graded a lot of their

papers. But, through you, Mr. Speaker, these students are now unionized. These graduate assistant students are now unionized, and through you, Mr. Speaker, how much of their stipend goes towards their union dues?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I do not know the exact amount of dues that are paid by each member. That is obviously something that's between the member and the union. It's not -- again, the university does not -- no stage agency pays a member's dues.

Dues come out of, in this case, the graduate assistant's pockets, their stipend or otherwise. And that can be -- there's a provision in here that allows at least the deduction of that if the student so chooses. But the dues relationship, the amount, that is between the students, or excuse me, the union members and the union. I do not know the

particular dues amount for these particular members off the top of my head. But I would posit that that is really irrelevant from our perspective. We are not paying that. They are paying that by virtue of the union members.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I think back to my time there and I certainly considered myself incredibly lucky that I just received that stipend, incredibly lucky that I received that tuition waiver, because as I mentioned, I went two years in the graduate program without receiving those things and then I did. Through you, Mr. Speaker. Is every graduate assistant at the university now a union member? Or can they choose not to be a member of the union?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. No, not every member is. They're just -- again, stepping back, you've got about 7,000-plus graduate students, only about 2,150 are members of this particular unit and governed by this contract. There are others that choose to not be members. They may have a discrete separate funding source for a particular research project and they say, no, I don't want to be part of this architecture. I'm gonna do that separately. Some self-fund.

But given the unique nature of, in particular research, and where funding comes from research, there are graduate students involved in research who are not part of this. This is voluntary, you're a part of it; 2,150 are. I think the university likes having most of them under this umbrella because it certainly helps with administrative costs and oversight.

The Representative mentioned his prior time there without being part of a contract. And in my understanding it that when that was case, this was

literally on a department-by-department basis, and so you had different stipends, different benefits, different arrangements, literally on an ad hoc, piecemeal basis. Just think about the overall administrative costs and weight of that to the university and to the students. So, I think we're lucky that most our part of this structure, but not all are.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm glad he mentioned that, because I certainly appreciated the freedom to be able to negotiate those things myself outside being part of a collectively-bargained unit to do so.

But I went into this vote here today with an open mind. As I mentioned before, I did understand the importance of what they were fighting for. I knew particularly well exactly the hardships that you face as being a graduate student and then being

asked to be a graduate assistant and having to teach and be a full-time student, and then in certain cases have a family as well. And the pay is not great, but you do get that tuition waiver and you do get to be that student earning that degree that you so very much want.

And I was open to voting for this contract until I started reading the details of the contract. And the thing that really set my decision to go no on the contract is the idea that three of these graduate students don't have to teach a single class. They don't have to participate in any research.

They don't have to do any of that because they get to be union stewards. So, other students pay tuition to the University of Connecticut and then the University of Connecticut pays stipends and gives waivers and gives tuition waivers and fee waivers and everything else to these three graduate students, who in turn do not actually provide a service to those students, but instead provide a service to the union in which they are members of.

And to me, that is fundamentally wrong, fundamentally an issue with this contract, in addition to some of the other areas that were touched upon by the kind gentle lady from Haddam.

So, I will be voting no here today for those reasons. I'm concerned about how far this goes. I'm concerned about the unionization of these students. I'm concerned about the fact that the unions now have union stewards that are receiving tuition dollars from students while not even seeing a benefit from that because they are union stewards and not actually teaching classes or doing research. And for those reason, I'll be voting no here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Davis. Will you remark further on the resolution? From the 143rd District, Representative Lavielle, you have the floor, madam.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good afternoon, madam!

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you very much. Before I ask a few questions and make my remarks, I'll preface this by saying that the good gentleman from Ellington and I share an experience on this, but mine's a little bit different and it's relevant to my perception of this contract.

I bookended my career with two stays; I supposed I should call it, in graduate school in Ph.D. programs. One was at Yale, longer ago than I would like to detail. And one was very recently at UConn. From the years 2008 until the end of 2010, when I was elected to this Assembly and stopped my graduate student term at UConn because it was a conflict of interest.

So, I experienced this firsthand, although at that time, as the Representative from Ellington said, we were not unionized then. A few questions for the proponent, if I may, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Of course. Please proceed.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

The good gentleman referred a few minutes ago to the need for UConn to compete for the best graduate students with other universities in the country. How many of the university or the state universities, public universities in the United States have graduate students who are unionized?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I can't give you a statistic for every university across the country. What I can tell you is that in preparing to and negotiating for this contract, what UConn did is it looked at a pool of universities, most of which who are public - UMass, UMass Amherst, UMass Boston, URI, etcetera - all of which were public. Some in the University of California system, and all of which had unionized employees, so that they were making an apples-to-apples comparison. All told

about 24 or 25 universities so they could make that comparison where they felt comfortable looking at the entire package and saying are we competitive or not?

They really did do their homework on this. I don't have an answer, as I said, of the numbers of unionized GA workforces across the country. Some are, some aren't. In this case, we were comparing to a good core group of about 25. Thank you.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And does the Representative know if the comparisons were made only with universities that have unionized graduate students? Or was it made with a broader pool?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through these -- the ones that they compared it

to, they were all univ -- unionized. Excuse me.
And they were predominantly public research
universities.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. I find that curious because as
someone preparing to go to graduate school, I know
from my own experience and I -- because I did it at
different stages of my life and I had a lot to
choose from. I always assessed the program, the
quality of the faculty, also was I going to get a
half ride, a full ride, no ride, anything in
addition. Would I have an assistantship or a
research assistantship or nothing at all, or were
there jobs available on campus? Whether or not
those things came through union negotiations or not
was not really a determinate for me.

So, I guess my question is do we have, as a
result of some of this research and comparison, any
idea of how UConn, as a place that a graduate

student might choose, stands up against other universities, whether they are unionized or not?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I think that'd be a very difficult comparison, because I had mentioned -- and just going back to the Representative's example. So, if you're -- let's say you're making that decision, right. You want to figure out where you want to go and you've got a number of options on the table. Much easier for you to look at a place that's unionized and say, here's my package all in one place. What's my stipend gonna be? Not just what my stipend's gonna be this year, but a year from now, two years from now.

That's gotta be very attractive and very helpful for somebody making those decisions versus a non -- comparing yourself to a nonunionized graduate program where you only have an assurance for one year and it's going to depend department by

department and I would imagine even supervisor by supervisor.

So, to me, and I think I can say this rather confidently, from a UConn perspective and a graduate student perspective, having this as your comparator really does help because it's all in one place, you know what it is, you know what it is two years. Because remember, these graduate students are coming on average for a three to five-year program. So now you can look at this and say I've got a four-year, here's what I know that package is going to be and I can compare that to this university or that university.

Certainly, if you've got an offer on the table from a private university that's not -- nonunionized, you'll have to make those comparisons, but the biggest factor I would think in your mind is boy, I've only got that guarantee on the table for one year, maybe two years max, versus being able to look at what that benefit package is by contract over time. So that's a long way of saying I don't know the answer on a university-by-university basis

for every single nonunionized private university,
but again, when the homework was done here, having
that comparator pool I think was very useful, both
for the graduate students and for UConn.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Lavielle. (Gavel)

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the good
Representative's answer and would appreciate it more
if my experience hadn't given me another perspective
on that.

When I was at Yale, I was given the conditions
of what I would receive financially on the level of
tuition and other stipends for a four-year term.

When I was at UConn, I was given a tuition
waiver plus a teaching stipend for a four-year term.
And I know exactly how much it was. Provided, of
course, they didn't kick me out because I didn't
meet a review or something, but I was given -- I was
told exactly how much it was.

That may no longer be the case at some places,

but I know that at many universities that one might consider; if one were considering an offer from UConn and other, it's still the case.

