The Senate was called to order at 10:08 o’clock a.m., the President in the Chair.

SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERILL:

Good morning and welcome. I can use my teacher voice. We’re still working on the technical problems, but meanwhile let’s get going. By the power invested in me by Connecticut general statute section 2-1 I, Denise Merill, Secretary of State acting as the President of the Senate call to order the 2019 Senate of Connecticut General Assembly. Welcome Back! (Applause)

DEPUTY CHAPLAIN RABBI PHILIP LAZOWSKI OF BLOOMFIELD, CONNECTICUT:

Proverbs 15:22, “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisors, they succeed.”

Sovereign of the universe, grant me the capacity to welcome and bless the newly elected Lieutenant Governor, Susan Bysiewicz, the newly-elected Senators and the returning Senators, both Democrat and Republican.

Grant them wisdom, courage and integrity. Guide them to work together and help them to draw upon the noblest impulses of the heart, that we may be worthy
of the American dream, to promote prosperity and goodness in our State and across our great Nation.

As we pray for blessing in the New Year, I beseech thee, O God, please give the Senators the insight and fortitude to protect us from the many dangers that confront this State and the United States of America.

Teach them to serve with humility and commitment to seek the best in each other, in common bonds of true humanity and civic duty.

May this country continue to be a beacon of Democracy and optimism to the entire world.

As we pray for blessings in the New Year, may Your blessing be upon all these public servants assembled here today.

Bless our President, our Governor, our Lieutenant Governor, our Senators, our defenders of freedom, and keep them safe in your hands.

Hear our prayer as we pray, and let us all say, Amen

SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERRILL:

We will now do the Pledge of Allegiance.

(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. Thank you very much.

Please remain standing, and I see we are back [laughing]. I am now going to call upon Senator Joan Hartley to introduce Lexi White who will be singing the National Anthem today. Senator Hartley.
SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH):

Thank you, Madam Secretary, and it is an honor to have this opportunity to welcome you in the Dais on this historic day in the state of Connecticut and certainly in the Senate chamber. I am honored to give the introduction to a lovely young lady who is going to share with us -- and is very brave without -- a couple minutes ago thinking you didn’t have a mic.

SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERRILL:

[Laughing].

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH):

-- to sing the National Anthem. Lexi White hails from the 15th district, and she is the proud daughter of Marissa and Greg White, and Iba Sorsulla (phonetic) and his wife who are with us here today. Lexi is 14 years old, and she won the best actress in the role of Ragtime. She was nominated for outstanding actress in the role of Anne Frank in the Thomaston Opera House, and for the second year in a row, she has sung at the New York Mets at Citi Field. A very talented lady to head off a most exciting day. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERRILL:

Thank you very much, and now, we’ll have the National Anthem.

LEXI WHITE:

(Singing the National Anthem) [applause].
SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERRILL:

thereof, and that you will faithfully discharge according to law the duties of the office of state senator to the best of your abilities, so help you God?

SENATORS:

I do.

SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERRILL:

Congratulations! (Gavel) You are sworn in [applause] [cheering] [laughing]. Wonderful [applause] [cheering]. And, may I take this moment to congratulate all of you. You are now part of a proud tradition in Connecticut, and I’m sure it will be a meaningful and hopeful time in the state, so congratulations, especially to the new members. It’s always an exciting time. I remember it well myself many years ago [Chuckling], so I wish you the best and -- and a really good session this year. All right. The next order of business will be the election of the senate clerk. I call on Senator Looney. Oh, no? Okay. We’re going to pass on that part [shuffling papers], so now, we will entertain nominations for president pro tempore. All right. Senator Bob Duff, you have the floor.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President, and good morning evening. What a great day, and thank you for your service and for swearing us all in. It’s wonderful to see so many faces here today. It is my honor to place into nomination, Senator Martin Looney, our current senate president, and senate president for over the next 2 years. Senator Looney is certainly
no stranger to us here at the State Capitol and in the Senate, somebody who works tirelessly for all citizens across the state of Connecticut. He’s been a fixture here at the Capitol for many decades, somebody who puts his heart and soul into his work for the betterment of all the citizens of the state, somebody who really works hard to give voices to those who have no voice, who works hard for the poor and disfranchised, who works hard to make sure our folks have a good job and a good paying job, and one who cares so deeply about his district. Public service runs through his blood like nobody else. I am very fortunate to consider Senator Looney as a good friend, a mentor, a colleague, someone who I can always count on to provide great advice and really an excellent leader, and working with Senator Looney is such an honor, and it has been a thrill to -- to partner with him as well over the last 4 years, but on top of that, he is just a really wonderful person whose wonderful wife, Ellen, is here and his family. He is a grandfather now, and he just all around is somebody who brings his pride to the state Senate, pride to the State Capitol, is a good negotiator, and it is again my pleasure and honor to put his name forth in nomination as Senate president and pro tempore. Thank you, Madam President.

SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERRILL:

Thank you very much. Do we have a second? Senator Fasano. Nice to see you. It should be on.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

[Mic off, audio starts here] He’s got some of his friends here from New Haven, which is always good to
see. Marti is a true statesman. He cares about this facility as an institution, and you cannot ask more of a leader of the Senate than the care about the institution. It’s always good when his wife, Ellen, comes in with a fudge brownie, so I have to admit that’s a definite plus for the circle, but Marti is dedicated to the work. He’s a dedicated person not only to his district but to the state of Connecticut. We’ve had the fortunate ability to talk on many occasions privately about issues that move Connecticut forward, and whenever there is disagreement, Marti and I can sit down and work it out because we can talk to one another. It is great to have him as a leader of the Senate, and I’m proud to second his nomination for president of the Senate. Thank you, Madam President.

SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERRILL:

Are there any further nominations? If not, I declare nominations closed. Martin Looney is elected president pro tempore of the Senate by acclamation [applause]. Congratulations, Mr. Looney [applause] [cheering]. Senator Looney, will you please come to the Dais? Judge Brian T. Fisher will now administer the Oath of Office.

JUDGE BRIAN T. FISHER:

Okay. Senator Looney. You do solemnly swear that you will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Connecticut so long as you continue as a citizen thereof, and that you will faithfully discharge according to law the duties of the office of president pro tempore to the best of your abilities, so help you God?
SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

I do.

JUDGE BRIAN T. FISHER:

Congratulations.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you [applause] [cheering].

SECRETARY OF STATE DENISE MERRILL:

Congratulations, Senator Looney! The Senate is now yours. [Laughing]. So to speak.

(The president is now in the chair)

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you, Rabbi. Thanks to all of you, and this is an extraordinary day as it is every 2 years. This is the start of my 39th session in the General Assembly going back to 1981. I want to begin by thanking my -- my wonderful wife, Ellen. Your generous heart and patience and understanding have sustained me throughout my 38 years in the General Assembly. I also want to thank my son, Michael, who is a Deputy Director of Hartford Public Works, and is out -- I think -- getting ready for the parade that’s going to be later today. My daughter-in-law, Becky, my grandchildren, you are all an inspiration and continuously fill me with joy and pride. I want to especially thank Judge Fisher for being with me
again today. He and his -- his wonderful wife, Katie, have had an extraordinary meeting in my life obviously that a little more than 2 years ago in December 2016, he gave me probably the greatest gift since my parents originally gave me life, which was to give me renewed life and health through the donation of his kidney, and that act of great generosity has -- has in many ways helped me feel reborn, and also, my law partner and dear friend, Jack Keyes. I want to thank Jack because it turns out that Brian -- when I got to know him -- was a close friend of Jack’s, and I began to practice law with Jack, so Jack was our connection. Brian and I became close friends, and of course, their activity through life, their main recreational activity has been basketball, and when I first started practicing with Jack, they were both playing in an over 30 league, and now it then became an over 40 league, and then an over 50 league, and now an over 60 league, but to use a sports metaphor they’re so proud of, Brian hit the 3-pointer with the clock running down, but Jack gets the assist, so I want to thank them both [emotional] -- both so much.

So, I said, I’m deeply honored to stand here today to begin a third term as your Senate President Pro Tempore. Everyday serving our beloved state is a privilege and to lead this body for another 2 years is a blessing beyond words. Your faith in me is a cherished responsibility that I will never -- never undervalue. Every one of us standing in this circle has been given an enormous responsibility and an opportunity, and it’s on us always to foster the best interest of the people of this state. We are all sustained by dear and close friends and family without whom none of us could ever meet the demands of this office for any -- any lengthy period of
time. That’s why I said I’ve been blessed with that wonderful family support for so long, and also, so many dear friends. My friends, Bill and Natalie Maneal [phonetic], who are here. Bill and I first became friends when we were alter-boys starting in 1962. My dear friend, Nic Neely [phonetic] who has either been treasurer or campaign manager for all of my campaigns since 1992. Steve Strom [phonetic] who is my son’s father-in-law and my son won the lottery in terms of -- of in-laws with Steve and his wonderful wife, Janet. Steve is an assistant attorney general. My dear friend, Nick Balletto, our -- our democratic state chair is here, and a gallery of friends and fellow attorneys and others from New Haven who are up here to the left I want to thank you all for -- for being here with us today; again, as everyone is supported by a community if you are going to be involved in -- in running this marathon.

