CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

The Senate was called to order at 11:15 o’clock a.m., the President in the Chair.

CLERK:

The senate will convene immediately. The Senate will convene immediately. The Senate will convene immediately. The Senate will convene immediately.

THE CHAIR:

Good morning. The Senate will please come to order. Members and guests, please rise and direct your attention to our chaplain, Reverend James J. Nock of East Hartford, who will lead us in prayer.

REVEREND JAMES J. NOCK:

Almighty Father, We ask your blessing on our circle, as we come together this morning, with budget thoughts looming in the future. Let us take comfort in these beautiful words of Harry Cushing who reminds us that, “faith is the moving force that makes the impossible accessible.” We ask this of you who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

THE CHAIR:
And I would ask that you please remain standing and Senator Kissel, would you please join us and lead us in the pledge.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

[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.

THE CHAIR:

I love it. Thank you. Thank you so much and I’d like to recognize Senator Lesser for a point of personal privilege.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President, for purposes of introduction. We have in the gallery today some really good students of the Pledge of Allegiance. We just heard them know the words very well. Some students from John Paterson Elementary School in Newington. I would ask that we please welcome these students to our chamber and also that we extend them our usual warm welcome. Thank you very much for coming up and seeing us, our business in the state senate today. [applause]

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, is there any business on your desk?

CLERK:
The clerk is in possession of Senate Agenda Number 1, dated Wednesday, February 20, 2019.

THE CHAIR:

And Senator Duff, our distinguished majority leader.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you Madam President. Madam President, I move that all items on Senate Agenda Number 1, dated Wednesday, February 20, 2019, be acted upon as indicated and that the agenda be incorporated by reference into Senate Journal and Senate transcripts.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Hearing no objections, so ordered. Senator Duff, please proceed.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, for our markings, Madam President, I would like to mark on our Calendar, Calendar 9, Senate Resolution 22 as a go, Calendar Number 10, Senate Resolution Number 13 as a go, Calendar Number 11, Senate Resolution Number 14 a go, Calendar Number 13, Senate Resolution Number 16 go, Calendar 14, Senate Resolution Number 17 go, Calendar 16, Senate Resolution Number 18 go, Calendar 17, Senate Resolution Number 19 go, and Calendar 18, Senate Resolution Number 20 go, Calendar 16, Senate Resolution Number 8 as a PR, Calendar 19, Senate Resolution 10 go A, Calendar 20, Senate Resolution Number 11 as a go, and also Madam Present, on Senate
Agenda Number 1, Senate Resolution Number 21 as a go. Thank you Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Mr. Clerk, would you call the calendar please.

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar Number 9, Senate Resolution Number 12, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MIRIAM DELPHIN-RITTMON OF MERIDEN TO BE COMMISSIONER OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

I thank you, Madam President. Would the Senate stand at ease for a moment please?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee’s favorable report in adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark Senator Duff?
SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Miriam Delphin-Rittmon was unanimously voted on favorably after her February 5 nomination hearing. She holds a Ph.D from Purdue University, M.S. in Psychology. She has her B.A. from Hofstra University. She has served as the Commissioner of Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services since 2015 and was Deputy Commissioner prior to that. She also worked on a wide range of leadership administrative capacities through her career and I would urge adoption of the resolution. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark Senator Somers?

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. I will not be supporting the Commissioner for reappointment. I have dealt with her for two years in public health as the co-chair previously and I was very concerned on her tenure as far as what has happened with our Whiting Forensic Hospital and I, at that time, two years ago, thought that we should at that point make a change. It is not personal, but under her watch, we have had one of the worst abuse scandals at our CVH Hospital. I know she has done quite a bit to try to rectify it, but there is no confirmation that that has been done at this point, so I will not be supporting this nomination. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you Senator. Will you remark further, Senator Duff?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I believe we should have a vote on the Commissioner please.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, would you please call the roll.

CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? We will go ahead and close the machine and Mr. Clerk, would you please announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Resolution Number 12.

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THE CHAIR:
Resolution passes. Senator Duff. Apologies. Mr. Clerk, is there any other business on your desk please?

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar Number 10, Senate Resolution Number 13, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF JAMES ROVELLA OF OLD SAYBROOK TO BE COMMISSIONER OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee’s favorable report and adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. The job is a four-year, full-time position and Mr. Rovella was unanimously voted on favorably after his February 5 nomination hearing. He has most recently served as the Chief of Police of the Hartford Police Department and has spent his life in that role and other roles that deal with public safety. He was a patrol officer, then a detective in the Major Crimes Division. He then transitioned work to the Chief States Attorney’s Office where he eventually held the
position of Chief Inspector. Madam President, I believe he is well qualified for the position and I would urge adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further Senator Witkos?

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. If there is no objection, I request that this be moved to Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered. Senator Duff. Sorry. Senate Clerk, is there any other item on your desk please?

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar Number 11, Senate Resolution Number 14, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF ELIZABETH BYE OF WEST HARTFORD TO BE COMMISSIONER OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, the name may sound very familiar because she is a former member of the Circle. Senator Bye is very well regarded and understood as an expert in this area.
I would move acceptance to the Joint Committee’s favorable report and adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, again, as I said earlier, her name is well known in the Circle and well regarded and known as an expert in this area of early childhood and certainly we miss her in the Circle, but know that she will do a great job with the early childhood department as commissioner. She has a long record of being a teacher and somebody who has done a lot of work in the space as Executive Director of the Trinity Community College Child Center, the Director of the School for the Young at St. Joseph’s College, and the Early Childhood Education Director at the Capitol Region Education Council and we know that even though with all those titles, we know certainly where her passions lie and this is certainly where her passion lies and somebody who I know it wasn’t easy for her to give up her seat in the Senate and she would only do that for an opportunity as wonderful as this and Madam President, I would urge adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further, Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):
Thank you, Madam President. Good morning. I am speaking in support of the resolution. Obviously, Beth Bye was one of our beloved and respected colleagues here in the chamber and her service in both the House of Representatives and here in the Senate was extraordinary. We certainly miss her, but having begun her career as a professional in provision of daycare services and early childhood education, this is in many ways her dream job to be Commissioner of Early Childhood and we know that she will do a superb job in that capacity. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you Senator. Will you remark further Senator Witkos?

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Without objection, I request that this item be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered. Senator Duff – would – Mr. Clerk, is there any other business on your desk?

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar Number 13, Senate Resolution Number 16, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MICHELLE SEAGULL OF GLASTONBURY TO BE COMMISSIONER OF CONSUMER PROTECTION.
Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee’s favorable report and adoption of the resolution.