So, I guess I'm somewhat concerned that a negotiating exercise is actually being set up as the basis for and the means of enabling UConn to compete with a variety of universities that are simply forming the market for graduate students, as UConn is, and determining UConn's competitiveness for graduate students as opposed to what it looks more to be doing, which is offering the conditions that the graduate students are in effect lobbying for.

I think that it's a limited world view of what the market offers and it does not necessarily -- is not necessarily being done with -- on -- supported by the wisdom and experience of people who are constantly engaged in nationwide surveys of admissions, research competency, faculty quality, and so on and so forth. All of those factors go into this and not just financial and other related benefits. That's one concern of mine.

I also have a specific question related to

that. I wondered if the Representative could elaborate on the relationship to the fact I mentioned earlier that Ph.D. students at UConn, to my knowledge still; I may be wrong, but I believe I am right, are reviewed every year that they are in attendance in a Ph.D. program. It's sort of easy when you're taking courses. You just have to pass the courses. But when you get a little farther along, you have to pass certain exams, you have to write certain pieces of research, you have to submit a good deal of material.

And if you're looking at a union contract that is spread out over four years, does that union contract make any reference to what happens if a student is asked not to continue?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. Imbedded in this contract is the core concept that these are students and therefore they must meet all of those

rigorous academic requirements as graduate students, be it a Ph.D. candidate or otherwise. And if you do not, you leave the university. And this contract does not guarantee you any kind of relief from those academic requirements, and in fact, the university's control over those academic requirements. It is preserved specifically by this agreement because we want that clear sort of division of responsibility here.

Again, students and employees and to the extent that they are students, they must meet every single one of those dissertation requirements, defense requirements, etcetera, to continue as a student. And if they are disciplined, thrown out, fail to meet those requirements in any respect in terms of their academic career, there is no saving grace from this contract.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the

Representative for that answer. I will move to my -
- I have three points, so I'll move to my second
one.

A few questions. I noticed that the fiscal
note, and I think the Ranking Member of
Appropriations mentioned this already, but there are
some increases every year, from \$1.6 million dollars
to \$3.6 to \$4.7 to \$5.6 through each year. Those
are the amounts of the increases each year. There
is a mention somewhere, in either the fiscal note or
the contract or our discussions earlier in the
Appropriations Committee, that UConn is anticipated
to be able to meet these expenses.

But I am curious, as we have seen tuition
increase by double-digit percentages over the last
few years at UConn as well as our other state
universities, are we expecting this to come out of
appropriations that are routinely allocated to UConn
each one of these years? Are we expecting that if
that isn't possible that tuition increases would be
necessary to meet them? What exactly -- where
exactly is this going to hit?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. So, again, and this is according to UConn, this does not come out of the allocation to the university that the state provides. The funding for this contract and these particular GAs comes from two main sources, one, those independent research dollars. So, you know, they're bringing that in through private enterprise, private institutions, a lot of federal grant money. So that goes and funds a lot of that RA work right off the bat and we don't have to worry about that. That's not something that we touch. That's what comes out of those dollars. And again, there's usually literally on an annual basis \$200-\$250 million dollars and that more than enough to cover this.

But the way that UConn also budgets for the contract here is also on the tuition end of things. Now, there's undergraduate tuition and there's

graduate school tuition. All in on an annual basis, UConn brings in about \$42.7 million dollars in just graduate tuition. So, when we take a piece of the graduate tuition dollars and we take a piece of the research dollars and then they allocate some to what UConn calls self-generated revenue - sales, services, course fees, etcetera - that they do, that's a de minimus part of it. That's how UConn pays for this.

And what they've done, and again, this is not anything new, they've been dealing with this contract now since 2015. That's how they paid for it in the last few years, without touching at all the core money that we provide that really goes to the undergraduate experience. These folks are not even on the books with respect to where the deans are, etcetera, for benefits, etcetera. They are completely different.

As I mentioned on the health care side, they are part of that partnership plan. And the core funding here is research dollars and graduate tuition dollars. From the numbers I've seen from

UConn more than make up for covering this contract.

And what they've said -- and I wasn't at Appropriations, another Representative was. But what from I understand what they said is, look, we've costed this out over time. We've included in our cost assumptions the fact that our revenue fluctuates - the revenue dollars that come in from research, the tuition dollars, etcetera. We're not anticipating any tuition increases needed to pay for this. They don't think that's possible, or, excuse, needed for this. That it's entirely gonna be taken care of from those two main funding sources.

And again, importantly, what they've said over and over again and OFA -- I know unequivocally, OFA unequivocally agrees that the money is there at UConn to do this without touching the allocation that we provide.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do know that

research grants are not necessarily predictable. They have to be applied for on a regular basis. Faculty come and go. People are regular recipients, although not guaranteed, but regular recipients of grants from certain institutions might leave. You know, tenure keeps your job for you, but it doesn't prevent you from deciding you might want to go elsewhere.

I worry and I -- this is a hangover also from the public hearing on the contract. I do worry that at some point the burden of this will fall on tuition-paying students and that would be one thing, under certain circumstances, if it was the development of a program that all students were benefiting from, but I think it has other implications. And here's where I come to my third point, which is the one that is really of most concern to me in discussing this contract.

Representative D'Agostino mentioned several times, and you're right, he's right, that the people are students. Of course they are. And as students, they have a lot of work. You bet. I hope so. I

was happy to have all that work when I had it. But as students, we've got something; we've got kind of an ambiguous mixing going on here.

You are given a tuition waiver because it's considered a value to the academic community that you become qualified in a research discipline. So you're given a tuition waiver for which you are able to obtain for yourself coursework, advising by faculty, and then you are given a stipend because you are also learning through experience, either as a teaching assistant or a research assistant.

Many people who; I would say most, who act as graduate teaching assistants are doing it for the very first time. They have never been in front of a classroom. Research assistants, also maybe they've never done that before. You're getting a real taste of what a professor does and how they put their books together. This is experience you couldn't go and get on your own. You need either a class or you need a professor. You are not a fully -- you are not even a semi-qualified professional when you start this. You are learning from the ground up and

you get really good training. I must admit.

So, with this ability to negotiate contracts and to sort of square off one's likely benefit with perhaps either the benefit of the university or the taxpayers who subsidize it, or the students who pay the tuition to go there, you're sort of couched as an employee and you're receiving benefits and wages and compensation the way an employee would. It's very much mixed. And what really disturbs me is the way that it's reflected in the way that this is all managed at the university.

I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, the Representative, if he has any idea, if he has any information on how often during a typical undergraduate four-year courses the students at UConn are taught by full faculty members?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I just -- stepping back for a minute on the question, I do want to note

that the Representative's concern, if you will, with respect to that experience level is of course reflected in the stipend. Say, somebody coming in as a beginner level makes less in a stipend than someone coming in as a Ph.D. candidate whose got that background of the masters and the experience coming in. So, there's a reflection of that in the stipend level.

I can tell you, in terms of just the work that I know what these students provide, front-facing to about 20,000 of our undergraduates. Now, I don't know how that compares exactly to the full-time and adjunct professors in the hours of instruction that they give. We could certainly get that and compare it. But I think a very important thing note here, and I'm sure the Representative from her experience will appreciate this, is you're freeing up, you know, what the role, again that dual mission - research and teaching.

Putting the research to the side, the teaching functions that these GAs perform also not only expand the opportunities for thousand of

undergraduates, because it simply wouldn't be possible for the limited professors that we have to teach those 20,000 extra man hours of front-facing course time to students. We'd have to hire hundreds of more faculty just to do that, and obviously that amount would come out of the appropriations and we couldn't afford to do that.

So really what you're doing here with these GAs is freeing the university economically from that sort of shackle and saying, you know, the professors will teach when they teach -- I think -- and I don't have comparison numbers. Frees them up for research, frees them up for additional teaching responsibilities. But at its core, these students, these more than 2,000 graduate students, then enable those opportunities for undergrads to take courses at the university campuses. Opportunities that would not be there otherwise but for their existence as TAs.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My experience gives me a different perspective. When I was a graduate student at UConn, yes, I happened to have had 26 years of professional experience in the subject that I was teaching. That was strange. I was older than everybody else there, a lot older.