On November 6, 2018, the people of Connecticut sent a clear message to the General Assembly and state government as a whole. We must invest more to maintain and improve the quality of life for all of our residents, and the fiduciary challenges that we continue to face are critical but cannot distract us from the higher task we are given. And, it’s important I think -- as Senator Fasano said -- to remember that we are involved here in a -- in a significant tradition that goes beyond the issues of any given year or given session, that serving in the state Senate is a blessing to treasure, and it is something that we need to keep constantly in our minds that it is a wonderful blessing to be chosen by the people of a certain district in this state to be their representative in this chamber, and that’s why on opening day and closing day of every regular
session I wear this tie, which as the seal of the state of Connecticut on it. The same seal that we see in the middle of our -- of our carpet, and it was given to me on January 6, 1993, my first day in the Senate, by our then Senate President, now congressman, John Larson. In putting on the tie this morning, I realized that this tie is more than 3 years older than Senator Will Haskell [laughing] [laughter] who is [laughing] our new senator from the 26th district [applause] [cheering]. But, as I said, this year we have an opportunity to do many valuable and wonderful things, to create a paid family and medical leave system. That means no one in our state has to choose between a paycheck and caring for himself or herself or for a loved one, to raise the minimum wage to $15=dollars-an-hour incrementally so that people who work an honest day can rise above poverty, support a family, and take pride in being self-sustaining, and also to continue the second chance and re-entry initiatives that began during the Malloy administration that has now in many ways become a national model that build a more equitable criminal justice system that allows people to get their lives back on the right track. Also, to strengthen and expand investment and job training and higher education so that residents willing to work to fulfill their dreams have the opportunity to do so. Together, we’ve made genuine progress for the people of Connecticut, and we must continue to advance enlightened policies aimed at promoting the kind of future that we envision for our children and for our grandchildren.

As representatives of state government, we must commit to be a partner of the people who are striving to build a better life for themselves and their families. A sensible, responsible, well-
managed government can provide nurturing support to its people through comprehensive, effective job training programs so that a person can embark on a new career path with legitimate expectations rather than a vague hope. Also, more affordable housing so that a young child has the opportunity to grow up without daily fear and dread in a crime-ridden neighborhood. A strong patient-centered healthcare system so the people will not live in fear that a major illness can cause financial ruin. A superb public education system with a strong commitment to excellence at all levels including an early childhood education so that an inquisitive child can grow up to become a scholar, a physician, an architect, an attorney, an inventor of transformative technology, or perhaps a member of this general assembly. We must not stifle the fragile dreams of our young. As former first lady, Michelle Obama, wrote in her recent memoir, “Failure is a feeling long before it is an actual result.” And, our state must not be complicit in the growth of that poisonous feeling of failure. Government can do great things to lift people up as demonstrated most heroically by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal at the time of great national crisis.

There is no more effective force than government to mobilize the strengths of our people together in order to help their neighbors and in turn, help themselves. If we look past the arbitrary walls that separate our communities, we can make our state more efficient and more creative at providing services that people need to rely upon. Our fellow citizens of Connecticut sent us here to make responsible and difficult choices, and there is nowhere else we can turn. In this state Senate, we
have educators, town leaders, lawyers, business owners, labor leaders, parents, and grandparents. Together, we have the experience to tackle the obstacles that we face. We must look to each other to move Connecticut forward and to create enhanced comprehensive regional cooperation to provide state assistance to cities and towns in creative and more efficient ways.

As the esteemed economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, once said, “The conventional view serves to protect us from the painful job of thinking.” The median size of a Connecticut town is 27 square miles with a range from 5 to 61, and while our close-knit communities help make Connecticut an attractive place to live, we cannot continue to have so many government fiefdoms that expend pressure energy protecting the status quo. In fact, the best way to preserve the character of neighborhoods and villages is to find ways to lower their cost and establish a long-term path of sustainability to make sure that state aid to those municipalities goes as far as possible in challenging times. We have succeeded before with the streamlining of our probate court system, and I believe we can muster the collective will to create more regional school districts and more shared services districts. More than anything, with a new governor and the creative talents of Governor Ned Lamont, and a transformed general assembly, we have an opportunity to achieve ambitious goals for our state.

For our returning senators, the new legislative session represents an opportunity to create change unlike anything many of us have experienced in this Chamber. For the many new senators -- with the great excitement of the 11 new senators introduced
today and 3 more who will be joining us we believe by the end of February -- push yourselves and your fellow senators to seize this opportunity and act vigorously upon the mandate that sent you here today.

To all of my colleagues here today, I look forward to harmonizing our diverse gifts and perspectives in a spirit of bipartisan goodwill to meet the challenges and to foster the vast potential of our state during the next 2 years. Senator Fasano mentioned earlier our communication and goodwill. He is someone who I respect enormously. As he said, we’ve had a friendship before we were in the positions we now occupy in the General Assembly, and I’m very proud to say that some of the bipartisan health and insurance-related legislation that he and I worked on together over the next several years are now regarded as a national model that other states are looking to -- to emulate, and I think that’s something we are both proud of, and it stands to a testament to what can be done when there is bipartisan goodwill in state government. As the great 18th Century British Essayist Joseph Addison said, “A man must be both stupid and uncharitable who believes there is no virtue or truth but on his own side.” Also, we must proceed with an attitude of collective forbearance and not automatically assume bad faith on the part of others and ascribe pernicious motives. I believe that the poet Marianne Moore was correct when she observed that, “The passion for setting people right is in itself an afflictive disease.” And, we need to, I think, keep that in mind when we are engaged in conflict that otherwise might become excessively partisan and destructive of our -- of our mutual good.
Our successes in navigating this Chamber will require us all to work closer together. We had substantial achievement before the historic time of the 2016 legislative election. We had substantial achievements during that time over the last 2 years, and we will again with a new dynamic in the General Assembly this year.

Finally, we would do well to embrace the insight of President John Quincy Adams who noted that, “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.” Thank you all and may we all have the wisdom, strength, optimism, and courage we will need to lead in the next 2 years. Thank you so much [applause].

Thank you all so much, and we will let -- proceed with -- with business now. The -- the next item of business is the announcement of the election of majority leader, and it is my great, great pleasure and honor to announce that Senator Bob Duff of Norwalk of the 25th district has been elected by our democratic caucus to continue as the majority leader of the state Senate for his third term. He became a majority leader in January 2015 when I became Senate president pro tempore. So, at this point, I would call upon our distinguished and my dear friend and someone who is a great partner and collaborator in all that we have gotten done over the last 4 years and for many years before that, our Majority Leader Senator Bob Duff [applause].

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Senator Looney, and thank you for your confidence, and thank you to members of the democratic caucus for their confidence as well in
leading -- helping to lead this caucus for a third term. It is an honor and I am humbled to have this responsibility to work with you Senator Looney as well and members of the democratic caucus. I also look forward to continuing to work with Senator Fasano. We have worked well on a number of issues over the years and Senator Witkos as well as we work to run floor operations, and it is quite an honor to -- to lead -- to be a leader in the Senate in the General Assembly, especially over these exciting times we’ve had over the last few years.

I want to just briefly thank some folks who are here today. Again, I want to welcome our new senators, both sides of the aisle for who are here and exciting time and their families and guests and to welcome again our returning members. Every time we come in, every 2 years, it is really almost like the first day of school. We are all dressed up nicely. We have our families. It’s kind of a new day of optimism, and we hope that carries through, through June, when we have our sine die, but knowing that how well we all work together and that we come together on so many different issues, and it’s such a -- it is really a model for -- for other legislatures and certainly, Washington as people watch the work that we do.

I also want to introduce a few folks who are here, and if the Senate can give them a welcome as well, but I have my mom and my dad, Bruce and Joanne Duff, my wife, Tracey, who’s here [applause]. We also have mayor of Norwalk, Harry Rilling, and his wife Lucia who are here as well [applause]. And, there are a lot of people here, so I’m certain there are other folks here from Norwalk and Darien in the gallery [chuckle] somewhere but want to thank them
for being here and all the voters of Norwalk and Darien for their confidence, and the people who helped get us here today.

As Senator Looney said and I think everybody certainly understands that this is not done by ourselves. It’s done thanks to the good grace of our families who have put up with the campaigning and put up with the long hours, and -- and all the work that we do. It’s done through the volunteers and those and certainly the voters who -- who elect us, and we always have to remember everybody who -- who gets us here and that we are -- we are a servant of the people, and that we always must work towards the greater good in the state of Connecticut. So, again, I want to thank the caucus for their support. I work and continue to work with all members of the Chamber to get our business done and get the bills done that we need to get accomplished this session. I than the voters. I thank my family. I thank my friends for -- for all the work that they’ve done getting me here today, and again, thank you Senator Looney. I look forward to our collaboration over the next 2 years in getting things done, and of course, doing that with Senator Fasano, Senator Witkos, and all members of the Senate and the House and the governor to lead our great state. Thank you so much [applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Duff, and -- and we are -- we are underway. I would also like to -- to mention, as did the Secretary of State before, the republican choice for republican leader for minority leader once again Senator Leonard Fasano and would call on Senator Fasano [applause].
SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you [applause]. Thank you, Senator Looney. Congratulations to you and to Senator Duff. Senator Witkos and I and my caucus look forward to working with you as the years go on in this session. I want to thank my family and my supporters of my district. Look, all of us in this circle know you would not be sitting in that seat if you didn’t have support from your family and your friends and your district, but mostly your family and friends to pull you over that finish line. I am going to ask all of us in the circle to stand and acknowledge your family and friends that have placed you in the seat. Please acknowledge them [applause]. I want to congratulate all the new senators and welcome to our family. We call it the circle, but it is a family, and unlike the House where they sit republicans on one side, democrats on the other, we sit by districts, and I think that is good for what the Senate has always stood for, comradery and the ability to talk issues out. That’s what makes us strong, and to our veteran senators, welcome back. We refined our relationship over the years, and we will go forward.