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, Commissioner Seagull is somebody who we know since she has been the commissioner already, has done a great job, was voted unanimously at her February 7 nomination hearing. She holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School, a B.A. in Political Science from Washington University, and she has taught at UConn Law School and been Associate Counsel in a private law firm. Madam President, again, I believe she is well regarded here in the Circle and I urge adoption of the resolution.

Thank you. Will you remark further, Senator Witkos?

Without objection, I request that this item be placed on the Consent Calendar.
THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Without objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk, is there any other business on your desk?

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar Number 14, Senate Resolution Number 17, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF VICTORIA L. VELTRI OF COLCHESTER TO BE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF HEALTH STRATEGY.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee’s favorable report and adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. This job is again a full-time position. Vicky Veltri was unanimously voted on favorably after her February 7 nomination hearing. Again, no stranger to the Circle as someone who has been working in state government for a number of years and very well regarded. She has a Master’s of Law from NYU Law School, a J.D. from Western New England College and a B.S. in Chemistry from UConn. She has worked on a number of different
areas here, as I mentioned, and I would urge adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further Senator Witkos?

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Without – I’m sorry. I will yield to President Looney.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. I do accept the yield. Thank you, Senator Witkos. Madam President, speaking in support of the resolution, many of us know Vicky Veltri from her time as the Health Care Advocate for Connecticut in which she did such a superb job in helping distressed people through the thickets of dealing with health insurance challenges and problems and has moved on to her new position and as Executive Director of the Office of Health Strategy, we know that she has both the expertise and the passion and the knowledge and the commitment to do so well and it is something in which I think we should have a great deal of confidence in this critical area of protecting consumers and patients. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you Senator Looney. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Without objection, I request that this item be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk, do you have any other items on your desk?

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar Number 16, Senate Resolution Number 18, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF JOSHUA GEBALLE OF GUILFORD TO BE COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee’s favorable report and adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you, Madam President. Mr. Geballe was unanimously voted on favorably after his February 14 nomination hearing. He holds an MBA from Yale School of Management with a focus in Strategy and Public Management, a B.A. in Sociology from Yale University. He has a substantial history in the private sector, most recently worked as the President of the Angel Investment Group, Thimble Islands Ventures, LLC. Prior to this, he was the CEO of a software startup core in Informatics, LLC, which was later acquired by Thermo Fisher Scientific where he went on to serve as its Vice President and General Manager. He also has been politically involved, working with Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, and worked for her as her Outreach Director for two years. I have gotten to know the Commissioner and certainly I know that he brings an ability to think outside the box a little differently and am excited for some of the things that he is going to be able to do over the next few years. With that, I would like to – and I would urge adoption of the resolution and would like to yield to Senator Cohen.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Cohen, will you remark?

SENATOR COHEN (12TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator. I rise in support of the resolution to confirm Joshua Geballe to Commissioner of Administrative Services. Josh is a dear friend of several years and a fellow Gilfordite and he is here joining us this morning with his wife, Ali, and daughter, Caley. Unfortunately, his son, Will, is at home sick and likely watching on CTN right now. I’m just so proud
of him and I think he is going to make a great addition. He is a tech-savvy businessman who will certainly help to drive Connecticut forward. Most importantly, he is a good man. He is an avid soccer player I can say and I’m just looking forward to opening up the possibilities of my carpooling [laughter] choices, so thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator, thank you so much. Will you remark further? Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. In an effort bipartisanship, I would like to echo the comments that were made about Josh. I think that having somebody with a business background once again coming into the Capitol and thinking out of the box and innovative is the way to go. Josh has been involved in politics many years ago, so I know he cares about his community and cares about this state, so I look forward in also joining in the approval of Josh for the position. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Speaking in support of the resolution, I have known Josh Geballe since about 1997 when he graduated from Yale and became an Outreach Director for Congresswoman DeLauro. He was
enthusiastic and very effective worker on her behalf with a strong sense of communications with her constituency throughout her district and someone who had a great deal of sound judgement and a sense of tact in proportion beyond his years, he was so young at that time, still young, but only now relatively young as opposed to at that time, and he is again I think someone who will do a superb job as Commissioner of Administrative Services. His background in the private sector with IBM and other ventures is superb. I think he will take a look at that state operations with a fresh eye with bringing to bear the best and most significant and efficient use of technology. His daughter, Caley, who is here today, is a sixth-grader at Foote School in New Haven and she is getting at least part of a day off from school, if not the whole day, so congratulations Commissioner, Allison, and the whole family and I’m sure your son is watching on CTN, so congratulations.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Without objection, request this item be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk, do you have any business on your desk.

CLERK:
PAGE 2, Calendar Number 17, Senate Resolution Number 19, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF JORDAN A. SCHEFF OF VERNON TO BE COMMISSIONER OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee’s favorable report and adoption of this resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Jordan Scheff was unanimously voted favorably after his February 14 nomination hearing, a lot of love on Valentine’s Day for many of these commissioners. He received his M.A. in Human Services Administration from Springfield College and a B.S. in Communications from Rhode Island College. He has served as Deputy Commissioner from 2015-2016 and moved up to the Commissionership after that. We had a lot of support for him and as a matter of fact, I can also say in my own community in areas where Commissioner Scheff has a role, there is a lot of support for this nominee and this commissioner and I am very proud that we are able here to vote on his
nomination. I would certainly urge adoption. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you senator. Will you remark further? Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. If there’s no objection, might this item be placed on the Consent Calendar?

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk, any further items?

CLERK:

Page 3, Calendar Number 18, Senate Resolution Number 20, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF JORGE L. PEREZ OF CHESHIRE TO BE BANKING COMMISSIONER.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee’s favorable report and adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:
Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Mr. Perez was unanimously voted favorably after his February 14 nomination hearing. He holds a B.S. in Accounting from the University of New Haven. He has served as the Banking Commissioner since 2015 and prior to that, was the Vice President and Senior Commercial Loan Officer of Liberty Bank. Mr. Perez has worked hard over the years as the Commissioner of Banking and I certainly believe that he has wide support in the Circle and in the Legislature. I urge adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Speaking in support of the resolution, I have known Jorge Perez for over 30 years, since he was first elected to the Board of Alders in New Haven. During his tenure there, he became the Board’s primary expert on government finance and eventually rose to be President of that Board for many years. Also, his experience in Community banking I think is unusual in terms of a background for someone who has been Commissioner of Banking. I think that consumer advocacy and attention to the needs of small businesses and start-up companies and their need for refinancing is something that will continue to stand him in good status Commissioner. He has done a great job for the last several years. I look forward to seeing
him continue in that and urge approval of his nomination. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. If there is no objection, might this item be placed on Consent Calendar?

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk, any further business on your desk?