My colleagues in the department and I were each given classes -- two classes a semester with 40 students each. Some of those people had never been in front of a class in their lives. Many of them didn't know much about the subject they were teaching, but they were learning. They were great people.

And many of the students I had told me that they had never -- they were juniors and seniors, all of them. None were freshmen or sophomores. Some of them told me that they had never once in their experience at UConn had a full member of the faculty teach them, ever. This was of great, great concern to me. Some of the professors in the department never taught a course except for a graduate course.

Now, that's -- I guess that's UConn's business and I guess that's, you know, up to them to decide how they want to manage that. I'm not a member of their faculty or an administrator there, so I won't put myself in the weeds.

However, what I will say is that here we are increasing very substantially the stipends, the fees, the exemptions and so on that are being given to graduate students, paid for by these very same students who are not receiving the benefit of full faculty instruction and who will possibly see their tuition go up as a consequence. This is very deeply concerning to me.

And, so I ask, what is the impact of this way of managing graduate student compensation on undergraduates, on the value of a UConn Ph.D. itself, and finally, on the quality of the university at the end of the day? And when we begin to deval -- to diminish the value of a Ph.D. as a qualification, I think we're entering dangerous territory.

I -- it concerns me that people who are

benefitting from funding that comes from the state and the taxpayers who fund the state to get -- and from student and their parents who pay a tuition. They're benefiting from that and yet at the same time, what they're ready doing is getting an education and becoming the trained professional they have every right to be and we want them to be. But they are still allowed the privilege and the benefits of negotiating as people who are already qualified to teach and do research at the university level.

And because of that, Mr. Speaker, I will be voting no today on this contract. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Lavielle. Will you remark further on the resolution? From the 54th District, Representative Haddad, you have the floor, sir.

REP. HADDAD (54TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution. I wanted to thank Representative D'Agostino. He's done a very capable

job of describing, I think, the agreement and answering questions. I had a couple of additional comments that I wanted to add in my experience of -- as the Chair of the Higher Education Committee and a member of the Appropriations Committee.

First and foremost, I just wanted to reiterate what Representative D'Agostino has said a number of times that this contract will be funded, not through state appropriations, but through the revenue of the University of Connecticut. They have asserted and testified before the Appropriations Committee that they have that information -- that revenue available to them. And as such, actually I -- like, I'm not even sure why this is a hard vote.

Typically, when we have voted on union contracts in the past, it has been really limited to our assessment of our ability to fund the contract through our general fund. This has no general fund obliga -- impact and I think, on balance, it's a good contract. The agreement, as we have heard through Representative D'Agostino, has an important health provisions, maintains the quality of health

insurance for GAs and their families. That's an important aspect.

The particular plan that they use through the partnership plan has helped save UConn hundreds of thousands of dollars through the provision of health care benefits in that manner. It provides reasonable improvements to compensation. The average salary, again, to mention it, of these graduate assistants is just \$20,000 dollars. The average raise on a yearly basis is about \$400 dollars and, if my math is correct, that comes about to less than \$8 dollars a week. That's what we're talking about. For folks who take home about \$20,000 dollars of income, we're talking about an \$8 dollar a week raise, and we're hearing folks describe that as somehow unaffordable even though that is not being bor -- that cost is not being borne by the general fund.

I acknowledge that there's a tuition waiver here. I know this -- I don't think that that's income. I'm told that that's not reportable as income. I also know from experience with my

friends, some of whom I know these folks. And in Mansfield, one of the members of this unit, his daughter goes to the same daycare as my daughter. I know what I pay to send my daughter to that daycare. I'm not sure how he does it on this salary. But I know that this tuition waiver doesn't help him pay his daycare bill. I'm glad that there's some daycare benefit here.

I've been to his house, by the way. It's quite modest. He lives like a student, he and his wife and his family. And I -- as I have heard a number of people talk about how the hard work. I think they relish the work they do. I think they are encouraged by the university to contribute to our state. They are pursuing advanced degrees that will help them become the future of our workforce and the future leaders of our state. And I think that we should do everything we can possible to encourage their presence here in the State of Connecticut.

Representative D'Agostino also mentioned the cost of -- to the university that's avoided by utilizing graduate employees to do the work of -- in

both a research and teaching assignments. I'm told from the University of Connecticut that if we weren't using graduate students to do this work, they would have to hire associate professors and residents. These are folks that the university has been hiring to teach courses. They are cheaper than tenured-track faculty members, but they earn a salary of about \$72,000 dollars a year. Their fringe -- with fringe benefit, that cost if \$108,000 thousand dollars a year.

I think that we forget that our institutions of higher education in Connecticut are really enterprises unto themselves. They certainly are subsidized through the block grants that we provide them, ever diminishing block grants I might add. But the university is responsible for providing a quality education to its consumers, for conduction, in the case of UConn, research that drives -- that will drive our economy in the future, and for meeting all of the other expectations that we have of our research university and they do so by very careful planning of both their expenditures and also

of their revenues.

All of this comes together, I think, in an overall strategy to employ all of the tools that higher education officials use across the country to provide education that meet those needs that includes employing faculty and graduate assistants, maximizing enrollment.

We had a long conversation yesterday about using financial aid to increase enrollment. But ultimately in the end, I think that what we are doing with this contract is merely ratifying an agreement that University of Connecticut Board of Trustees has asserted is in the best interest of the university, that the graduate student employees themselves have negotiated in good faith. It's a good contract and I urge my colleagues to support the resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the resolution? From the 108th District, Representative Smith, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Mr. Speaker, you've been up there a long time and now we have a new Speaker. You've been relieved. Welcome, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Please proceed.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Thank you. You know, just a quick comment before I get into some of the questions that I have for my colleague, Representative D'Agostino. In response to the last speaker's commentary about finds it difficult to believe we're even talking about this bill and why we would have a hard time voting for it.

I could tell you that I have received many pieces of correspondence and communications from my constituents indicating that the cost of UConn is too high, that the funds are not being used wisely, that they're being expended in places where they should not be expended. So even though these funds may or may not be coming from the general fund, they are coming from somewhere, and I would suspect from the monies that have been paid by students to go to

UConn to actually fund these activities.

So, these are some of the concerns that my constituents have and some of the reasons why some of my colleagues have stood up here today and asked the questions they have asked and we'll continue to ask those questions until we get all the answers that we do in fact need.

And I would be -- I guess I wouldn't be surprised, but I suspect my constituents would be surprised to find out that these funds are in fact being used for purposes other than education. For instance, payment going to three union stewards to do union business. I'm not sure how many folks out there actually know that. I'm not sure those folks realize that when they send a tuition payment, they're actually funding collective bargaining and union dues and union activities. I'm not sure if that's disclosed anywhere.

So I guess my first question, through you, Madam Speaker, to my good colleague is, is that disclosure made to anyone who funds these types of activities.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Don't mess with the new Speaker, to my colleague on the General Law Committee. Again, just stepping back a bit. I want to be clear. I've said that a couple of times, but I think it bears repeating that none of the cost of this contract, and you don't have to take my word for it. This comes right out of OFA. Borne by the university, mainly through the research grants. And if you look at the different tuition strands that come in, the graduate tuition strands. Any time someone's paying tuition, whether it's undergraduate tuition, graduate tuition, that's going to fund the university.

At a public university like Connecticut, UConn, UMass, wherever, the professors are organized, the staff is organized, there's -- the custodians are organized. I mean, that is part of the structure that we have with a public university and you can go

to other public universities and it's like that. So there is no -- you know, nobody gets a disclosure that says that.

But, critically here, and Representative Haddad said it much better than I possibly could, this particular cost of this contract saves Connecticut money, saves people tuition money. Because if you're not paying for the GAs to do this work, it's either not getting done and we're depriving them a ton of education opportunities because there simply aren't people to teach the courses, or you're hiring a bunch more professors at six figures to do the work.