I also want to take this time to recognize Kevin Witkos who is my partner in the leadership of the Senate and thank you Kevin for taking that position and for the work that you’ve done over the years. Thank you so much [applause]. As Senator Looney said, last year we were at 18/18 historic vote in 2016, and this Chamber accomplished so much. We had two bipartisan budgets back-to-back. That’s historic. That has never happened in the Capitol. Two bipartisan budgets back-to-back. We controlled borrowing and spending. We reduced taxes on the
elderly and Social Security and pension. We codified the Affordable Care Act. We did equal pay. We passed numerous bills in cooperation with each other that have set a good course for the state of Connecticut. Now, the numbers may be a little bit different than they were 2 years ago, but the will of this Chamber to get things done still exists. The common bound of making Connecticut strong will certainly hold us together and outweigh any policy differences that may try to tear us apart because in this room we have talent. We have friendships. We have dedication. We have people who care, and that’s the mixture you need to bring about a strong resolve and a continued pathway that will make Connecticut as strong as it could possibly be.

So, in the program, it says Senator Looney speaks, brief remarks by the majority leader, and even briefer by the minority leader [laughter], so I will conclude and say that it is a privilege and an honor to be a leader in the circle, but more importantly, it is a privilege and an honor to be in this circle. If you listen to what everybody has to say, you will change as a person if you allow the voices to ring true to yourself. Thank you and God bless this Chamber. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Fasano, and before proceeding with today’s business, I would like to introduce and recognize the presence in the circle of one of the most beloved former members, former senator, now mayor of the city of New Haven, Toni Harp [applause]. Thank you for being with us today, Mayor. Let us move on. Mr. Clerk, is there business on the Clerk’s desk?
CLERK:

Yes, Mr. President. The clerk is in possession of Senate Agendas No. 1 and 2, dated Wednesday, January 9, 2019.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Recognize Senator Duff, our majority leader for motions on the adoption of Senate Agendas 1 and 2.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. For the new members, we’re almost there for introductions. We have to go through some pro forma things here. Mr. President, I move all items on Senate Agendas No. 1 and 2, dated January 9, 2019, to be acted upon as indicated and that the Agendas be incorporated by reference into the Senate Journal and the Senate Transcript.

THE CHAIR:

So moved -- the majority leader has moved to place those items on the Senate Agenda -- [Clearing throat] Senate Agendas 1 and 2 to be placed as -- as indicated, and without objection, so ordered. Mr. Majority Leader.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I move adoption of the resolution from Agenda 2 and ask for a voice vote.
THE CHAIR:

Please proceed. Yes. The Clerk will read that -- that item, Joint Resolution No. 1.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Yes. Thank you, Mr. President. I apologize. I skipped that one. Mr. President, I move that we move Senate Joint Resolution No. 1, and that it be called, please.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Mr. Majority Leader, would you remark further?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

No.

THE CHAIR:

Yes. Mr. Clerk, call that -- call that Resolution.

CLERK:

Calling -- calling from Senate Agenda No. 2. Senate Joint Resolution No. 1, RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE JOINT RULES OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, these are -- are -- are rules of the Senate and House of Representatives and have been agreed on by all leaders of the caucuses, and I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Duff. Will you remark further? Any additional comment on Senate Joint Resolution No. 1 regarding the joint rules? I’m seeing no further additional comment. We will try your minds. All in favor please indicate by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? I’m hearing no -- nothing in opposition. The Senate rules in Joint Resolution No. 1 is adopted. Mr. Majority Leader.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I call for -- could the Clerk please call Senate Joint Resolution No. 2?

THE CHAIR:

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. Again, these are -- are our general Resolutions regarding the publication of the legislative bulletins, printing of the bills and expenses for our session. I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader. Is there additional comment? Would you remark further on Senate Joint Resolution No. 2? If not, I will try your minds. All in favor please indicate by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? I’m hearing no objection. It is so ordered adopted. Now, we move on to --

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Yes, Madam -- Mr. Majority Leader.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I move for immediate transmittal of Senate Joint Resolutions 1 and 2 to the House of Representatives, please.
THE CHAIR:

Without -- without objection, it is so ordered. Mr. Majority Leader.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. Would the Clerk now please call Senate Resolution No. 1?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 1, RESOLUTION RAISING A COMMITTEE OF 3 SENATORS TO INFORM THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR THAT THE SENATOR REQUESTS HER PRESENCE IN THE SENATE CHAMBERS.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Mr. Majority Leader.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. It’s self-explanatory. We’re ready to swear in the lieutenant governor, and we would ask for adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader. Is there additional comment on the Resolution? I’m hearing none. We
will try your minds. All in favor please indicate by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? I’m hearing none. The Resolution is adopted. Mr. Majority Leader.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. --

THE CHAIR:

[Interruption] Yes. Thank you. After adoption, we will now appoint the committee created by that -- that Resolution, and we appoint Senator Marilyn Moor, Senator Cathy Osten, and Senator Champagne also to be that committee of 3 members to -- to greet the lieutenant governor and inform her that the Senate is ready to receive her. And, before standing at ease, we would just like to also acknowledge -- speaker of beloved former members -- we have former state senator, Billy Ciotto in our presence today who is always [applause] welcome. Billy used to always bring the most people on opening day, so he was -- he could have filled both galleries by himself quite easily, so again, we will -- the Senate will stand at ease awaiting the lieutenant governor.

[Applause] Before relinquishing the chair for the administration of the oath to our new lieutenant
governor to whom I offer the -- the greatest congratulations of former colleague in the -- in the general -- general assembly and somebody who has devoted her life to public service. I want to also acknowledge the -- the presence of two other beloved former senators, Senator Ed Meyer, former senator from the 12th district who is here [applause], and also -- and also Senator Ed Gomez whose retirement took effect today [applause] [chuckle]. It is now my -- my great pleasure to relinquish the podium for the administration of the oath to our new lieutenant governor.

DAVID DONALDSON:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Connecticut so long as you continue a citizen thereof, and that you will faithfully discharge according to law the duties of the office of lieutenant governor to the best of your abilities so help you God?

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR SUSAN BYSIEWICZ:

I do [applause] [cheering]. Good morning and thank you all. Before I begin, I just want to thank my family. That was my husband, David, and my children, Ava, Lana [phonetic], and Tristan [phonetic] without whose love and support I would not be here today. I love you all. Thank you so much. I also want to acknowledge my sister, Gayle, and my cousins, Christine, Ted, Amy, Kate, and Phyllis. You’re -- and there they are. They are representing the large and extended Bysiewicz family. Love you all. [Applause].
To my predecessor in this office, Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman; Nancy, thank you for your long and exemplary public service to our beautiful state. Your work on healthcare as well as your care and concern for the veterans and welfare of our military really is an inspiration to everyone in our state. Nancy, I wish you well with your new chapter. [Applause].

I want to thank the people of Connecticut for entrusting this important job to me and the governor-elect. I promise that we will get up every day and work hard to move our beautiful state forward. And, I want to take this opportunity to thank the more than 200,000 people in our state who have served in our United States military, protecting our fundamental freedoms, especially our right to vote, to hold elections, and to govern as we do today. [Applause].

I want to thank governor-elect, Ned Lamont. It’s an honor to be your partner in government. We have a lot of work to do, and I am so excited about the possibility of all that we can accomplish together for our state.

To the president pro tempore, Senator Looney, congratulations on your election to once again lead this very distinguished Chamber, and I also want to acknowledge Senator Fasano for once again being chosen to lead your caucus. [Applause].

To the new and returning members of the Senate circle, congratulations to each of you. You have chosen public service, so please never forget the weight of the responsibility entrusted to you by your constituents. The governor-elect and I look
forward to working with all of you. We are committed to reaching across the aisle, to bringing everyone together, and treating every single person with fairness, decency, and the respect that they deserve. The road that I’ve traveled to get here today as been quite the journey indeed. It all started on a potato farm in Middletown where I was taught by example to always fight for what’s right by my dad who was a World War II veteran and by my mom, the child of immigrants, was also a lawyer to stand up for people in need, and I have taken that fighting spirit to everything that I’ve done whether it’s serving as Secretary of the State, as a legislator, as a business lawyer, and a job creator. The road ahead might be tough, but we can, and we will confront the important issues and challenges facing our state. We will help small businesses grow, thrive, and create good paying jobs. We will ensure equal pay for equal work, and fight for paid family and medical leave. We will make a balanced state budget that’s fair to everyone, and we will safeguard access to affordable healthcare. We will fight for equality and stand up against attacks on our rights and our freedoms, and we will always fight for our families of Connecticut. The governor-elect and I believe in our state and we believe in Connecticut’s future.