CLERK:

Page 3, Calendar Number 19, Senate Resolution Number 10, RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES AND THE PUBLIC DEFENDER ATTORNEYS AND SUPERVISING ATTORNEYS, LOCAL 381, AFSCME COUNCIL 4, AFL-CIO.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. We will PT that item for a moment and if we can have the Clerk read the
items on the Consent Calendar and then followed by a vote of the Consent Calendar please.

THE CHAIR:

Certainly, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar Number 9, Senate Resolution Number 12; Page 1, Calendar Number 10, Senate Resolution 13; Page 2, Calendar Number 11, Senate Resolution 14; Page 2, Calendar 13, Senate Resolution 16; Page 2, Calendar Number 14, Senate Resolution 17; Page 2, Calendar Number 16, Senate Resolution 18; Page 2, Calendar Number 17, Senate Resolution 19; and Page 3, Calendar Number 18, Senate Resolution Number 20.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, would you like to re-read that list?

CLERK:

I’ll read it. Page 1, Calendar Number 10, Senate Resolution Number 13; Page 2, Calendar Number 11, Senate Resolution Number 14; Page 2, Calendar Number 13, Senate Resolution 16; Page 2, Calendar Number 14, Senate Resolution 17; Page 2, Calendar Number 16, Senate Resolution 18; Page 2, Calendar Number 17, Senate Resolution 19; and Page 3, Calendar Number 18, Senate Resolution Number 20.

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Consent Calendar Number 1.
Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? Mr. Clerk, would you please read the tally.

CLERK:

Consent Calendar Number 1.

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(Gavel)

THE CHAIR:

Measure passes. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, if the Clerk would now please call Senate Resolution Number 21 from Senate Agenda Number 1.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:
Senate Resolution Number 21, RESOLUTION RAISING A COMMITTEE TO INFORM THE HOUSE THAT THE SENATE IS READY TO MEET IN JOINT CONVENTION.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the resolution and ask that we inform the House that the Senate is ready to meet in joint convention.

THE CHAIR:

All those in favor, please signify by saying aye and all opposed Nay. All in favor?

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

All right. I would like to appoint Senators McCrory, Cassano, and Sampson to the committee who will report to the House that the Senate will be prepared to meet in joint convention.

On motion of Senator Duff of the 25th, the Senate at 11:53 a.m. recessed.

The Senate reconvened at 1:08 p.m., the President in the Chair.
THE CHAIR:

Would the Senate please come to order? Is there any business on the Clerk's desk? Senator Duff, there you are.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

In technicolor. Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, we PT'd an item, if the Clerk can go back to that item, which is Calendar 19, Senate Resolution No. 10.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:  

Page 3, Calendar No. 19, Senate Resolution No. 10. RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES AND THE PUBLIC DEFENDER ATTORNEYS AND SUPERVISING ATTORNEYS, LOCAL 381, AFSCME COUNSEL 4, AFL-CIO.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. It's a pleasure to be here and see you up on the dais. I - - Madam President, I move acceptance of the
Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President I believe the Clerk is in procession of Amendment LCL No. 4571. I ask the Clerk to call that Amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk?

CLERK:

LCL No. 4571, Senate Schedule A.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President I seek lead to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Please continue.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):
Madam President, since the original filing of this contract the parties have agreed to a new Article V, which removes the pre-Janus language referring to the Supreme Court Janus Decision from the Collective Bargaining Agreement and fully comport that this new article fully comparts with Janus. This was an amendment to the Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved by the parties in the agreement. This is not a legislative amendment. This is an amendment that is put forth by the negotiators of the contract and not by the move of the legislature and I urge adoption of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

The question is on adoption. Will anyone remark further? Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise for a bit of discussion on the Amendment if you please?

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Just to be clear for my colleagues. There was some conversation with regard to the Janus Provisions in this contract and upon discussion at the Committee level there were conversations with the negotiators about redoing this language so that it would better reflect the intent. I would like to commend those folks who went out and reworked the language with regard to
this particular Article. This Article 5, from what I understand, replaces the language in its entirety. If I may just verify that with Senator Osten, please. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President.

Through you, yes.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Thank you very much, Madam President, thank you Senator Osten. I would just then like to say seeing as the problem has been rectified that I ask my colleagues to support this Amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Formia. Senator Osten?

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I urge adoption.

THE CHAIR:

The question is on adoption. Will anyone remark further? If not, let me try your minds. All in favor of the Amendment please signify by saying Aye.
ALL:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? Ayes have it. Motion -- Amendment is adopted. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President with the resolution now amended I urge my colleagues to support this Collective Bargaining Agreement as negotiated with the parties which is with the Connecticut Public Defenders and they will join AFSCME Council 4. There are nearly 200 members in this Bargaining Agreement. They have case loads of around 200 to 300 cases a year. This is the first time that they have been involved in a Collective Bargaining Agreement. They make the same sacrifices and this Collective Bargaining Agreement comports to the savings that were in the 2017 SEBAC Agreement. The agreement is fully in line with the savings and concessions that were in that earlier SEBAC agreement with increased contributions to healthcare and pensions and it includes zeros for general wage increases in the earlier years. The agreement I believe is fair and reasonable and in line with other state employee settlements.

Public Defenders perform an essential service and could easily make more money in the private sector. I believe that they do this because it is a vocation for them, not just a job. This agreement fully complies with the Supreme Court decision revolving
Janus in the Janus vs. AFSCME Agreement. We earlier amended this agreement to include the text revolving around Janus. It is a bare agreement with minimal increases and is included in the current budget documents that were earlier today presented before us. I urge adoption and am available to answer any questions revolving around this Collective Bargaining Agreement.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark? Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Yes, I rise for a few questions and then a few comments on the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Proceed.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator Osten. I appreciate your presentation of this. Some questions as you say, this is a new -- this is a new agreement for a new bargaining unit so this is a first time event?

Through you Madam Chair.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.
SENATOR Osten (19th):

Senator wants to know if we want to share a microphone. I think this is fine. We've done this so many times, it's like a show that we have. (Laughing)

THE CHAIR:

I like this bipartisan thing going on.

SENATOR Osten (19th):

Well you know, in our neck of the woods we have to act bipartisan because that's how we get things done. This is moving into Local 381, AFSCME Council 4. It's a current bargaining unit that is creating new members.

Through you Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR Formica (20th):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator. As a new bargaining unit and a new contract, I think you indicated that this complies with all of -- I don't know if you used the word comply, I think it's in line with all of the SEBAC agreement that was put in place I believe in 2017. Can you just help me understand why an agreement in 2019 goes back to 2017 and is able to take advantage of some of those -- some of those concessions as you call it, and then I'll follow up with my next question.
Through you Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much Madam President. Quite simply they started bargaining in 2016 and used the 17 and 18 years in compliance with the SEBAC Agreement.