So, this is -- and I -- we go back to this with the SEBAC debate. I appreciate it can be characterized one way or the other. You know, I look at that contract and I talk about the savings, billions of dollars in savings. This is even more fundamental than that because of the unique and particular role that these graduate students play in providing literally tens of thousands of hours of teaching to university students, undergrads. And I

shudder to think of the impact that there would be is if we turned around tomorrow and didn't have them. We'd be facing a request for UConn for hundreds of millions of dollars more to make up for that lost teaching time, not to mention -- and I'm not even talking about the research dollars that come into the university by virtue of the work that they do.

So, I mean, a longwinded answer, short answer. No, there's no disclosure when you write a tuition check. But I think people are smart enough to realize that when you write a tuition check, it's going to a number of functions. You know, you walk on that university, those grounds, those buildings, those -- you know, the classrooms, the people in the classrooms -- the people in the classrooms providing at the research facilities. That's all part of your tuition check. I'd like to think people are aware of that.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative

Smith. REP. SMITH (108TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This should be interesting because you have one lawyer going to another lawyer and we're used to just talking and answering a simple yes or no question with a nice conversational soliloquy. So, I'll continue to answer -- ask the questions and have some fun along the way.

My colleague brought up the SEBAC Agreement. We could spend the rest of tonight, tomorrow and go through the rest of the session talking about that, but nobody wants to hear it. That's been voted on already. So I will not get into that today.

I am -- I would disagree, though, with my colleague in the sense that -- well, I'll say this. I agree with him that when you send a tuition payment, it doesn't go just to one function. It's for the entire university and whatever it may encompass. But I still would say to you, Madam Speaker, that it is surprising to me and would be surprising to a lot of my constituents to find out that that this money, coming from a number of

different sources, but primarily tuition, is being used for collective bargaining purposes.

I'm going to go through some of the things I heard today. In fact, I wasn't even planning on speaking and then I kind of woke up with some of the comments that I heard. And I just want to confirm what I did hear to make sure that I get it right so I can report back when folks do ask me.

So, as I understand it, we have free tuition. We have free health care. We have annual wage increases. We have four weeks of vacation and a 20-hour work week. And there's more, but I'll just stop there. So far is -- Mr. Speaker, is that correct?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I quibble a little bit with it. I mean, I wouldn't call it free health care. Yes, I appreciate that those payments are low. The pool, the risk it poses. A self-

insured pool is very low. When you look at it on a percentage basis, even the single participants about paying about five percent of the costs and that goes up for the single-plus -- or the person-plus -- GA-plus one and then the family. So, they do have skin in the game on the health care. I appreciate that that is low by comparison to certainly private plans. But again, I put this in context. We are talking about a segregated, discrete risk pool of obviously, you know, healthy, younger workers, and even the actuaries say they do not anticipate the normal sort of cost increases you would see in a regular health plan because of the remarkable health of this pool that's self-insured.

So, not free health care. It is paid for. And certainly, again, like I said, we can -- I appreciate that the annual cost is low, but that is low for the university as well on a net basis when you look at health of this pool, but. Yes to the other questions. These students get tuition waived. And again, that is across the board wherever you go, so. I mean, one of the first things that they're

gonna look at is, am I getting free tuition and that's a sort of a standard term, if you will, for the GAs.

Then the stipends, again, two percent a year increases, modestly working out to about \$10 dollars a week. Some can work more than 20 hours a week. That's by arrangement with the supervisor and that has to be -- there has to be, obviously, a recompense for that that's arranged on a pro-rata basis. A lot work less than the 20 because, again, we're talking about full-time students and what is the particular need that they're serving. It is being a TA? Is it just running a lab that may or may not require 20 hours a week?

So, I don't think of this as sort of a normal workforce in the sense that, again, we're talking about a university environment and a particular discrete set of skills that they bring to the table that free up the university to do other things. But the overall package - tuition, the stipend, the health care and some other fringe benefits that we talked about in terms of the fee waivers.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Is the health care contribution made by the members of this collective bargaining agreement \$240 dollars under this proposed amendment -- proposed bill, rather?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Thank you. Through you, Mr. Speaker. For single participants it's about \$200 dollars a year. It's \$200 dollars a year and then by the fourth year it'll go up to \$240 dollars and I think it's, like I said, we talked about I think -- I'll get the numbers for the GA-plus one and the family. But for single participants, \$200 dollars a year, correct, and then that goes up 20 percent in the fourth year.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

I appreciate the clarification. So I did say free health care. So it's \$240 dollars at the highest level per year. So this is a pretty favorable benefit. And then we have -- I'm not gonna go through all the things that I heard, but I just -- there's certain things that I just want to emphasize.

The three members of this unit that can do -- that do not have to do any research, they're allowed to do, I'll just call it collective bargaining work or union work. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. The contract does recognize that there will be three members chosen by the union, and this is something that everybody negotiates. And I mean -- I appreciate we're honing in on this contract. That is not a new

concept. It's not a new concept for this contract. It's not a -- it's certainly not a new concept for any collectively-bargained-for contracts that we deal with. We're talking about a population of more than 2,000 members. This is UConn's largest bargaining unit, as I understand it.

So, having three released to do that work frees up a lot of the others and a lot of that administrative overhang, both from the university and the rest of the members. So, you know, the reason that release time is in just about every collectively bargained for contract and why management agrees to it, mind you, here and in other collectively bargained for contracts, is because there's a benefit. There's a benefit both to the management and to the members, particularly when you're talking about a large group and handling a lot of that administrative mundane, day-to-day tasks that these members do. And they are selected by the union members. And yes, that is part of this contract.

But again, the dues, what funds, that is all

out of these members' pockets. That is not something -- at no stage does the university -- in any of our state contracts, do we write a check to a union. That is entirely through the dues process between the members and the union themselves.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Yeah, I always wondered what, in fact, they do do. I mean, we have three people actually doing collective bargaining work for 2,000 students. I'm not sure what needs to be done on a daily basis. I was -- it probably comes from ignorance. I've never been part of a union. I always got the job done myself, so.

I still wonder why we have three people that we're -- somebody's paying to do nothing but union work, while the university is paying these other graduate students to do research, extensive research, important research, and on the other hand, we have three individuals doing union work. It just

-- I don't know. It doesn't sit well with me. It could just be my lack of knowledge of what they're doing and why they're doing it. And I understand my colleague's comment that management's in favor of it. I'm not sure if they are. I'm not sure if we could do the job for the same amount of money or less for 2,000 folks. It's not an overwhelming amount, but it does seem like a lot of people to handle that type of job, whatever in fact it may be.

I think there were some questions about dues previously and opting out. Are members who opt out of this union, are they required to pay any type of fees or anything along those lines?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. So again, two different categories here. I mean, there are graduate students who may be using a different research funding source that are not part of this union. So, let's put that to the side. That's not

-- there's no dues issues there. There is no -- is not part of this contract.

For union members, there is at least right now embedded in the contract a fair share fee that they all pay. And this of course goes back -- we're all familiar with the union -- the dues architecture in some of the cases that are now percolating up at the Supreme Court with respect to dues and fair share fees versus any kind of the political lobbying fees. But right now, yes. Every member pays a fair share fee associated with their membership and that is deducted. And then on a voluntary basis, they can add to that, to the sort of the non-fair share fee portion, at least under current law.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the gentleman for his answer. Is there an option to opt out of the fair share payment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. No, not under current law, I believe.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

And if the Janus decision comes down and says that the current bargaining procedure that is in many contracts throughout the country as well as here in Connecticut, if it comes down and says that's no longer legal, what happens with this provision?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the softball from one lawyer to another. Because I know Mr. -- Attorney Smith knows the supremacy clause and

is well aware that -- that, obviously, if Janus comes down that way that those provisions would be invalidated in this contract and any others.