As Ella Grasso said, “It’s not enough to profess faith in the democratic process. We must do something about it.” And, as Jodi Rell said, “The goal of government is simple. Safety and security.” The work, ladies and gentlemen, begins today and we must do that work together. Thank you [applause]. Thank you all so much!
Before I acknowledge the new members of this Chamber, I want to recognize the very dedicated public service of Senator Beth Bye, Senator Terry Gerratana, and Senator Tim Larson. Although their time in this Chamber is coming to an end, the governor-elect and I are looking forward to their continued public service as it enters a new phase. Senators, thank you very much for your service in this Chamber. [Applause].

It is now my pleasure to introduce our new members. First, Senator Matt Lesser. Senator Lesser of the 9th district is joining the state Senate after having served 5 terms in the House of Representatives where he was most recently chair of the Banking Committee. He has been a principle author of a number of important laws including the first in the nation Student Loan Bill of Rights, as well as a Major Workplace Safety Law, which was later adopted as a national standard. Senator Lesser is here with his wife, Sara, who are both my neighbors in Middletown. So nice to have you [applause]. And, I should note that Senator Lesser will be serving as chair of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee and as vice chair of the Public Health Committee.

Next -- I thought we were recognizing each at the end, so I’m going to continue with the introduction, Senator Lesser. So, next, Senator Christine Cohen. Senator Cohen of the 12th district joins us from the town of Guilford where she lives with her husband, Rob, and her 3 children, Aiden, Ashlyn, and Ryan. Senator Cohen has been an active member of her community having served in many different capacities. She has most recently served on the Guilford Board of Education. She is also the owner
of Cohen’s Bagel Company in Madison, and she will be serving as the chair of the Environment Committee and vice chair of the Commerce Committee. [Applause].

And, next, it is my honor to introduce Mary -- Senator Mary Abrams. It is a pleasure to say that I am a constituent of Senator Abrams in the 13th district. Senator Abrams taught special education as a classroom teacher for 25 years. She then transitioned into administration and served over 10 years as a director of special education and is a high school assistant principal. Senator Abrams lives in Meriden where she has been very civically active in her community. She lives with her husband, Judge Jim Abrams, a friend of many of ours. They have 2 children, Madelyn and Nicholas. Senator Abrams will be serving as chair of the Children’s Committee, chair of Public Health Committee, and vice chair of the Veteran’s Affairs Committee and on the Education Committee. [Applause].

It is my pleasure to introduce Senator James Maroney. Senator Maroney of the 14th district is a familiar face at the State Capitol. He was formerly a state Representative for the 119th district representing Milford and Orange. He served on the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee while in the House of Representatives. He has been a very active member of his community having served on the Board of Education as well as the Board of Directors of the Milford Literacy Center. He is a member and past president of the Devon Rotary Club, and he has been a local track coach for many years. Senator Maroney lives with his wife, Jennifer, and their son, Jay [applause]. Okay. You clapped before I said that he will be
serving [chuckle] as a chair of the Aging Committee and chair of the Veteran’s Affairs committee, and I can say firsthand he has already hit the ground running because I saw him visiting residents at the VA Hospital on Sunday. He will also serve as the vice chair on the Human Services Committee.

Next, is Rob -- Senator Rob Sampson. Senator Sampson of the 16th district is another familiar face at the State Capitol. He was first elected to the State House of Representatives in 2010. He has served as the executive director of the Connecticut Liberty Caucus. He is an officer of Wolcott’s Masonic Lodge #146, and as a member of the Connecticut Association of Realtors as well as member of numerous other civic organizations. He is an American history buff and collects items related to the American Revolution, George Washington, and the Civil War. The senator will be serving as ranking member on the Government Administration and Elections Committee, and will also be serving on the Judiciary, Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committees. Senator Sampson. [Applause].

It is my pleasure to introduce Senator Dennis Bradley of the 23rd [cheering] [applause]. He is an attorney and an ardent advocate for Bridgeport and Stratford. He has served as chairman of the Bridgeport Board of Education, and he has received awards for his pro bono legal service. Senator Bradley will be the chair of the Housing Committee and the chair of the Public Safety Committee. Welcome. [Applause] [Cheering].

It is my pleasure to introduce Senator Julie Kushner. Senator Kushner [applause] [cheering] represents the 24th district and has recently
retired as the Director of the UAW Region 9A, which covers New England, Puerto Rico, and portions of New York. She has spent her life advocating for social justice and for women. She has been a member of the Coalition of the Labor Union of Women, a member of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, and a lifetime member of the NAACP. She is married to her husband, Larry, and they have 3 children, Ala [phonetic], Rachel [phonetic], and Kara [phonetic]. Welcome Senator [applause] [cheering], and I will just add that she will be serving as chair of the Labor Committee as well as vice chair of the Environment Committee [applause]. Thank you, Senator.

It is my pleasure to introduce Senator Will Haskell of the 26th district [applause]. He is now the state Senate’s youngest member. However, for someone so young, he has built a remarkable resume. Senator Haskell has just graduated from Georgetown University where he helped launch the free speech project, an initiative dedicated to monitoring and protecting the freedom of expression. Senator Haskell has also spent an amazing amount of time working interning or volunteering with many different public offices including the Connecticut Office of the Public Defender, the office of Senator Christopher Murphy, and the office of Congressman Himes. Senator Haskell will be serving as chair of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee and as vice chair of the Government Administration and Election Committee. Welcome, Senator Haskell. [Applause] [Cheering].

It is my pleasure to introduce Senator Norman Needleman of the 33rd district [applause] [cheering]. Senator Needleman has been the Essex
first selectman since 2011. He is the president and founder of Tower Laboratories, the largest producer of effervescent products in the United States. The senator and his partner, Jacqueline Hubbard, have with them today Matthew Needleman and his wife Katie, Daniel Needleman and Jen Abramson, Catherine Hubbard, and Rosalyn Hubbard. The senator will serve as chair of the Energy and Technology Committee and as vice chair of the Banking Committee. Welcome, Senator Needleman [applause].

It is my pleasure to introduce Senator Champagne of the 35th district [applause]. Senator Champagne has served as the mayor of the town of Vernon since 2013. He has also served our country in the Army National Guard and served as a Vernon police officer for 22 years. Mayor Champagne received numerous accolades for his distinguished service. He is married to his wife Karen. The have 2 daughters, Emily and Melissa. The senator will serve as ranking member of the Planning and Development Committee and will be serving on the Judiciary and the Public Safety and Security Committees. Welcome, Senator. [Applause].

It is my pleasure to welcome Senator Alex Bergstein [applause] [cheering]. Senator Bergstein will represent the 36th district. She has been an active member in her community of Greenwich. As director of Greening our Children, she led efforts against the use of recycled tires in municipal and school playgrounds. She is also a leader in the nonprofit Greenwich Community Gardens and cofounded the Parody Partnership. She formerly was the chairwoman of Mount Sinai Children’s Environmental Health Center as well. In addition to all of that, Senator Bergstein is currently a PhD candidate in
environmental science at Yale. She and her husband, Seth, have 3 children, William, Max, and Elle, and the senator will be serving as chair of the Banking Committee and vice chair of the Judiciary Committee and vice chair of the Transportation Committee. Welcome, Senator Bergstein. [Applause] [Cheering].

Okay. Would there be any business on the Clerk’s desk? Ah, Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President and welcome. Congratulations and we look forward to working with you over the next 2 years, and welcome again, and it’s great to see you and your family here today for an exciting rest of the day and into the evening, so.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Madam President, would the -- would the Clerk please call Senate Resolution No. 2?

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 2, THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE RULES OF THE SENATE.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you. Madam President -- Madam President, this is regarding the rules of the Senate, which is
sponsored by myself, Senator Looney, and Senator Fasano in a bipartisan manner. I would move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Is there any further discussion? If not, let me try your minds. All in favor please signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The ayes have it. The resolution is adopted. Mr. Clerk, is there any further business on your desk?

CLERK:

Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam president, would the Clerk please call Senate Resolution No. 3?

CLERK:
Senate Resolution No. 3, RESOLUTION RAISING A COMMITTEE CANVASSING OF THE VOTES FOR THE STATE SENATORS.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam -- thank you, Mr. Clerk. Madam President, this is self-explanatory, and I would move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Any discussion? I’m seeing none. All in favor please signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? Ayes have it. The Resolution is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you. Madam President, you need to appoint the committee now I believe.

THE CHAIR:

So, I would like to appoint Senator Lesser and Senator Winfield and Senator Miner to the committee.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you, Madam President. Madam president, would the Clerk now please call Senate Resolution No. 6?