Through you Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator -- Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator Osten. So even though this contract is being signed now or being voted on now, they can go back and take credit for concessions like the zero raise that was agreed to for the first two years of SEBAC, which I believe is what, 17 and 18?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. They're not actually going back. They started -- they started
negotiating in 16 and so 17 and 18 are properly before us as zeros, but the short answer is yes.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formia.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Okay. Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator Osten. So -- so does that mean that when these employees who were non-union members in 2017 and 2018, did not take any type of raise in the similar time period that the SEBAC Agreement was in place?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Actually they were union members in 17 and 18, they just did not have a signed contract. This is a contract that accretes in new members and these members were in negotiations in 16 and so they were part of a bargaining unit, they just did not have the benefits of that bargaining unit because their contract had not yet been negotiated and signed.

Through you, Mr. President.
THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you. Thank you, Madam President. Thank you for that clarification. I didn't realize that they had organized as a group in 2016. I remember you had said that they began negotiating but I guess I should have understood, which I didn't, that they were bargaining as a group and therefore even though the contract was not finalized, they were still acting as a union and they get -- are there any other benefits that they get during that time when they were negotiating but not having the benefit of this contract?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. They get no other benefits than any other employee in a collective bargaining environment got during the 17-18 years.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formia.
SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. With regard to some of the details of the contract, we have already spoken about the Janus and how that has been addressed. There were four provisions in this agreement that conflicted with state statute and my understanding, these things happen in these contracts. State statutes get modified. Would you be able to speak Senator Osten a bit to those provisions.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President and through you, if you would indicate which -- exactly which ones you are speaking to I will outline the response.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Yes, in -- it's in the Appendix C Supersendence. My understanding that there's some additional -- additional language that does not match state statute and therefor has been negotiated into this contract.
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I would really like clarity on what you're talking about. Are you talking about remove setting of compensation inside the Collective Bargaining Agreement?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator. I have the list. It looks like you have the list. There are four items here that do not comport with state statute so I'm more wondering why that they would be appropriate to be added into this contract and taken out of state statute and then we can talk about the process following that.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):
Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, through you. Compensation of these job classifications, dismissals, suspension and demotion or other discipline would no longer be handled as a non-union or non-collective bargaining employee. They would be handled within the comports of the grievance processes that are handled through the contracts and the compensations that are handled through the contracts because they no longer would be non-union employees.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate it. So this is a reflection of some job classifications whose compensation was set in statute, now because they're -- these job classifications I understand are now part of this bargaining unit and therefore need to come out of the statute?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):
Thank you very much, Madam President; and through you, yes.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you very much, Senator Osten. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

I'm going ahead without your approval. I hope that's all right.

THE CHAIR:

I'll let you know.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

All right. Thank you. (Laughing) And I think along with those job classifications the parity with the state's attorney compensation has been removed and also the grievance procedure has been updated and the retirement opportunities for a number of individuals in a classification has also been modified?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.
SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President.

Through you, yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator. So in a superseded situation it is listed as Appendix C in this contract. We have now -- should this become approved today or whenever, we changed state statute. Does supersendence mean that we have to go back and take another action or is this the last time that we see this particular modification to state statute?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President and through you, this would be the last time that we handle this particular contract for this particular contract scheduled years. I'm certain that once this approved for these very fine workers that we will see it for their second bargaining agreement.

Through you, Mr. President.
THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So we agree on one thing, that these are fine workers (laughing) and I think we're all in support of that. You know, does that mean that every supersendence opportunity needs to get voted on in the contract and we don't have to go back and change state statute? This automatically updates these statutes or do we have to go back and make a change?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President.

Through you, yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Senator. Thank you, Madam President. We appreciate that. Now with regard to the cost of this contract I'm not sure that I heard you outline
the cost. If you wouldn't mind reviewing the cost to the -- to the -- to the taxpayers on this particular contract?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. And these taxpayers who pay into the State of Connecticut taxes and are considered as tax payers in and of themselves, show a payback in fiscal year 18 according to the Office of Fiscal Analysis of a negative $620,920 they show fiscal year 19 a cost to all of us, including them, they are paying for this also; $906,708. In fiscal year 21, $1,501,301 and in fiscal year 21 $3,057,173.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator. The first number you listed as a negative $630,920 indicates I believe a longevity payment that was moved from 18 to 19, so is it fair to count that as a savings?

Through you, Mr. President.
THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Formia.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you for your expansion on that answer (laughing). So I don't think that I have anymore questions for Senator Osten. I appreciate the good Senator's patience as I try to work my way through understanding this.

Madam President, we just had the opportunity to listen to our new Governor talk about the "State of Connecticut being squeezed, the middle class being hammered." And we come up less than an hour after and are asked to talk about a contract that adds an additional $5.5 million dollars to our expenditures. It adds significant dollars to the retirement and fringe benefits and the impact on retirement less than an hour after the Governor said we have to do things in a way to make that more palatable for the people of the state. So I'm a little concerned about this timing. And again, I did agree with Senator Osten and all the good work that the Public Defender attorneys and the supporting attorneys do for the State of Connecticut. This is not about that. This is about timing. This is about dollars.
This is about affordability. And for those reasons, Madam President, I will be voting in opposition of this contract at this time and look forward in the future when we might be better financially positioned to do something for this fine group in the future. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I had the opportunity to review the Office of Fiscal Analysis report -- preliminary report to the Appropriations Committee Meeting so that's where I will be asking my questions from. I'm glad during the Governor's speech today he talked about IT improvements and I didn't bring my IT equipment with me to look something up on line so I had to go back to old fashioned paper and pen. My questions surround, and I understand that in this particular Senate Resolution we're talking about 183 employees that are moving from a non-representative position. They filled out their cards. They choose to be represented and I fully support their opportunity to be able to do that and the fact that they've so chosen to do that. My question is if I may to Senator Osten, I understand that that negotiations or those cards where the election took place in 2016, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Through you, the negotiations started in 2016 with 183 employees.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you. And through you, Mr. President to Senator Osten. Was there a -- so they -- we're up -- I guess an agreement that was currently in place as an employee of maybe a handbook or something and most of those benefits were -- would be -- was that the starting point for negotiations to what's included in the packet before us?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I'm not certain if they started form the handbook or if they started from the governing documents from the Collective Bargaining Agreement from the employees that they accreted into.
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you. I wish I unfortunately knew the incident of that because that would make to me a world of difference in how I cast my vote. Because if they were already achieving most of the benefits that they had already and it was transferring it to a representative unit, to me it's a no brainer that you know, subsequent contract negotiations they would have to be bargained for with the opposite party and management in good faith, and I'm not so certain that that's -- by joining a labor unit already that they automatically got that because there's some history for that bargaining unit to work its way forward.