And I know he deals with enough contracts to know that there's also a severability clause in this contract that explicitly recognizes that if a portion of it is superseded by federal law, as would be the case under Janus, that that would no longer be the case and we -- and you would not be doing that, that the fair share fee would no longer be required and that any statutes or bargained for provisions to that effect would be superseded.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

It's good to have a lawyer on the other side, Mr. Speaker. (Laughter) We've struggled with some of those questions sometimes when we don't have that expertise. The 20-hour work week, if the student works more -- let's assume he or she works 30 hours a week and does that over a period of time. (Gavel).

Let's say it's a month. So, for a full month they're working 30 hours a week. How is that reflected in the contract? Do they get additional pay, and if so, where does that come through?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

(Gavel) Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I'll note that that is a rare occurrence. I'm not aware of anyone currently going above on a year-long appointment. It may be the case. But the contract does specifically say that the max is 20 hours, but there are provisions in there that allow for additional time above the 20 hours a week so long as that is agreed to by both sides.

It cannot be unilaterally imposed by the university, nor could a student just say I worked an extra four hours, pay me. This has to be agreed upon with the advisors through the process and then there's a pro-rata mechanism to make sure that the GA is paid for that agreed upon additional time.

I'll have to pull the section I'm -- for Representative Smith. I'm sure he'll want to look at it.

But that specific structure is recognized under article X workload, and particular section 9 at the end is that new section that deals with any agreed upon time over the additional 20 hours and there would be, as I mentioned, a pro-rata increase to the stipend based on those hours.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And if in fact an additional payment is required, who actually makes that payment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you. Can I just hear that again? Hear the question again?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Would you please repeat the question,
Representative Smith?

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Yes, sir. If additional payment is required,
who makes the payment? Is -- does it come from the
university or some other fund?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I would
characterize it by falling back on what I said
before about the sources here. It's gonna depend on
that particular GA. I mean, look, at the end of the
day, it's university.

But let's say, for example, this is for RA
work. And I think the more common occurrence where
you would see this is additional funding, research
funding comes in, there's a critical lab period
that, you know, some sort of experiment that needs
to be monitored and it's gonna require more than 20

hours a week. You're gonna see in that circumstance where the research funds are really gonna drive those additional hours that are needed on a sort of a case-by-case basis.

So, I mean, ultimately, the check is from the university. The source, as I've mentioned before, is typically split between those other funding sources, i.e. grad tuition or the research funds. In this circumstance, I'm envisioning -- I feel pretty confident in saying when those additional hours are driven by the research, there is gonna be a research grant behind that.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

And that was the concern I had with the language in the contract. Because it does say paid for by the university and it doesn't really reference those other sources that were just referenced by my good colleague. And the concern that caused me to read that language was that if

it's the university, then it's taxpayer dollars and it's not university funds. It's not these grants and scholarships that have been alluded to all afternoon. So, I have an assurance, I guess, but I'll just confirm it again that these funds are not funds that are taxpayer dollars? Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. And I can say this confidently across the board, not just for any additional 20 hour time, but just -- but the entire contract. This is not taxpayer dollars in the sense that it's an allocation from this body. I mean, I guess you could say it's taxpayer dollars in the sense that there are people paying tuition who may or may not be taxpayers in the State of Connecticut, but it is not any kind of taxpayer dollars revenue that comes in to the state and is allocated through this body to UConn. That source of funding goes to the undergraduate experience only.

This contract is funded primarily through those research grants that come in through multiple sources and tuition, primarily that graduate tuition.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the gentleman for the clarification on that. Just a few more questions if I may. I noticed through the contract that the students have the absolute right to take three days off as a matter of right. That's correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, three days of leave -- paid leave per semester.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

And can the university agree to more than three days with increased -- not with increased pay. For pay as well?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Anything more than three days, the university has to sign off. The university may agree to that on a paid basis, an unpaid basis, and the university is given that flexibility from a management perspective. Yes.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

As I read the contract, it looks like they can agree up to -- get up to 21 days and they retain their benefits - health benefits, their tuition benefits. And then anything over 21 days, it has to

be agreed to and they can also agree where the university would pay the health benefits and all the other benefits they receive. It's just -- and I did a quick read of the contract. I want to make sure I'm correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I have a lot of faith in Attorney Smith's ability to read a contract. He's read that correctly. It's entirely discretionary and he's characterized the timeframe, this sort of a trigger, with respect to benefits at that 210-day period. But again, as he mentioned, all discretionary, once you're beyond those three days, from the university.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

I thank my colleague and Chairman of the

General Law Committee who's pinch hitting here on this bill. You know, I don't want to beat a dead horse, Mr. Speaker, but I've raised the concerns I have with this bill. Naturally, I think I expressed them and I cannot vote in favor of it, for the various reasons I mentioned, so I thank the gentleman for his answers and his time. And thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Representative O'Dea from the 125th District.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just a few quick questions; I know the day is long on this issue, to my good friend. The -- this -- we've established that this covers 2,150 graduate students. Correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you. Yes, that's the number I've

gotten as of, I think, April 13.

Through you. Obviously, it fluctuates.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Understood. And so has the number of applicants for those 2,150 spots increased, decreased, or stayed about the same? In other words, are there 10,000 graduates trying to get these 2,100 spots? Or are there simply -- are they trying to get more applicants?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The only data I have on that is about a two-year look back period that I know OFA did when they were costing this out, and they said the number remained relatively static in that range of the 2,100, 2,200, 2,150 range for the last two years. I don't have data beyond that two-year look back.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Sorry, but I'm more looking for the -- that and the number of applicants for those spots. So in other words, are we saying that, you know -- is this like a Harvard school application where there are, you know, 10,000 applications for 1,000 spots? If the good Chair knows.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I -- you know, I don't know. If I'm understanding the question right and I want to make sure I am. There's obviously the academic piece to this. How many people are applying to UConn to be grad -- members of a graduate program to get a masters in this or a Ph.D. in that? I do not have the academic side information, if you will.

Now once they're admitted and in the program, in terms of how many then become GAs, I can tell you that there's about 7,100 graduate students, and again, that we have 2,150 a year on average who become GAs. And I think that number stays relatively static based on the population.

My guess is that we could find out that the graduate population doesn't fluctuate a lot more on that overall level of 7,000 or so students. Just given, you know, UConn resources to be able to provide that level of education, but I don't know, on the academic side, how many people are applying to the graduate program and are admitted every year. We could find that out, though.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My point being, I don't think one of the reasons why we're increasing the pay is to encourage more people to apply. My point is, and I'm wondering if the good

Chairman would disagree, there've been more people that have been denied graduate applications and there are spots available. In other words, there's not 2,150 applications for 2,150 spots. There's more applicants than there are spots. Is that your understanding?

Through you, Mr. Chair -- through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Through you. I mean, I don't know off the top of my head, but I'd be shocked, obviously. I mean, there's certainly -- you know, there's an admission process and we probably have more people applying than there are spots. I would quibble a little bit, though, and drill down a little further just simply in terms of, again, -- you know, we're looking to get to attract the best of the best.

The reason not everybody gets in is because it's a rigorous program and we want to make sure we've got those students who are coming in and --

you know, I was reading one story. The research, the work that some of these graduate students do is remarkable stuff. I mean, subatomic, splitting the atom and research work in the pharmaceutical field, etcetera, are really cutting edge things and we obviously want them to be part of our applicant pool. Hey, I wanna come to UConn.

And part of coming to UConn is obviously in the first instance for them, the strength of the academic program. But then they're in demand, so they're gonna know if I go there, I'm gonna be a GA, what else is going to attract me to that university, and that's part of this.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just my last comment would be simply this. We've -- it's been mentioned by my good friend on the other side of the aisle, the Chair, that this money is not coming from

state funding. And just to be clear, the UConn budget, pursuant to their own website and own information, state funding is \$375 million dollars, tuition \$507 million dollars. Other, which is room, board, ticket sales, parking, campus merchandise, etcetera, is \$345 million dollars. And then the research grants is \$104.6 million dollars. So the total of all those pool of monies to UConn is \$1.332 billion dollars.