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 6, RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE NOMINATIONS OF REVEREND JAMES NOCK OF EAST HARTFORD AS CHAPLAIN OF THE SENATE AND RABBI PHILIP LAZOWSKI OF BLOOMFIELD, REVEREND BONITA GRUBBS OF NEW HAVEN, AND MONSIGNOR GERARD G. SCHMITZ OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD -- HARTFORD AS DEPUTY CHAPLAINS OF THE SENATE.

THE CHAIR:

Any discussion?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Madam President, I just need to move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Any discussion? I’m seeing none. I would move for a voice vote. All in favor of the Resolution please signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? Resolution is passed.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you. Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Would the Clerk now please call Senate Resolution No. 4?

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 4, RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PRINTING OF THE SENATE JOURNAL.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Madam President, thank you. I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

All in favor please signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? Motion Resolution carries.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

You gotta put a little heart into it. Thank you, Madam President.
THE CHAIR:

[Laughing].

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Madam President, would the Clerk please call Senate Resolution No. 5?

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 5, RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE ROLL CALL AND THE READING OF THE SENATE JOURNAL.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

All in favor please signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The motion carries.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I believe the committee on canvass of votes issues to report.

THE CHAIR:

The committee is therefore discharged. Any further business? Madam President, would the Clerk please call Senate Resolution No. 7?

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 7, RESOLUTION RAISING A COMMITTEE TO INFORM THE HOUSE THAT THE SENATE IS ORGANIZED AND READY TO MEET IN JOINT CONVENTION.

THE CHAIR:

Do -- Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

All in favor of the Resolution please signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:
Opposed? The motion carries and is adopted. And, it is now my pleasure to appoint Senator Maroney and Senator Flexer as well as Senator Sampson to the committee who will report to the House that the Senate will be prepared to meet in joint convention in the afternoon.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Hurry back [laughing]. Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I believe that we are now at the point of points of personal privilege. I would just like to remind members that it’s our tradition to let the new members go first, and then we will -- I think our goal is to try and finish by noon, which is going to be exceedingly difficult, but we want to try to make sure everybody gets in and says hi to their families and friends, so with that, we can move to points of personal privilege please.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator, and -- Senator Duff, and with that, we will move to points of personal privilege, and we are going to start with Senator Lesser. Ah, and he is discharging committee business, so we -- here he is? Okay. There he is. Senator Lesser for the second time, and this is it.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank -- thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

You’re recognized.
SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President, and Madam President, on the onset, let me just say one thought. An incredible joy it is to see you up on the Dais as a neighbor, a friend of yours. From Middletown, we feel immense pride of your accomplishments and are so excited to get to work with you in this capacity.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

[Crosstalk] [mic off] President I am new to this Chamber but not new to this building. I had hoped at one point to be the youngest member of this body [Laughter]. Unfortunately, I have been beaten by a country mile [Laughter] by Senator Haskell, so that -- I have to give that up, but I do have a number of guests here today in the Senate that I’d like to acknowledge with your understanding. I have with me my incredible and ever patient and wonderful wife Sarah Steinfeld. Sarah, thank you [Applause] for everything. My best friend from as far back as 7th grade, Dr. Joe Griffith, has flown in all the way from Cleveland, Ohio. [Applause).

THE CHAIR:

Great.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):
And, I’m not sure why, but I’m grateful [Laughter], and I see my -- my good friend, the former mayor of Middletown, Dominic Fort [phonetic] with me here as well.

Now, I will say I am currently the state Senator from the 9th district, but I’m really just warming the seat over because the real senator from this district will be and always be Senator Billy Ciotto who is her with us today [applause]. Last week -- I’m not sure if the members know -- Senator Ciotto was a personal guest at the swearing in of Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, so he is very much slumming in with us here today [laughter], but we’re very grateful for his -- his presence here as well.

We also have Reverend Carlton Giles here. We’ve got Barbara Arathay [Phonetic]; John Kelly; councilwoman, Carol Anis [Phonetic]; Alisha Blake; Terry Lapenta; Rochelle Palotke [Phonetic]. And, I want to also thank the people who helped me get elected. I thank Lindsay, Nick, and everyone else who believed in me along the way. Earlier this week, I had the privilege of traveling to the state of Alabama with a friend of mine from the other side of the aisle, Senator George Logan. We visited many of the sites associated with the history of slavery of Jim Crow, and the civil rights group in our country, and I was reminded of the great task before us of making sure that our country lives up to the ideals and the lived experiences of our constituents live up to the ideals of this country. I think that work remains before us. To do that, I’m work -- intending to work with all the members of this Chamber, keep my head down, work hard, and serve the people the 9th Senate District and the people of the
state of Connecticut. It’s a great privilege to be here. Thank you, Madam President. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Lesser, and it is now my pleasure to introduce Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Good morning, Madam President. It is indeed a tremendous honor and privilege to serve in elected office, and I would like to start my service in the state Senate the same way I started my service in the House of Representatives by making a promise that I will never forget how I got here or why I’m here, which is to represent and defend the freedom of my constituents, and I want to thank them for the trust and confidence that they have placed in me. There are great many people that are responsible for your growth into adulthood, and what it means that ultimately you get to serve in state Senate. I think that means that they did a pretty good job teaching you the ropes about maturity and life, and there are too many people to list for me that would contribute to that, but I would like to -- to thank some of the people who helped get me here today. My friend, Taylor Way [phonetic], Brenda Martin, Federica Castaldi [phonetic], Enasi Newjame [Phonetic], Jane Bate, Sharon O’Brien, Barbara Roberts, Alexander Anderson, and my friend, Tim Anip [phonetic] who just happens to be right behind me who is -- stand up Tim. Tim is one of the hardest working campaign workers you will ever see. He knocked on thousands of doors with me, and we joked that he was employee of the month quite often, so.
I would be remis if I didn’t also mention my predecessor, State Senator Joe Markley, who is my best friend in the world. He is not only my friend, but he has been my mentor and my partner in our desire to make sure that our core American principles and values are not lost in Connecticut and America, and I’m constantly reminded that I have large shoes to fill sitting in his seat, but I will do my best to make him proud. There are also 2 other people that I most definitely would not be here without, and those are my parents, and they are sitting right behind me, Margaret and Charles Sampson, and my dad vanished, of course, right at this moment [laughter], but mom, if you’d stand up you can maybe get on the camera [applause]. Without my parents, I would not have been raised with the values that I have that have carried me through to this day and understanding of what it means to work hard for the things that you believe in and you want to achieve right and wrong, and a love for this country that remains strong throughout my life. They inst -- instilled those values in me, and I cannot thank them enough. I am very excited to start my journey here in the state Senate. I have served in the House over the last 8 years, and Senator Markley and I used to joke about how it’s two different worlds, and this is the more cerebral Chamber and the House is more like the floor of the stock market with a lot of chaos. I’m accustomed to that, but I will try and adapt to the surroundings here. I look forward to working with my new 35 friends in this circle in both parties to make Connecticut a better place to live, to work, to raise a family, and to retire, and I hope that we can set an example for people in politics all across the country on how to work together to achieve those goals. Thank you very much, Madam President.
THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson, thank you [applause]. It is now my pleasure to recognize Senator Abrams.

SENATOR DAUGHERTY ABRAMS (13TH):

I rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR DAUGHERTY ABRAMS (13TH):

Thank you, Madam President. It is indeed a privilege to represent the people of the 13th district in the Connecticut State Senate. It’s also a privilege to have so many constituents, friends, and family here today, especially my husband, Jim, our daughter, Madelyn, and son-in-law, John Thomas, our beautiful albeit loud granddaughter, Rose. Hi baby [laughing]. My sister Cathy and her husband, David Algier [phonetic], my mother-in-law, Lofton Wilson [phonetic], my sisters-in-law, Janice Daugherty and Janet Steel [phonetic], my friends. My wonderful friend, Sarah Sear [phonetic] and Sally Southard [phonetic], and my beautiful nieces Alyssa Hewitt, Sarah Daugherty, and Rachel Daugherty. I am so happy to have you all here, and I also want to acknowledge 2 people who I’m sure would be here if they could and that is our son, Nicholas Abrams and a wonderful Middletown’s own Seb Erasko [phonetic]. I hope that they watch this, so I want to make sure that I mention them.
And, lastly, I’d just like to say that it is humbling to have the privilege to serve the people of Cheshire, Middlefield, Middletown, and Meriden, and it is an honor to be here, and I want to remember the words every time I come in this Chamber of Eleanor Roosevelt who asked that we “use privilege to sow justice.” And, that is what I will intend to do as I work with all of you over the next 2 years. Thank you very much. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Abrams. It is now my pleasure to recognize Senator Haskell.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

It’s such an honor and thrill to be with you all today. I am just so enormously grateful to have this opportunity. I look forward to learning so much from my senior colleagues around the circle, including Senator Looney’s tie in the upcoming legislative session [laughter]. First and foremost, Madam President, I would like to recognize my mom who you will not find a harder working, more compassionate, more loving mother in the state of Connecticut, and I could not be here today without her help and support. I also want to recognize my
father who inspired my interest in politics and taught me from an early age that government can be a force of good in people’s lives. I want to recognize my grandparents. Two of whom are here with me today. One of whom is watching from home [chuckle]. They set the example for civic participation and civic engagement in their communities. Finally, Madam President, in the course of my campaign, I talked constantly about the need to draw young people back to Connecticut, to keep young talented workers here. The truth of the matter is I’m just hoping that my girlfriend, Katie, will come back to Connecticut. She is here with us today [laughter]. I -- last but not least, I want to recognize my brothers who I’ve looked up to for as long as I can remember. They’ve lent me hours of free advice as well as this suit in fact, so I’m so grateful for their help and support [laughter]. And, finally, my best friend who did not hesitate for a moment when I asked him to be my campaign manager, and that’s Jack Lynch who truly did make this dorm room-type dream a reality. I’m so grateful for his friendship.