So I guess I'll ask you a couple of questions about the financing of it to make sure I understand. So there was in fiscal year 19, they received -- members received a bonus payment of $2,000 and again this is through the Office of Fiscal Analysis Report or a top step lump sum plus $1000. So do the employees have the ability to choose which one they wanted or is that just I guess not characterized correctly through the OFA analysis?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR Osten (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. The confines of the agreement dictate who gets what.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Okay, so then in the example that I gave if the good Senator could spell out which -- what does the confines of the agreement state because again, I only have the OFA analysis and they gave -- according to them there was a choice, so I'd like to know what was spelled out through the contract.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR Osten (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President and through you. The -- if I can find -- I've got to check back through the contract itself. In 19 -- in fiscal year 19 member who receive a bonus statement of $2,000 unless they're in the top step, then they'll get a lump sum plus that $1,000.
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. What is the lump sum payment -- top lump sum that we're speaking of?

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President and through you. In the OFA analysis of this it indicates that the bonus is $483,000, the longevity payment is $305, total earnings $788,853.

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So if my math is correct in my head, it's just under the $2,000 bonus payment that those at the top step would be eligible for. If we took the $483 divided it out and then
took an additional $1,000 on top of it, so they're pretty close. Not one single member is really harmed by that -- by being a top step employee is kind of what I gather. Would that be fair to say?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Yes.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you. And through you, Madam President. In fiscal -- there was a wage freeze that you had mentioned in your opening remarks and then in fiscal year 2021, COLA is received at 3.5 percent as well as an annual increment. And is the annual increment a 3 percent increase?

Through you, Mr. President. To all employees?

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. They will receive a cost of living increase of 3.5 as well as annual increment. This is estimated to cost $1.1 million in fiscal 20 and $2.4 million in fiscal 21.
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you. And through you Madam President. And what specifically is the annual increment that an individual employee would be receiving. I know the 3.5 percent COLA but what -- what is the -- I guess I'll call it a step increase if that's the annual increment.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. If we could stand at ease for one minute, please?

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will stand at ease.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will come back to order. Senator Osten.
SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much. Effective July 1, 2019 there will be a general wage increase of 3.5 percent and effective July 1, 2020 there will be a 3.5 percent general wage increase. Annual increments in sum -- in lump sum shall be provided on the following schedule and accordance with the 2017 SEBAC Agreement. When employees reach the maximum step and is not eligible for an annual increase they shall receive a lump sum payment of 2.5 percent to their annual salary payable on the date of the employee's annual -- annual increase. When annual increases or payments in lieu of annual increments made the following schedule shall be in place.

Employees hired between October 2 and April 1 inclusive following completion of at least nine full months of paid employee, that will be January 1 annual increment and those hired on April 2 and October -- between April 2 and October 1, inclusive following completion of at least nine full months of paid employment on July 1, an employee shall -- who has transferred from another branch of state government will retain the annual increment date established by the branch. Annual increment dates may be changed by the Chief Public Defender in connection with an employee's reclassification or promotion to provide for equitable treatment amongst employees for the division. Through you, Mr. President. And OSA has linked those two together. They have not separated the dollar amounts out.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So through you, my understanding of the explanation that Senator Osten just read to me was it's a 3.5 percent annual COLA adjustment and 3.5 for fiscal years 20, 21 and 19 a 3.5 percent annual increase in pay. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So in addition to the 7 percent annual increase that is provided for in this bargaining agreement, there's also an increase in the longevity payments and through you Madam President, I know it's only applicable to employees that are hired prior to 2011 because that was removed in the next tier group, but out of the 183 members in this bargaining unit, how many members of those are eligible to receive a longevity payment?
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I do not have the total numbers that are -- that this equates to.

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Through you Madam President. And the longevity increases that generally in my experience and I'm assuming your experience also Senator Osten, that longevity is a -- is a -- is a stipend that's there for you to get because of the long duration that you spent of an employee of that specific entity and is to recognize you for your good service. But in this case here at the state we actually take a longevity payment, which I would consider a stipend and we're indexing that to a COLA and through you Madam President to Senator Osten. Is that customary that longevity payments are increased by a COLA in Collective Bargaining Agreements?

Through you.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. And through you, it depends on the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you. And through you, Madam President. Since this bargaining unit is -- these 183 Public Defenders are getting absorbed by the AFSCME Unit, does the good Senator know when that provision for the longevity payment being attached to a COLA was introduced as part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement?

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I know that back in 2001 when I was the President for CSEA, SEIU, Local 2001 Correction Supervisor's Council, rather long name, that that was in effect back then for several bargaining units that were accreted into bargaining units through -- from a managerial
position through a bargaining unit and so it goes back at least that long.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President to Senator Osten. Most recently during the SEBAC Agreement, the Malloy administration had negotiated a new tier of state employees. I believe it was Tier 4, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much. There is a new tier 2004. The Malloy administration also did the 2011 and 2013 agreements so part of Tier 2A, Tier 3 and Tier 4 were all negotiated under the Malloy administration.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):
Thank you, Madam President. And through you to Senator Osten, are Tier 4 employees eligible for a longevity payment?

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. If they were hired after 2011, that would be no.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you. And through you Madam President. What was the reason given for why we were negotiating longevity payments out of the tier system?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. These are not tier 4 employees.
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. If I may ask my question in a different manner. When the Governor, Governor Malloy went through the SEBAC Agreement negotiations and there was a creation of tier 4 employees the longevity payments were removed for all employees hired after -- after 2011, whether that included the tier 3A or whatever, I'm not sure on the timeline when that was created. But that was done for a reason. And my question to Senator Osten is, is she aware of the reason why longevity payments were removed from the Collective Bargaining Agreements under SEBAC?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Because these employees were hired before that timeframe of 2011, and this -- the longevity that the good Senator talks about has nothing to do with tier 4, although it applies to all tier 4 employees it also applies to all tier 3 employees because they were all hired, either tier 3 or tier 4, were all hired after the date when longevity was excluded.
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So we know then that if they're -- all of these employees, the 183 members were hired prior to 2011; is that correct?