Now, you may say, oh, that's a lot of money. So none of this \$15 million dollars in extra money to the graduate assistants comes from state funding, but it all comes from the same pool. So that \$15 million dollars at a time where we know, we all know, we have to cut UConn funding from the state. There's -- we just have to.

So, with all due respect to my good friend on the other side of the aisle, to say that the money is not coming from state funding, that pool of \$15 million dollars is coming from the grand pool of \$1.3 billion dollars, of which a third is from state funding. And I think it's a little play on words to

say it's not coming from taxpayer money.

My final statement is simply this. We can't afford this raise. So I would urge my colleagues to not vote for this. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further on the resolution?
Will you remark further on the resolution?
Representative Wilms of the 142nd.

REP. WILMS (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't going to make any comments or ask any questions because I think my colleagues did a wonderful job of really drilling down on this agreement and I do commend the proponent and he's a very articulate defender of the position, and I do want to commend him for that.

I just have a few comments. I voted no on this in Appropriations and basically here's why. I -- before I came here, I was involved with the City of Norwalk. I chaired the board of estimate taxations. It's the fiscal authority for the city involved in a lot of city contract negotiations and then also, as

per state statute, were involved with any certified negotiations with the teachers and the principals, which in our case are unionized as well.

So, what was clear to me when I looked at this contract for the first time was that there wasn't a pattern that came out. The end result didn't demonstrate a pattern from the employer's perspective of any kind of strategy. And the reason why that's important is we're in the middle of a huge fiscal crisis here and it's imperative then when we engage in any union contracts that they employer, or the state, or the taxpayers, recognize that we have a set of economic interests that are different from those who work for us. They have a separate set of economic interests.

And in my experience here at the state, the unions here don't totally get that. I mean, their negotiators are on point, very focused, know what they want. And candidly, our negotiators, I'm not sure they're so focused or even know that they understand that they're supposed to recognize that the state has a separate set of economic interests.

So, when I looked at this contract, I saw a two-percent pay increase every year, compounded on top of each other, and then there are all these extra things that came on that were laid out nonfinancial, which basically add on top of the two percent, and then there was a one-time payment in year two, so that adds on to it. And then the only sort of giveback or the only kind of concession was in -- that the last year a slight increase in the health care payment. That's it.

And so a contract that would've had a pattern reflecting the interests of the state that I've seen in many other situations would've had annual health care increases to offset the wage increases. There would've been a clear goal in the mind of the negotiators - okay, we're not gonna give more than one percent a year all in. And that clearly was not the case here.

Finally, I just want to add that the whole idea that we are -- the employer pays for union members to pay for their salaries, essentially, it's just unacceptable. It's just -- we should not have that

in any of our contracts. We had one like that in the teacher's contract in Norwalk and we decided to take that provision all the -- we took the whole contract to binding arbitration to the final, final end for the first time in 40 years.

You know, in the past, the boards would also end up stipulating or, you know, pulling back at the last minute. But we contested 66 points in the contract and one of those was that we didn't want to have the taxpayers pay for the union president's salary anymore and his benefits.

So the arbitrators actually got to rule for the first time in 40 years, and in the ruling on that point, they said very clearly that there's no way that the employer should pay for union personnel who were doing union work while on company time. The union should pay for that themselves. So, if they want to have their people doing work, the union should pay for it, not the employer.

So, in conclusion, I just want to say that I agree with all my colleagues. I'm gonna vote no. You know, if we weren't in a fiscal crisis, it might

be a different outcome, but we are. And I think it's important that we set patterns that we can -- that will then relate to the other kind of contracts we negotiate in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further on the resolution?
Will you remark further on the resolution? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House and members take your seats. The machine will be opened. (Ringing)

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.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? The members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast? If all the 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. 9,

Total number Voting	144
Necessary for Passage	73
Those voting Yea	73
Those voting Nay	71
Those absent and not Voting	6

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The resolution passes. (Gavel) The esteemed Majority Leader, Representative Ritter. (Applause)

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, I just want to let the Chamber know that it is about 5:10. We have nine bills or eight bills on the agenda. If we all stay close, we should be out of here by 6:00. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Well, we'll hold you to that, Mr. Majority Leader. Representative Reyes, for what reason do you rise?

REP. REYES (75TH):

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to cast my vote in the

affirmative for the previous bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The transcript will so note.

REP. REYES (75TH):

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Will the Clerk please call
Calendar 341?

CLERK:

On page 35, House Calendar 341, House Bill No.
5412 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE TIME FRAME FOR THE
FILING OF AN ANNUAL REPORT BY A LIMITED LIABILITY
COMPANY OR A FOREIGN LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY -
Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on
Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move
for acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable
report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Representative Stafstrom, you have the floor.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the bill before us is a fairly simple one that makes it a little bit easier for registered limited liability companies in the state to comply with their filing requirements with the Secretary of State.

Under recent revisions to the Limited Liability Company Act this General Assembly has done in the last couple of years, we changed the requirement that an annual report has to be filed by April 1 of the calendar year as opposed to on the annual anniversary of the LLC's initial filing

This bill would simply extend that deadline from April 1 to July 1, to give a little bit more time and a little bit more flexibility for companies to comply with our annual filing requirements. I urge support.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further on this bill?

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a minor change, just extending it to April to July.

It's a good business bill. I urge passage.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Well stated. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House? Will the members take your seats? The machine will be opened. (Ringing)

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 ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all the members voted? Representative Rutigliano, I know better than to close it if she hasn't voted.

Have all the members voted? If all the members

have voted, please check the board to ensure your vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 5412,

Total number Voting	143
Necessary for Passage	72
Those voting Yea	143
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not Voting	7

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill passes. (Gavel) Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 3 -- oh. I apologize. Representative Lemar of the 96th. You're not on the board, so you just gotta hit your button, sir. You have the floor.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

I rise for the purpose of a quick announcement.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please proceed.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, look, New Haven Day started about nine years ago and it was the first of the cities to offer an outstanding experience downstairs in our lobby. It was a great opportunity to see so much about what made New Haven great. In many ways, many cities and towns have copied New Haven's lead on this, but I have to be honest -- I have to be honest, Harford Day downstairs right now exceeds the best that New Haven has ever offered. (Groans) It is an extraordinary experience. So, we're gonna get out a little bit early tonight, go check out Hartford Day downstairs.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Lemar, before you put down the microphone, you say that in a way as though you're accepting it as a challenge for next year. You're only speaking of this specific one.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

That is exactly right. I guarantee you every New Haven Representative in this building is going to exceed what is happening downstairs right now.

But I have to call it like it is. As of right now, Hartford Day has won.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Representative, and classes for both you and Representative Betts will be available for making announcements. Will the Clerk please now call Calendar 384?

CLERK:

On page 40, Calendar 384, Substitute House Bill No. 5258 - AN ACT ADOPTING THE REVISED UNIFORM ARBITRATION ACT - Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm still wondering whether Representative Lemar lost a bet to the Majority Leader, but, be that as it may. I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is acceptance

of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I would submit that, as with the last bill, this is a good pro-business bill to improve our statutes in the state involving the resolution of commercial claims. As the Chamber probably knows, more and more commercial cases are being arbitrated as opposed to litigated. This would codify into our state statutes the best practices involving arbitration rules. It is the product of many years of work by the Uniform Law Commission and the Connecticut Bar Association has been fully vetted by a number of interest groups and I believe really is a strong step forward in codifying our arbitration rules, and I would ask for the Chamber's support.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further? One of the most powerful members of the Judiciary Committee, Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I concur with everything the good Vice Chairman said, also with what the Speaker just said. This is a good bill. It's been adopted in 19 other states. The Connecticut Bar Association supports it, also the American Arbitration Association, among other associations. So, I urge passage and support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Madam. Will you remark further on the bill before us? Will you remark further on the bill before us? If not, staff and guests come to the well of the House, members take your seats. The machine will be opened. (Ringing)

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 ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted, please check the board to ensure your

vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Substitute House Bill No. 5258,

Total number Voting	142
Necessary for Passage	72
Those voting Yea	142
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not Voting	8

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill passes. (Gavel) Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 129?