Madam President, the last person I want to recognize is somebody who isn’t here today. It’s somebody who isn’t watching on television or isn’t waiting to see what happens in the upcoming legislative session. I’m talking about those who carefully avoid politics, who adjudicate their role in the policy making process, who don’t think that they could or should vote let alone run for office. In the months ahead, I hope it will be the job of this Chamber to reach out to those who are apathetic or pessimistic or too often overlooked. Let’s demonstrate the government is a place to come together and politics, if practiced responsibly, is simply the mission of
helping people. I mention these citizens, Madam President, because at some point in all of our lives, we were that person. It was only a few months ago that many laughed at the idea of sending a younger voice to the state Senate. I -- I wouldn’t want to speak for my colleagues, but whether it was last year or a decade ago, I’m sure that my fellow state senators remember sitting on the sidelines filled with doubt and fear. Let’s make it our job to encourage others to make that leap of faith, to believe in the good of government, and understand that we need their voice in order to build a better future for Connecticut. Thank you so much, Madam President. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Haskell. It’s now my pleasure to introduce Senator Champagne.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I’d like to start out by first thanking my wife who’s here with us, Karen, and my family has always been number one when it comes to my decisions in politics because I believe family should be the forefront. I also have many other people that I’d like to thank and one of those is my father-in-law who is here, Richard Offerman [phonetic], and my -- my manager, Mark Vesco. I would also like to thank the people of the 35th district for voting me in, and I’d also like to thank the -- all those people that -- that couldn’t be here today and those that had to leave after the swearing in. I also thank God for what he provides for me and -- and -- and his leadership in life, and to all those people sitting around the table who
have gotten involved in politics, I thank you for stepping up to the plate because it’s not an easy task and to all of you, hats off.

Madam President, congratulations to you. Congratulations to those sitting around the table and thank you. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Champagne, and it is now my pleasure to recognize Senator Bergstein.

SENATOR BERGSTIEIN (36TH):

Madam President, I rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR BERGSTIEIN (36TH):

Thank you, Madam President. A year ago, I could never have imagined being here. Now, I can’t imagine being anywhere else. So, if you’re wondering how a girl from Greenwich got here, I refer you to exhibit A and exhibit B, the most amazing, brilliant, fantastic, hardworking, dedicated, ethical, caring, all volunteer nonpartisan campaign team. I love you all. Thank you for being here. [Applause] [chuckle] [blowing kisses].

So, the reason my team and I are so bonded is because we share a mission, and the mission is to
make civic engagement and civil discourse the new norm. Because we expect our democracy to flourish, not just to function. We expect an end to obstructionism. We expect reasonable and responsible solutions, not rhetoric and posturing. We expect an end to all deception, denial, all negativity because we really have no use for negativity. It is counterproductive. It is a waste of time. What we believe in is optimism and action, and that’s what we are modeling because that is our definition of a healthy democracy. Self-governance by informed and engaged citizens, and we’re never gonna stop fighting for it. Are we? [Applause] [cheering]. All right!

So, to my new colleagues in this Chamber, I hope you agree that as citizens and elected officials we have a duty, not just to win by all costs, but to govern and to lead by example, so I want to give you a snapshot of what you can expect from me and a suggestion of how we can all move forward. I believe in an open mind, listening without judgement. I believe in an open heart looking for the good in others. I believe in serving the public, not a political party. I believe in long-term solutions and not quick fixes. I believe in individual responsibility for those things that we can control and shared responsibility for those things that are beyond our control. I believe in absolute equality for all people, and I believe that true power comes not from the use of wealth or status or the threat of force or fear. True power comes from the light within each of us, which is compassion and love because compassion and love help us find peace within ourselves and connection to one another. And, if you’re doubtful or cynical about
what I’m saying, I just suggest that you try an experiment.

Find someone, anyone, today or tomorrow who you think, ah, I don’t have anything in common with that person or, ah, I don’t think I’m gonna like that person because I’ve heard things about him or her, and just ask them a question about themselves and listen. Listen without judgement, and I guarantee you your mind will shift, and you will say, wow, she’s not that bad or he’s not as grumpy as people say. And, when you do that, when your mind shift, trust and acceptance will grow. Your own heart will feel lighter, and your own light will shine brighter. And, if we all practice this one action, it would be transformative. This is the power of an open heart. It creates new possibilities, so my wish for this Senate is that we each shine our light every day, and if we keep at it with all our lights shining, we can become a beacon, and in this Chamber, we can become a new model for how democracy can work and how we the people can save not only our state but also ourselves in the process. Thank you. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Bergstein. It’s now my pleasure to call upon Senator Cohen.

SENATOR COHEN (12TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:
Please proceed.

SENATOR COHEN (12TH):

Might I just start by saying that it is so wonderful to see you standing up there residing over the Senate. I have gotten to know you well over the past year --

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much.

SENATOR COHEN (12TH):

And, I am thrilled to have your leadership.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

SENATOR COHEN (12TH):

It is just -- I’ll echo the sentiments of my colleagues, a privilege and an honor to be here representing the 12th district, the -- the folks of Guilford, Madison, Branford, North Branford, Killingworth, and Durham. I, you know, have been really contemplative the last few days as we lead up to the start of the session today and thinking about how I -- it’s not lost on me that I am not the typical face of the Senate -- female with a very young family whom I’ll introduce in a moment, business owner, and I look around this circle and see so many atypical faces of the Senate, and I am thrilled by that. We have educators, 22-year-olds. We have a democrat from Greenwich [laughing], so
it’s really exciting, and I -- I look forward to working with you all and being the voice of the 12th district.

I will also be as brief as possible just by virtue of my seat. I know what a time crunch we’re under [chuckle], so I’m hearing the whispers and would love to introduce some folks that are with me here today. Unfortunately, I -- Senator Kennedy who I have obviously big shoes to fill in -- in his stepping down from this 12th district senatorial seat. He is across the country today, but I just would like to thank him for his mentorship in these past few months. Also, with me here today my family. My -- my high school sweetheart, my husband, Rob [applause], and husband of nearly 18 years. my son, Aiden, 14, a student in Guilford. Ashlyn [phonetic], 11, and my daughter Ryan [phonetic], who is 8 years old. Also, with me up in the gallery is my mother, Patricia Hunter, my stepfather, James Cooper, my sister, Winter Picars [phonetic], my nieces are up there, and so thrilled to have Tara and Lisa here who worked so hard on my campaign and without whom I wouldn’t be here today, so thank you so much.

Also, on the floor with me today, are mentors of mine whom all of you know very well, former Senator Ed Meyer and his wife, Patty Ann, as well as our Deputy Controller, Marty Carlson. So, I’m just thrilled to be here and looking forward to working with everyone in a bipartisan manner to make Connecticut even better than it is today, so thank you. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:
Thank you so much. Thank you so much, Senator Cohen. [Clearing throat] The chair calls -- calls now Senator Kushner of the 24th district. [Applause].

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH):

I had a note here to say thank you, Madam President, but I think I’ll wing it and say thank you, Senator Looney, our president. I want to say that I never expected to be here as well as some people have said today. You know, I started working when I was 24 years old, and I noticed right away that the women were not paid the same as the men where I worked, and I thought that was wrong, and I started out trying to do something about it, and so most of you know that I have been a union organizer and a union leader all my life fighting for better wages and better conditions for people, and it never dawned on me that that might lead to a role in the State Senate, and so to me, this is a continuation of the work that I’ve always done and always believed in, and you know there has been so many people who have made that work possible and today more than ever I realize how many of you made it possible for me to be able to be the state senator from the 24th district representing Danbury, Sherman, New Fairfield, and part of Bethel. And, I want to say that during this journey to become a state senator what I found so exciting was meeting so many new friends, new people, talking to so many potential voters along the way and listening to their stories and hearing what was important to them. I was very excited. You see I’m wearing a button today. I’m wearing a button for -- advocating for paid family and medical leave [cheering]. Woo Hoo! [Applause] [cheering] And, what is so exciting for me is that
along the way nearly every person I spoke to in my district believe passionately, believe strongly that this is something that we have to do, and I feel very strongly from what I’ve seen that it’s something that we can do this year, and so it’s thrilling to be part of the legislative process. Some people in the room today were incredibly important to my being here and I want to start by introducing my family if they would stand up? My husband, Larry Morgan. My children, Ole Kushner Hermanson and his wife, Carrie Keri. My daughter, Rachel Kushner Wishart [phonetic] and her husband, Jim. My daughter, Carolanne Kushner Morgan. You may have noticed a trend. They all have the same middle name [laughing], and my four grandchildren that I’m so proud of, Abigail, Sophie, Jackson, and the birthday girl. Today is the birthday of Shelby Rae Wishart [phonetic] my dearest, smallest, youngest granddaughter, so join me in wishing her a happy birthday [applause]. I wish my mom and dad and my sisters and brothers could have been here today with us. My mom was here for much of the campaign asking for people to sign paid family leave petitions, and my sister made a bunch of phone calls, and my brothers really were incredibly supportive.