Through your analogy and through you Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. As the -- those getting longevity amounts to $21,611 that indicates that those include employees only pre-2011 just by the sheer dollar amount.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. When we talk about the cost of employees, no matter what business you're
in, whether you're in private practice or you own a business, a large retailer or restaurant or a state employer, the biggest cost of anything is labor; I understand that. And one of the driving costs from why we're being told, especially now in one of the public hearings that I'm attending, are the fringe benefit costs of our state employees. Because the amount that the state employees contribute is minimal compared to the benefit that is received. And would the good Senator please describe to me the costs of the -- whether it's a savings or a cost by adding these 183 members to the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the years containing therein.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. I just need clarification. Are you asking about the cost of fringe benefits?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. In the OAF analysis that I'm looking at there's a year in which there's
some savings and then there's a year in which there's some cost -- additional cost to the state and I was wondering if the good Senator has those numbers and could explain to me what those numbers are to make sure I have the numbers correct.

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Are you talking about the section which talks about Social Security, Medicare, and unemployment, OPAB or other post-employment benefits and state employee retirement system in which it indicates the numbers of $62,000 as regard to Social Security/Medicare?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Yeah. Madam President, yes, ma'am I am.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Okay. Thank you very much Madam President. These costs would have still been in the state budget had they not been in a bargaining unit because they still would have been responsible for Social
Security, Medicare and unemployment. Now it moves into the bargaining agreement because they're bargaining unit members. But these costs here would have still been in our budget had they even not joined a bargaining unit.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And how -- please explain to me if you could, why there would be a -- I understand there would be a cost factor because you're paying all that for those different entities, but how do we find a savings, if you will, if there were 183 members prior to and all -- 100 members are moving into the bargaining unit, how have we found a cost savings in the fringe benefit account?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. Because the general wage increase did not accrete to these members during this year and in earlier analysis before they moved into this bargaining unit they had accreted that dollar amount and so this more accurately reflected those savings that we achieved through the
SEBAC 2017 agreement across the board and was reflected in this particular document.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. My last question to Senator Osten and then I'll just make a comment or two. Is, are you aware, are there any provisions that were in the existing Collective Bargaining Agreement that were not adopted by the 183 members that were going into it because they felt that that's not applicable to them or they'd rather not utilize it therefore we want to enhance that. Were there any substance of changes between what was existing and what they're -- we're moving into?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. There were not.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. That's all the questions I have for Senator Osten. You know I -- through my discussions with the good Senator, we've
come to realize that you know, we 183 dedicated state employees that are -- that come to work every day to do their work and not always in the most favorable light, especially when it comes around -- discussions around budget time. While I applaud the state employees for the 0 percent wage freezes that they -- they had for that two-year time, I can't in good conscious vote for something that offers a 7 percent annual increase in wages. I mean that's almost unheard of in today's day and age in the private sector. And when we're talking about, just a very few minutes ago a debt diet in the State of Connecticut, we can't invest in our -- in some of our needs. Governor Lamont had classified some things that are necessary and some other things that are nice to haves. I would put this in one of the categories of that everybody would love to have, but are we doing making it more affordable? Has anybody seen the reports from the Yukon Health Center? This body told them they need to go find a public private partnership because the fringe benefit costs were killing them. We heard just today the cost of the fringe benefits for every dollar of salary there's .92 cents in fringe benefits and now we're just offering up a 7 percent increase in wage. 7 percent. We can't afford that. That's one of those nice to haves, but not today. I want to reward our state employees for the work that they do, but let's be realistic about what we can afford and what we can give them. This is too rich.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark? Senator Hwang.
SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. You know as a student in the study of labor relations at my beloved Alma Mater at Cornell, I've learned to appreciate the history and the contributions of labor and collective bargaining and its contributions to this country so as we explore this deliberation I want to first commend the hard working people that work to protect us in the court system. So as a result, I actually have some questions as relates to kind of understanding this for the proponent of this Bill.

Through you, Mr. President, if I may.

THE CHAIR:

Yes, please proceed.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you. This is a new bargaining through Senator Osten -- Senator Osten, this is a new bargaining unit. Was it organized through a vote of its members or a formation? Could you share with the circle in regards to how this bargaining unit came to be and what process lead to that?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):
Thank you very much, Madam President. Well I am not a Public Defender and so I could not give you the exact details of how these lawyers who are paid far below private sector lawyer's wages. And I -- I can tell you the general analysis of anybody that joins a bargaining unit that's a state employee, having started a union myself that were state employees. There was an interest in belonging to a Collective Bargaining Agreements. Members signed cards to joint this already existing bargaining unit and they accreted already into an already existing bargaining unit that happened in the bargaining unit that I was the President of with two subsequent agreements. And they signed cards, the cards were verified for signature by the Office of Labor Relations and then the Office of Labor Relations made a decision on whether or not they had to have an election or it was done just by what we in the Labor Movement and many people here call card check, and it would depend on how many people had signed cards. So if 90 percent of the bargaining unit signed cards, that may have been decided that they did not need an election.

In this particular case, I'm not intimately knowledgeable about which way that went but that's how it started.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):
Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. I want to thank the -- the answer, it seems to be consistent with the process in regards to the card check and a vote among the membership so I want to thank you for that clarification, and it's very helpful.

We did have a conversation about longevity bonuses and we did look at the salary employees before 2011. Can you share with the circle in regards to the status of longevity bonuses for our state hourly employees? Does it still exist?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much. It exists for those employees that were hired pre-2011.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So just a point of clarification. So hourly and state employees, those that were hired before 2011 continue to receive longevity bonuses as part of their compensation package from the State of Connecticut?
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang, thank you. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Yes, through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang. Thank you. And I know that the Senator had shared -- had shared the cost and there's some OFA analysis that relates to that. Does the good Appropriations Chair know what the cost is to the state in regards to the total bill of longevity bonuses. That may be a far-fetched questions but perhaps the Appropriations Chair may know what the cost of longevity bonus as a whole for hourly and salary employees impact the State of Connecticut's budget.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. While I do like numbers I don't memorize them and I do not have that number off the top of my head, but over the next couple of days for those of you who are going to be part of the Appropriations Committee we will
be looking at each and every one of those numbers and be more intimate with them.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So as I understand longevity bonuses to be it is a reward for length of service, continuous service or service to the state, it has no baring to receive this bonus based upon performance, any measure of goals achieved; it is simply a bonus for being there long enough; would that be correct?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Then as much as I respect my good colleague, I prefer and I believe it is a payment for services rendered and it’s been part of the state employee payment structure for a lot of years and has been negotiated for new employees starting in 2011. It is not a reward for work. If we were going to reward workers for the work that they do, it would be a far higher payment because this job is among one of those vocations that is in the -- in lines with God's work
of helping those who need to be represented but cannot afford that.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Through you, I can't compete with God's work on that Ma'am, so with that said, I'll leave that but it is important that as we look and following the premise of Governor Lamont's presentation of thinking smarter, working more efficiently and respecting the taxpayer dollars I want to perhaps ask the Appropriations Chair and the General Assembly to evaluate the value (God Bless You) of longevity bonuses as well as other areas that may be additional costs that we could put toward elsewhere. So I'll move on Madam President.