CLERK:

On page 17, House Calendar 129, substitute House Bill No. 5182 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ASSESSMENT OF CERTAIN FEES BY BUILDING OFFICIALS - Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Development.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Lemar of the great City of New

Haven.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in some cases building -- builders do not acquire sufficient permitting or follow regulatory building statutes. This bill would reestablish in statute the ability for building officials to assess fees for permitting violations. In doing so, buildings will be constructed more often in accordance with statute safety, soundly and legally. I move adoption.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on adoption of the bill. Representative Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Different building -- different -- unpermitted work done on buildings, especially plumping and electrical, can be -- create major safety hazards because they do not get the inspection process that permitted projects do. This just gives another tool to building inspectors to be able to enforce the building codes. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this. I will be supporting it. thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Will you remark further? Representative Ackert of the 8th District, sir, you have the floor.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I know we have Hartford Day and we want to get out of here. But I have some reservations on this piece of legislation. So, through you, Mr. Speaker, a couple of questions to the proponent?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

It appears as Representative Lemar is prepared, so please proceed, sir.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, if -- I read a little bit of the testimony and there's very little, actually. To be honest, a couple of building inspectors and counsel of municipalities, and they wanted to expand it to all the towns. So, if somebody started a building project -- and first and foremost, let me say there are regulations that tell people you have to get a permit and it's listed, you know, very specifically in the legislation. But, it's, I believe, up to twice the amount of the permit fee could be the penalty. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, up to twice.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

So if somebody had a relatively large project and the project essentially had a permit fee, and it usually go -- depends on how much it is per thousand, on it. And let's say it's \$15 dollars per

thousand. You know, you gotta a \$10,000 dollar job, \$150 bucks, potentially. They gotta still pay the fee plus, you know, doubling that could be the permit -- could be the penalty fee. Correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

And is -- am I not correct that this cannot be applied -- you can penalize a contractor for starting work prior to this legislation?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. Right now, building officials feel that they are not able to assess a fine for the unpermitted beginning of work and that -- they used to be able to assess this fine

and now, due to the update in the state building code where this language was omitted, they want to reestablish this right.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because I do know towns were able to asses this fee in the past. Do we know -- was there at all information that came out that suggested how many, you know, unpermitted projects are out there and does it apply at all to, say, a homeowner who can pull a permit -- should pull a permit on a project.

Through you, Mr. Speaker. So they can work in their own home and do work in their home and pull permits.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you. Yes, it does apply to anyone who is required to build a

building permit, but who does not. And there were also -- to the first question, there was representation both in conversations with CCM cost and the building trades folks who worked on this bill, saying -- suggesting that it is widespread and is leading to a series of unsafe construction and unsound building practices.

And this would actually support the guys who are doing it right, the folks who are doing things correctly, and would allow our building officials to more strategically target just clear offenses and hold people accountable for doing unpermitted work.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And probably the final question and then a comment. Is it up to the twice the permit fee, is it, you know, subjective, given, you know, by town by town?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is a discretion that we will allow the town to enact, but we did believe it was worth putting a cap on the amount. We didn't think it was appropriate for communities to put outrageous fines on top of individuals. So we wanted to cap the amount, but make it so it was actually the true deterrent that we're seeking.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And this -- I'm sorry, there is one more question. This does not include emergency work, because emergency work can be done -- Friday night, someone gets called, a gas line is broken in the house and needs to be -- somebody to come out, or a plumbing line. They can't pull the permit until the following Monday. That does not change that requirement at all.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Mr. Speaker, the -- he's exactly right. That is right. This does not impact emergency work.

That's carried out through another statute.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and then a comment. I just have a reservation on this and it's because I can't tell you how many times I've gone to a home where the basement is finishing -- the homeowner is finishing a basement and I say to them - do you have a building permit? And they go - why would I need a building permit? It's my basement. It's -- I said, you're adding space. It needs a building permit. Go get a building permit. I can't give you a quote on electrical work.

So, I'll leave my comments at that and think that in some cases this is -- it makes sense,

especially for the quality workers that are out there that we have; so many in the state, and hopefully it targets the right individuals that we're trying to accomplish. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, staff and guests please to the well of the House and members take your seats. The machine will be opened. (Ringing)

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 ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

If all the members have voted, please check the board to ensure your vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Substitute House Bill No. 5182,

Total number Voting	142
Necessary for Passage	72
Those voting Yea	102
Those voting Nay	40
Those absent and not Voting	8

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill passes. (Gavel) Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 139?

CLERK:

On page 17, House Calendar 139 - AN ACT CONCERNING PHARMACIST AND PRACTITIONER COMPLIANCE RATES AND THE ELECTRONIC PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAM - Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on General Law.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative D'Agostino of the 91st, you have the floor.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Please proceed.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What this bill does is it requires the Commission of Public Health and Consumer Protection review compliance with the prescription drug monitoring program and report to the Committees of Cognizance how to best to achieve 100 percent compliance with the program. Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment, LCO No. 3972. I would ask that the amendment be called and I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 3972, which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A."

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "A," LCO No. 3972, offered by Representative D'Agostino.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber

to summarize amendment. Is there objection? Seeing none, please proceed.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All the amendment does is it makes the effective date of the bill -- effective on passage, rather, to January 1, 2019, and I move adoption.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on adoption of the amendment. Will you remark? Representative Smith, on the amendment? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. Representative Smith, would you like to comment on the bill as amended?

REP. SMITH (108TH)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Anyone in favor of controlling our opioid addiction problem we have

here in this state should vote for this bill. I encourage passage. Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Representative Mushinsky of the 85th.

REP. MUSHINSKY (85TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to support the bill. We actually wanted a strong bill. This bill came from the Coalition for a Better Wallingford. We have had 15 deaths, mostly young people, due to opioids in our town of 45,000 people, and it just seems to be not even peaked yet. It seems to be rising and rising. And originally in this bill we wanted a warning to doctors who are only at 50 percent compliance right now and we wanted a penalty if they failed to check the database.

The pharmacists are at 100 percent compliance. They're doing a great job, but the doctors are not there yet. This bill is not exactly what we wanted, but it will require the Department of Consumer Protection and Department of Public Health to come back to us and report on the compliance rate and

recommendations on how we will get to the 100 percent compliance, which is what we all desire.

So, for now, I urge your support for the bill. We should not rest in here until we have this epidemic under control and we should not rest with this bill, but work harder next year to work with these two agencies to reduce this epidemic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Representative Petit of the 22nd, you have the floor, sir.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple quick questions for the proponent, sir?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative D'Agostino, please prepare yourself. Representative Petit, please proceed.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't see testimony from the Department of Public Health and maybe missed it from Consumer Protection. Do they feel that they have the resources necessary to

implement these changes?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Hit the mic? There you go.

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

Thank you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Petit. Thank you, sir.

Representative Linehan.

REP. LINEHAN (103RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this bill and I'd like to thank Representative Mushinsky for her leadership on this, and it's a great bill that ought to pass.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Representative Orange of the 48th. Nope? Staff and guests to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be opened. (Ringing)

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 ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted, please check the board to ensure your vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Substitute House Bill 5241 as amended by House "A",

Total number Voting	141
Necessary for Passage	71
Those voting Yea	141
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not Voting	9

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill passes. (Gavel) Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to be recorded in the affirmative, please.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The transcript will so note.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, madam. Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 34?