But I also brought with me some guests who are in the gallery, and starting with the Working Families party, Lindsey Farrell, Javier Smith, Sarah Ganong. These are the folks who made sure everything got done on a daily basis. Tom Swan from Citizen Action of Connecticut, Andrea Gartner from the Danbury Democrats, Carolina and Camila Bortoletto -- a lot of you know them from the Connecticut Students for a Dream. Terra Volpe-Martin from Action Together Connecticut, and from -- my very special friends
from the UAW, Joellen Leone [Phonetic], Jose Melara, and my friend, mentor, and our previous director, Phil Wheeler. And, not here, my campaign manager, Jay Malone, my dear best friends, Wendy Fields and Kitty Krewpat [phonetic], who couldn’t be here. But I want to say it was a coalition of women and labor and progressives that helped me to get here. It was janitors, social service workers, state workers, grocery workers, bus drivers, electricians, nurses, hospital workers, teachers, operating engineers, hardworking people in the 24th senatorial district, and they are the ones who got me here, and I will do everything in my power -- and my treasurer, Kate Konetta [phonetic] who I just -- [chuckle] Sorry, I had forgotten. I will do everything to try and represent you well and make sure that we as a state do our very best to promote bills and legislation that will help working families and the middle class to achieve. Thank you. [Applause].

SENATORY LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Senator Kushner. For a point of personal privilege, the chair recognizes Senator Maroney of the 14th district.

SENATOR MARONEY (14TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. It’s a great honor to be here today, and it’s a privilege to be a part of the circle and to join this family. One of the greatest honors in your life I feel is to be recognized by your peers, and so I’d be remis if I didn’t thank the voters of Milford, Orange, West Haven, and Woodbridge who put their faith in me to represent them up here in Hartford. I pledge to work hard to justify the faith that they’ve put in me. I would
also like to thank some of my biggest supporters who have made the trip up to Hartford to be here with me today. The best family, friends, and campaign staff that anyone could ever ask for. As you know, the trials of a campaign it’s not easy being the spouse or the partner of a candidate, so I’d like to start by -- and with me I think -- I’ve heard it’s made exponentially more difficult, so I’d like to start by thanking my wife, Jennifer Ju, who is obviously a beautiful and kind and very patient for staying with me, so thank you. I’d also like to thank my son, Jay -- Jay if you’d stand up -- who’s in 7th grade [Applause], and it’s unclear whether or not this is an excused absence, so if I could trouble you on behalf of all of the students who have come up here today to write them a note. We’ll get that after the session or after today’s events conclude. I’d like to thank my mother, Frosty O’Keefe, who is here. You can stand mom if you’d like [applause], and my in -- my in-laws Wan su and Ilman Ju [phonetic]. My father, Jim Maroney; my other mother, Beth Maroney; my brother, John Patrick Maroney; and also, I’d like to recognize the mayor of Milford who is also I consider a great friend, Ben Blake; the assistant mayor of Milford, Justin Rosen [applause]; another friend, Mike Smith; my friend, Jesse Viartan [phonetic]. We’ve been friends since 2nd grade, he was in 1st grade. My friend, Joe Honcz; Jay Zamello [phonetic]; and then Tom and Linda Fuchs [phonetic] who I’ve become very close with and really owe a lot to as well as my friend, Dominic Cotton, and unfortunately, if you’re a fan of Seinfeld, you should never name names. I think I might have missed someone, so the other person who came -- who made the trip today -- and I’m not sure if she’s still here -- but West Haven Mayor, Nancy Rossi and Patty Horvath.
So, I’d like to thank you all as well as thank all of my colleagues. It’s inspiring listening to you speak today. I look forward to getting to know you better and working with you over the course of the next several months. I’m reminded of a trip when I was in 4th or 5th grade. I went with my mother on her field trip. She was getting her Master’s in Social Work. We went to the Franklin Roosevelt Museum in Hyde Park, and you quoted Eleanor Roosevelt and one of my favorite quotes that I learned there from Eleanor Roosevelt was, “Don’t curse the dark, light a candle.” And, so I look forward to working with all of you to light that candle and build a new day for the state of Connecticut, so thank you [Applause].

SENATORY LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Senator Maroney. For a point of personal privilege, the chair recognizes Senator Bradley of the 23rd district [Applause].

SENATOR BRADLEY (23RD):

Thank you, Mr. President, and I ask for this point of personal privilege and --

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR BRADLEY (23RD):

Thank you very much, Mr. President. It’s an honor to be here and it’s an honor to have this opportunity, and I thank you for the leadership and
mentorship you’ve already offered me in -- in my fledgling starting career here in the Senate. I rise and I stand on -- on the shoulders of giants. To my fellow republicans who are brothers and sisters here in this Chamber with me, it was your presidential nominee and Ronald Reagan that allowed my mother who was an undocumented Mexican to have a pathway to citizenship, who came to this country working in the orchard farms of Washington State and the cherry fields of California. I thank her. She is present here. She is sitting in the back here. I thank her immensely [Applause] for what she’s taught me.

Before I was born -- before I was born, I learned the importance of what government can do to change the lives of people. I sit in this chair today, and I think to myself what would have happened if we would have had a different type of president that had took a pregnant woman and allowed me to be born in Mexico? What would have happened to my life if that was the reality of -- of my mother’s decision at that time? I rise and I thank my brothers and sisters on the democrat side who had the courage of nominating president Barack Hussein Obama as the President of the United States and allowed me to believe that the Senate and the presidency and the United States of America and all the wonderful things that it has to offer don’t just belong to those who come from wealth or status or position. It doesn’t just belong to those who have some sort of stature. It belongs to all of us.

Just as Senator Haskell said here, “It belongs to each and every single one of us.” I fight and I stand for you and I thank my party for allowing me to have this opportunity to have their endorsement,
to allow me to serve under that party. I thank you immensely. We are all here brothers and sisters -- democrat or republican, we're brothers and sisters in this Chamber because we're all Americans and I've heard the words of my fellow colleagues who have recently been elected. We want to push Connecticut forward. We want to push America forward. That is my desire. I stand and I rise here for people who are not present, not because they're watching at home, not because they have a -- a lack of desire for government, but who have passed away, specifically Clinton Howell, 12 years old -- 12 years old, was gunned down, worked on my campaign, and is no longer alive. What we do in this Chamber is not just something that's fairy dust. It's reality. We have people in our community that need jobs and need opportunity. That need advancement. That need education. The great equalizer. We have to give it to them. They need healthcare. We just can't simply talk about these things. We have to make them a reality for the people of the state because we're Americans. Whether we're rich or we're poor, we're black or we're white, we're Americans. So, I ask you please, I stand here with my freedom fighting Nikes. I've had wonderful mentors in Ernie Newton -- Senator Ernie Newton. I thank you very much for your mentorship. I've had wonderful mentors in mayor -- Mayor Joe Ganim, thank you for your mentorship [Applause]. Lydia Martinez, Dr. Ford. If I sit here and name everybody, it would be too much, but I tell you this. My father was a soldier in the United States Army. I'm an Army brat, and he taught me this. You only kneel when you're praying to God or when you're in service to people. So, I'm not kneeling here today. I'm standing up for those people here, the city of
Bridgeport and Stratford who elected me. Thank you and God bless you. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Bradley. [Clearing throat] Thank you -- thank you, Senator Bradley. [Clearing throat] Thank you, Senator Bradley. Thank you, Senator Bradley. Thank you, Senator Bradley. The chair recognizes for a point of personal privilege the last but certainly not least of our new senators, Senator Norm Needle -- Needleman of the 33rd district. [Applause].

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Mr. President, I rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Thank you, sir. So, I -- I think I’m the closer, and I know we’re about 1 minute away from closing [Laughing], so I will try to be brief. I need to make a correction to the record for the sake of my son who is standing here, mentioned an ex-fiancé. He is now happily married to another woman with 2 children and a third on the way, and thankfully, she’s not here today because we would all be dead [Laughing] [Laughter], and to the rest of my family, my love -- lovely partner, Jacqueline Hubbard, who has put up with my second career in public service, her daughter, Kate; my son, Matthew, who between
Matthew and Daniel managed our family business so that I can do this work. Three of the five grandchildren I have with the sixth on the way, little Lucy, Mason, and Travis. I think Travis will one day have this seat or Mason, so I’m very grateful.