In regards to fringe benefits, is that calculated into the cost incurred by the state for every employee or are we just simply looking at the calculus of salaries in this kind of analysis.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):
Thank you very much. Through you, Mr. President. Fringe benefits have been talked about and are included in this. I believe that there needs to be a much harder look at what we talk about when we talk about fringe benefits. Every employee carries the weight of our inability to put money aside. And so when we talk about fringe benefit on a per employee basis we often include the debt of those that are currently retired and those that belong in part and mostly to tier 1. Now tier 1 ended in 1984 and 1984 was a long, long time ago and we continue to pay for the lack of many state legislatures and many governors for paying for what we owed back then. So when we talk about fringe benefits, if we looked at a tier 4 employee right now, essentially they pay for all their fringe benefits. If we looked at a tier 3 employee right now that would also be true. So we have asked the actuaries to come up with an analysis by tier for tier -- for each of the tiers. There's tier 1 ended in 1984, tier 2, tier 2A, tier 3 and tier 4. And I think we need to recognize that our tier 3 and tier 4 employees are -- are not -- they're just a normal -- they have a hybrid 401K in tier 4, and quite frankly we need to make sure that we are compensating those people at a level that allows us to hire the best of the best because we need the best of the best working for us in those very hard job classifications that are very difficult to stay in.

Those people who represent in this case, people who cannot afford a lawyer. Those people who work around the hardest situations with children at risk, that work in our Department of Children and Families. Those people who help those with mental illness, something which I could talk about for hours because we don't have enough services for
people who have mental illness, true mental illness. Your chronic schizophrenic. Those people who we don't have enough beds for who suffer from opioid addiction. We want the best of the best that work in the Office of Fiscal Analysis that present us with these documents that are -- are good at looking at outyear projections. We want to hire those people who are the best of the best and for those people who handle our bonds and handle looking at things in the Office of the Treasurer. We want those that can make those analysis and work forward. So I want to make sure that for the job classifications that the state has that we are providing the best people for the best job and giving them a wage that is commensurate with the job that they do, and I would say that there are not a lot of people that want to work in our prison system. And I worked there for 21 years and I honor the work that those people do and they get paid fairly. They are not over compensated.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you very much. I want to thank the good Senator for her eloquence. There are two bargaining units. Can you share who negotiated and reached agreement with those bargaining units on behalf of the state?

Through you, Mr. President.
THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. If we could stand at ease for one minute?

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will stand at ease.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will come to order. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):


Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. There may be a more clarifying question of one versus the other? Was this negotiated through the judicial department or through the Malloy administration?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. This was negotiated by the State of Connecticut Division of Public Defender Services.

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you. Thank you. One final question. Should these agreements not get passed today out of this Chamber, could the good Senator share what would become of the current agreement? In the past, when there was an existing agreement, that existing agreement remains in force, but given that there is no previous agreement what would happen to the current employees and what would be the next step in
this process? Would they have to go back to the negotiation tables and readdress the terms and reach a new agreement should this circle reject this agreement?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Yes, would the -- I thought I had a two-part question. One was, if there was no agreement like in past agreements, those agreements would be in effect, but given that this is new there would be no contract in place; would that be correct?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Through you, Mr. President. Yes.
SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

So, and then the second part of the question is if this agreement should be rejected in the Circle, would they have to go back and renegotiate the terms based upon the current conditions, particularly following Governor Lamont's recent address in regards to our budget prioritization that it may create a better opportunity for us to take a fresher look at this; would that be correct?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I -- that's why I said yes to begin with, Madam President. I was not trying to be sarcastic. That would be true. But I do believe that Governor Lamont said one thing -- he said a lot of things that I agreed with but he said one thing that I truly think is the core of our -- our -- our moral being in the State of Connecticut and that is we want to lift up the middle class. These workers are in the middle class. We are giving them a fair wage for the job that they do and this is what we would want to negotiate so I don't see a different result should we go back and renegotiate this particular agreement with these particular workers. This is a fair agreement for the job that they do. It is a vocation, a career. It is not merely a job so I believe that this agreement should pass because it is honorable and fair and I look forward to my
colleagues around the Circle agreeing with that and giving these workers the -- their reflection of the job that they do and that reflection on social justice is a fair wage.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. I want to again compliment the eloquence and the passion of the Senator. And I do agree that there are components that we are trying to reward the hard-working state employees, particularly in the Public Defenders and within the Supreme Court arena. That being said, I also have heard Governor Lamont talk about our middle class, the men and women that are not in state government, that struggle every day to meet the necessary requirements to fulfill their obligations to their families, to their children and who is speaking for them?

So when I look at these agreements and I look at the percentage of increases and I walk up and down the street and I share that with my representatives, my constituents, the idea of the percentage of increase in salary in this marketplace shocks them to their core. And when I talk about what we have to do in this Circle to reflect more of what the household we represent, this agreement and its terms however noble, however important to an important represented class deserves a re-looking, deserves a reevaluation. So we have an opportunity with a new
Governor, with a new look to be able to look at this renegotiation to maybe create a much more productive and mutually beneficial not only to those important employees but to the taxpayers that pay their salary and benefits. Perhaps it is wise for us to revisit that, to re-engage with a fresher look so I urge this body to reject this agreement and bring people back to the table for us to continue with President -- what Governor Lamont presented earlier as a new look on how we can move forward to make this state better. So thank you very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President I echo the comments by my colleagues around the Circle and Chairman Approps I do not have any questions for you, so you can sit back. Public Defenders certainly do good work and I think that Senator Osten is correct that they do it with their heart and soul so I don't take anything away from them. When you look at their salaries they begin at roughly $67,600 for a Public Defender and go to $141,000 and then you have to also add in the benefits that the state gives, which are as everyone knows, are fairly incredible in the State of Connecticut relative to other states. So what comes to me is we just got out of a Joint Session Budget with Governor Lamont and Governor Lamont's message was pure -- pure and simple on the expense side. We're in a state that has a large pension debt. We're in a state that he wants to get the employees
from the State Union into a room, teachers' pension under control because it's unaffordable and as many people I've heard mention in the last few weeks is that these fixed costs crowd out Social Services. Every time we approve a contract like this we are taking fixed costs going up, something's got to give. And what has been giving has been municipal aid and Social Services. Governor Lamont said it. We can't raise income tax anymore because it's a diminishing return. Now we've got some other taxes that one could argue are very regressive, at least on the board for now, very regressive. And that's the way we're going to do it.