CLERK:

On page 47, House Calendar 34, House Bill No. 5129 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A "SAVE OUR LAKES" NUMBER PLATE TO COMBAT AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES AND CYANOBACTERIA BLOOMS - Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Demicco.

REP. DEMICCO (21ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Please proceed.

REP. DEMICCO (21ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this bill does two things. It requires the commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue commemorative "Save our Lakes" license plates, whose purpose is to enhance public awareness of the efforts to preserve and protect the state's lakes and ponds from aquatic invasive species.

And the second thing that it does is it creates a Connecticut Lakes and Ponds Preservation account. And this account will be used to restore and rehabilitate state lakes and ponds and also to educate the public about this problem. And that's what it does. I move adoption.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Representative Harding.

REP. HARDING (107TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a good bill. This is an innovative effort to approach this critical issue in the State of Connecticut in regards to our lakes and ponds in addressing invasive species. I urge passage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will you remark further? If not, staff and guests to the well of the House and members take your seats. The machine will be opened. (Ringing)

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 ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted, please check the board to ensure your vote has been properly cast.

If your vote's been properly cast, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 5129,

Total number Voting	142
Necessary for Passage	72
Those voting Yea	142
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not Voting	8

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill passes. (Gavel) Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 90?

CLERK:

On page 14, House Calendar 90, substitute House Bill No. 5354 - AN ACT CONCERNING SNAPPING TURTLES AND RED-EARED SLIDER TURTLES - Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Demicco.

REP. DEMICCO (21ST):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you well know, slow and steady wins the race.

(Laughter) (Applause)

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move for

acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Will you remark?

REP. DEMICCO (21ST):

Mr. Speaker, yes. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, this bill does a couple of things. It prohibits the commercial trade in native snapping turtles until the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection adopts regulations. It also prohibits the importation of red-eared slider turtles and the release of these invasive red-eared slider turtles to the land or waters of Connecticut.

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment. It is LCO 4366, and I would ask the Clerk to please call the amendment and that I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO No. 4366, which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A."

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "A", LCO No. 4366,
offered by Representative Demicco and Representative
Mushinsky.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber
to summarize the amendment. Is there objection to
summarization? Seeing none, please proceed.

REP. DEMICCO (21ST):

Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,
this amendment makes an exception with regards to
the red-eared slider turtles. This was an exemption
or an exception that was asked for by the pet
industry and it specifically involves red-eared
sliders with the distinctive aberrant color
patterns. And these particular -- this particular
version of the red-eared sliders is less likely to
be released by the owners. They are more expensive.
They are more valued. And the industry asked for
this exception. And this amendment grants that
exception to the other -- to what is otherwise
prohibited.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will you remark on the amendment before us?

Representative Harding, on the amendment?

REP. HARDING (107TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you. Mr. Speaker, this is a good amendment. I urge my colleagues to adopt it.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further on the amendment before us? Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want some additional clarification on this amendment. I'd just like to understand. I think you mentioned earlier that this was something that was supported by pet stores. Is this language that was worked on in conjunction with them or submitted? How in fact did this amendment language come to be?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Demicco.

REP. DEMICCO (21ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, in answer to the good Representative's question. This was negotiated and -- with the pet industry. And I think we reached a pretty good compromise here.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ziobron.

REP. ZIOBRON (34TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted clarification. I appreciate that and I'll be supporting the amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Will remark further on the amendment before us? If note, let me try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. Representative Buckbee of the

67th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just have a quick comment to make. I work in a park with snapping turtles there all the time and I gotta say, I like turtles. It's a good bill and ought to pass. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark -- Ooh. Representative Lesser. (Awws) Staff and guests please to the well of the House and members take your seats. The machine will be opened.

(Ringing)

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 ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all the members voted? You guys aren't even close. We still got some more time. Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted,

the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Substitute House Bill 5354 as amended by House "A",

Total number Voting	141
Necessary for Passage	71
Those voting Yea	141
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not Voting	9

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 58?

CLERK:

On page 11, House Calendar 58, substitute House Bill No. 5201 - AN ACT REQUIRING THE COMMISSIONER OF HOUSING TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CERTAIN STATE-FUNDED PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECT - Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Butler.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for acceptance

of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Representative Butler.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill requires the commissioner of Housing to make recommendations regarding certain state-funding public housing.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Kupchick. I'm sorry. Hang on, madam. Yes, Representative Butler?

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

Thank you. This bill actually is the product of a study bill that we commissioned last session. So, this is evidence that some study bills are good. As a result of this study bill, the Connecticut Fair Housing organization is conducting a study right now on various activities in state-funded housing for the elderly and mentally disabled communities, and once that study is done, it's gonna be provided to

the Department of Housing. And what this bill simply says is once that is done, that the commissioner -- this bill requires the commissioner of the Department of Housing to make recommendations' to the Committee of Cognizance, Housing Committee, on or before October 1 of this year. I move adoption.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Kupchick.

REP. KUPCHICK (132ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good bill. Ought to pass.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you. Staff and guests to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be opened. (Ringing)

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 ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted -- Representative --

If all the members have voted, please check the board to ensure your vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Substitute House Bill 5201,

Total number Voting	141
Necessary for Passage	71
Those voting Yea	141
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not Voting	9

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill passes. (Gavel) Announcements or introductions? Representative Hennessy.

REP. HENNESSY (127TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the purpose of an announcement?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please proceed.

REP. HENNESSY (127TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a friendly reminder next week is "Save a Suit" drive where we will be bringing in clothes that we no longer fit in to, and that's on May 3, on a Thursday. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Hennessy, this time of year, it's all of them. Representative Serra of the 33rd. No? Representative Abercrombie of the 83rd.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the purpose of an announcement.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please proceed.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you. Members, please remember next Friday is Dress-Down Day. We're still trying to collect money from everyone. Five dollars dress down, ten dollars for suits. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Representative Duff of the 2nd, you have the floor. All right, no Representative Duff. Representative Piscopo, you look like you're ready.

REP. PISCOPO (76TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Born ready. For a Journal notation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Journal please note that Representative LeGeyt missed votes due to illness. Representative Betts missed votes due to illness in the family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Representative. Representative Hildaana Santiago. I just always wanted to try that.

REP. SANTIAGO (84TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Muchas gracias. These are for Journal --

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

De nada.

REP. SANTIAGO (84TH):

Journal notations. Representative McGee,

business outside the Chamber. Representative Rojas,
business outside the Chamber. Representative
Godfrey, business outside the Chamber. I'm sorry.
Those three should be business outside in the
District, not the Chamber. That's a correction for
the first three. Representative Stallworth, he had
a funeral. Representative Genga took ill.
Representative Gonzalez, business outside the
Chamber. Representative Tong, business in the
District, and Representative Sanchez, business in
the District. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99TH):

Mr. Speaker, good evening.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Good evening, sir. How are you?

REP. ALBIS (99TH):

I am just well. How are you?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Let's do the Clerk to a little announcement.

Mr. Clerk, do you have any business on your desk?

CLERK:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Favorable report of Senate Bills to be tabled for the Calendar.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99TH):

Mr. Speaker, I move that we waive the reading of the Senate favorable reports and the bills be tabled for the Calendar.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Any other announcements or introductions?

REP. ALBIS (99TH): Just a quick announcement.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please.

REP. ALBIS (99TH):

We will not be in session tomorrow. Get the weekend off. Come back Monday at 11:00 a.m., and expect to be in every day except for next Sunday, from now until May 9th. I know. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news, folks.

With there being no further business on the

Clerk's desk for today, I move that we adjourn,
subject to the Call of the Chair.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question is on adjournment, subject to the
Call of the Chair? Without objection, so ordered.

(Gavel)

(On motion of Representative Albis of the
99th District, the House adjourned at 5:57 o'clock
p.m., sine die.)

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 396 pages is a complete and accurate transcription of a digital sound recording of the House Proceedings on Thursday, April 26, 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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3244 Ridge View Ct 104
Lake Ridge VA 22192