I also stand here to acknowledge all of the people that work so hard to help me get elected, and -- and also to acknowledge a former state senator who sat in this seat, Eileen Dailey. She occupied this seat for 22 years I believe, and I’m -- I’m honored to fill her position in the 33rd district as the senator. I would also like to say for the record that we are democrats, we are republicans, but we are all here because we love Connecticut. We are all here to do the job that we were elected to do, which was to honor what’s great about this state, fix the things that need to be fixed, and be the example that we can be to other states in this country and to the United States, but we need to be -- we all need to understand the greatness of the state, and we all need to understand the problems that we face. It is all of our jobs to lay down the partisan discussions and fix the problems once and for all. My children, my grandchildren live in this state, plan on staying in this state. We plan on keeping our business in this state, and we want it fixed now, so that’s why I’m here and I hope to be part of the solution. Thank you, and thank you, Senator Looney for running again and being our -- our fearless leader. [Applause] [Cheering].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Thank you, Senator Needleman. Thank you, Senator Needleman. We do have a few brief
moments before we have to all hustle across the street for the governor’s inauguration for welcoming remarks and points of personal privilege by returning incumbents. The chair recognizes Senator Kissel for a point of personal privilege.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. President. I will be very brief. First of all, I want to thank all the folks in my district for supporting me to serve in a 14th term representing the 7th senatorial district of Northcentral Connecticut. Thank you to my -- all the folks that worked on the campaign but in particular, the three folks behind me suffer through this for decades, my lovely wife, Cynthia Kissel. Love you dear. Thank you for allowing me to do something that I feel so passionately about, and my two sons, Nathaniel and Tristan. If we could give them the friendly Senate round of applause, that would be terrific [Applause]. Thank you all very much. I look forward to serving with each and every one of you. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Kissel. Further points of personal privilege [Coughing]. Senator Martin.

SENATOR MARTIN (31ST):

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate my friends who came here today -- or welcome my friends I should say for coming here today. I have with me an assistant director of therapy for CREC, Joyce Rioux, as well as someone who takes care of us. He’s the manager of cyber
security operations at Pratt and Whitney, John, and Joyce Rioux, thank you so much for coming and joining me here today. I also would like to acknowledge some people who are -- who made sure that I got re-elected. They’re up in the gallery today, and that is Jeff, Andrew, Daunte, Dave. Thank you so much, and the entire 31st district team. Thank you so much, guys [Applause].

And, also with me today are some elected officials, and I think she was in the gallery earlier, but she left with our new lieutenant governor, Mayor -- Bristol Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, as well as -- yes -- yep, thank you -- as well as first selectman of Harwinton, Mike Criss, and also Dan Jerram from the New Hartford first selectman. Fellows, thank you guys for coming as well. And, lastly, I want to introduce my wife. Two weeks ago, we celebrated our 35 years of being married, and I couldn’t do what I do without her support [Applause]. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Martin. The chair recognizes Senator Flexer for a point of personal privilege.

SENATOR FLEXER (29TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. Good afternoon. It’s great to see you up there. Congratulations.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

SENATOR FLEXER (29TH):
Mr. President, I’m just gonna give very brief remarks today. I want to thank the people of the 29th district and all of the people who have -- my supporters who are here today who have helped me win re-election and supported me in this great privilege that I have to serve as a state senator, but I want to most especially thank the people who aren’t here today. [Crying] The people who have always been here for me, my mom and my dad. My mom, Margaret Flexer; my dad, Howard Flexer; my sister, Hoween Flexer. My dad is a patient right now at Day Kimball Hospital, and he’s doing okay, but he’s gonna get better. You got that dad? You’re gonna get better. You just gotta stay there. They’re gonna make you better. My parents gave my sister and I everything when they had nothing. They never had anything, and they’re sad that they’re not here today, but I’m okay because I’m in a circle full of people who are gonna make sure that everyone in the state has the privilege that I’ve had these last few days, is to take care of my family when my dad is sick, and we’re gonna make sure that paid family leave happens this year so that not just the privileged state senators get to take care of their family but everyone, and you’re gonna be okay dad. Mom, he’s gonna be okay, and Senator Looney, I know that you know this more personally than anyone, and I’m grateful to you for your leadership and mom, dad, Hoween, we’re all gonna get through this. Thank you. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Flexer. Thank you very much. The chair recognizes Senator Formica for a point of personal privilege.
SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. I rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. I just want to introduce a couple of my guests today. I know time is running short. I have a good young man with me, Eddie Aledia who has helped me immensely over the last few months, and I’ve gotten to know, and I can tell you that Eddie represents the young and the future of this state, and we are in great shape because of the hard work and the attitudes of people and young people like Eddie, so we have to work hard to keep these guys in Connecticut, so I want to thank him. Also joining me is my favorite youngest daughter, Olivia, who represents our family -- our family who just celebrated 35 years of being in business in this great state where we raised our family, where we opened our business, and I think the fact that I never had an opportunity, I never thought that I would have this opportunity to stand here in this great Chamber and address everyone and work on common sense and collaborative solutions to move the state of Connecticut forward as we did last session working together with Senator Fonfara and Senator Osten and others to move it forward. So, I look forward to welcoming and congratulating all the new members and congratulate the great lieutenant governor on her new leadership role so that we can all continue to work together to move our great
state forward because that is why we are here. So, thank you very much for the opportunity, Mr. President, to say hello and welcome and congratulations to you, of course, on your leadership and in your role. Thank you. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you very much, Senator, for [Applause] -- for the point of personal privilege, the chair recognizes Senator Hartley.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH):

Thank you, Mr. President, and it’s such a delight to be with yourself leading this Chamber and all of my colleagues and my personal congratulations to all of our new senators and a great heartfelt welcome back to our former colleagues. It’s a wonderful Chamber, and it is a family, and we may disagree from time-to-time, but we really all have a deep bond. And, Mr. President, a point of personal privilege, if I may?

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, Senator.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH):

Thank you very much. I want to first of all recognize those who once again expressed their complete support of myself and the work that I have done for the 15th district and previous to that to the 73rd district over the years and thank them for once again having the confidence to send me back
here to be their voice. I also, of course, would
not be here without the support and the backing of
those who are closest to me and that is my family,
and so I am deeply grateful for their support and
affirmation over the years.

But I want to introduce to you an incredible young
lady who I have had the chance of meeting and -- and
hoping to work together in a much more closer way,
and that is a young lady who hails from the city of
Waterbury, but recently is married and so she is now
residing in Hartford. Maybe someday I’ll be able to
woo her back to her home city, but her family is
still there. Meet Ojala Naheem. Ojala is an
incredible woman and she is the example of
everything that we have been talking about in this
circle for many years, as a young lady came through
the Waterbury school systems, went on to do her
bachelor’s work in New York, and she studied
international studies, and then at Fordham realized
that she wanted to make a difference and where was
that ability for her to make a difference, and she
came back to Connecticut, and she was very quickly
recruited by an entity -- a public/private entity,
which we know well in Hartford. Senator Fonfara
knows very well and that is Reset. She quickly rose
to a leadership position in Reset, and she has
championed public/private relationships, worked on
business incubators and accelerators in Hartford and
in fact, she was very involved in the corporation
benefit legislation, which passed this Chamber in
2014, and Ojala has gone on to help and inspire many
young aspiring entrepreneurs and help them build
businesses and communities that have enriched the
city of Hartford and the state of Connecticut, so I
would -- I’m grateful she could be here with us in
the circle today, and I really wanted you all to
hear a little bit about Ojala. Please, welcome Ojala with me. [Applause].

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Hartley, and welcome. The chair recognizes Senator Berthel for a point of personal privilege.

SENATOR BERTHEL (32ND):

Thank you, Mr. President. I do rise for the point of a personal privilege. I’d just like to take a moment. I know we’re running a little long here, and I have another event to get to, but I unlike -- or excuse me, just like everyone else in the Chamber today, I am also blessed to be surrounded by family and friends, and some have scattered already, some had to get back to other commitments, but I’d like you to recognize a couple of people who are actually in the Chamber right now. My co-worker from Post University, Shawn Wizenhan [phonetic]. Shawn, if you’d just give a quick little wave. My very dear friend and campaign manager, Janelle Wilke [phonetic], and of course, my son, Matthew Berthel, who is a freshman at Holy Cross in Waterbury. Earlier, my younger son, Paul, was here; my wife, Krista; my mom and dad, Joe and Paula Berthel. But, most importantly, I also extend a debt of gratitude to the people of the 32nd senate district for placing their faith back in me to return and be their voice here in Hartford, and I share the same sentiments, Mr. President, with everyone else who has also spoken before me with respect to getting to work and doing what will probably be some very difficult work for us in the coming 2 years. thank you, Mr. President. [Applause].
THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Any additional points of personal privilege before I recognize our distinguished majority leader for purposes of adjournment [cheering] so that we can proceed to the governor’s inauguration? Sen -- Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I believe that concludes our business for today. Everybody got in their speeches, which is great, and did a great job, and we know what a special place this is in the state of Connecticut. So, Mr. President, I believe that the -- the report from the committee has come back and favorably said that they are -- the House is ready to meet in Joint Convention.

THE CHAIR:

So noted, Senator.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

All right. Well, they haven’t told us otherwise, so [Laughing].

THE CHAIR:

[Laughing].

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
So, anyway, Mr. President, with that, I will move that we adjourn subject to call of the chair until our Joint Convention.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader. The Senate will adjourn subject to the call of the chair. [Gavel].

On motion of Senator Duff of the 25th, the Senate at 12:14 p.m. adjourned subject to the call of the chair.