The core is -- why are we here? What is it that's causing it? It's a contract like this. There is not in a private sector people getting 6 percent increases in their wages. It's not happening. It's not -- people are lucky if they can hold onto their job in this economy, steady on the income, maybe it goes up 1 percent but it's not going up 6 percent, and I doubt it's even going up 3.5 percent. And when they say 3.5 percent as a COLA, we've got to be intellectually honest with each other and say it is not a COLA. A COLA is a cost of living adjustment that's tied to rate of inflation. This is a salary increase 3.5 percent period. That's what it is. At least -- at least let's be honest in the Chamber with each other when we have the conversation and say this is a salary increase every year. Now, if you're okay with that vote yes. But in .92 cents on the dollar, which is what we're paying for benefits; and by the way I think it's .96 but because it was stated it was .92 I will still with .92. .92 cents of every dollar that's being spent we have to pay towards our benefits. So when you go up that 6 percent, you're going up also for our payments for
benefits. Our actuarial payments that we just got through hearing about we can't afford. We just got through with the conversation.

So when does this merry-go-round stop? When do we say, look I love what the Public Defender’s Office do -- does. Their heart and soul is into what they do and I know it is but we've got to say time out. Let's do what's right for these employees but let's not hurt others within the budget. That's all it is. It's a conversation. But what this is -- what this is, is a ditto of every union contract that's come before us. It's like everybody's got 3.5, we stick it in there. Everybody's got the step up, we still it in there. No thought process that says it's negotiated. It's like you're going to accept the one that we did for everyone else? Yeah. Okay, good, then we're done. Heck they modified even a day when there was an issue on Janus. So what are we really doing here? Are we really going to change this system or are we going to say no, let's do business as usual, go into our budget negotiations and figure out whose pocket we're going to pick the penny for this and whose going to get the cut to pay for this?

That's going to be the conversation as soon as we get into the budget room, is who is going to pay for these contracts? And here we could say let's start with this one and send a message that we need to go a different route. Governor Lamont in 2021 is going to have to negotiate the wage portion of the contracts. The benefits are golden if you would. I don't mean that disrespectfully and I will rephrase that. The benefits are locked in until 2027 so that cannot be touched. It's the wages that are going to come up in 2021. Why don’t we say, hey you know
what? The legislature rejected a contract that was a ditto contract because they felt 6 percent was a little rich. We need to back it down. They sent us a message. We're setting the table for Governor Lamont so that when he goes to the negotiation room he can start saying, you know what? Those old days are gone. We need to think differently. We need to think budget. We're helping him help position in 2021.

If you approve this, you've said you're on your own, Governor. We're not sending any message. Do whatever you normally did the other Governor's past, including Republicans going all the way back. Do what everyone has done. Do the ditto and don't worry about it. We'll figure out what magic rock we're going to turn over, what group we haven't taxed yet, what habit we want to stop so we'll tax that, what service is hiding that we don't know about yet that we'll find out about soon enough that we'll tax. That's what it's coming to. I'm not against Public Defenders. Senator Osten is right. They're hard-working people. Not against state employees. They're hard-working people. But the question is to what end can we fulfill these obligations balanced against the public interest of our budget and the people depend upon the very social services that we're going to have to look hard on and figure out if they're going to get cut as we look at this budget.

So with all due respect to the Public Defenders, I would suggest that we vote against this contract and let renegotiations begin with a different thought, with a different idea, with the world in mind and the budget deficit of $4 billion in mind and the fact that this Governor is going to have a difficult
task in this legislature. This is the place we could send that little message and support for Governor Lamont as he goes into his contract negotiations. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Fasano. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I would ask for a roll call vote.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will anyone remark further? If not, if we will open the machines and -- pardon me, Mr. Clerk. If you would call for a roll call vote please?

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Senate Resolution No. 10 immediate roll call vote in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the members vote? Have all the members voted? We will lock the machines and would the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:
Senate Resolution No. 10.

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THE CHAIR:

(Gavel) Legislation passes. Mr. Clerk is there any business on your desk?

CLERK:

Page 3, Calendar No. 27, Resolution No. 11, RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH AND THE JUDICIAL PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES UNION, JPE/AFT-CT, AFL-CIO.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Resolution and passage of the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):
Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, this is a small contract for 20 employees. I urge my colleagues to adopt this Resolution and give fairness to these 20 taxpayers in the State of Connecticut. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark? Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I -- I may have a question or two and then some comments on the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator Osten. I appreciate you bringing this forward. This is again the Judicial Branch and the Judicial Professional Employees Union. May I ask, is this a new union as was the previous? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):
Thank you very much. This is a brand-new bargaining unit. Through you, Mr. President. The previous one was an accretion into an existing bargaining unit. Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator. And through this being a brand-new bargaining unit, just looks like being conceived, no I don't see where the beginning date was. Perhaps -- does this go through the same SEBAC Agreement going back to 00 a $2,000 one-time payment and then raises it 3.5 percent plus a step for the two years following that? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much. This bargaining agreement covers January 1, 2019 to January 30, 2022. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):
Thank you, Madam President. So Senator, would that mean that some of those terms that I outlined do not apply? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much Madam President. When they were non-bargaining unit employees they took a zero like every other employee in the State of Connecticut and then this includes a general wage increase of 3.5 percent as well as an annual increment. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And so the -- the terms financially are the same as the previous Resolution? It's a cash payment plus 3.5 percent plus a step, 3.5 percent plus a step and the total cost over a period of time -- over the period of this contract? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):
Thank you very much, Madam President. In fiscal year 19 it's $79,402. In fiscal year 20 it's $194,078. In fiscal year 21 it's $377,360 and in fiscal year 22 it's $412,596. That does not include the fringe benefits which are calculated out as $10,518 in fiscal year 19, $28,995 in fiscal 20, $56,378 in fiscal 21 and fiscal 22 would be $61,642. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

I apologize, Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

That's fine, it's okay. Thank you very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

You don't look anything like him. (Laughing)
SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Senator for -- so doing the quick math this is a cost to the state for about a million dollars mirroring the SEBAC Agreement moving through for these 20 employees. So I just have a comment and I thank the good Senator for her -- for her gracious answers to my questions. It seems that the Janus Provision has been dealt with in this contract differently than the others, so that does not seem to be an issue. But once again, Madam President I'd just like to say that you know, we heard the Governor speak earlier this afternoon. We understand the state's fiscal climate. He's reached out to both sides of the aisle to try to offer solutions to help you put a budget forward that has indicated that he wants to speak to the employees of the State of Connecticut to see if they can come to some better agreement to help participate, granted they participated in the past but so has every family, every business and everybody here in the State of Connecticut so once again, I applaud the Judicial Branch for their hard work. We can't operate a state without them, however, at this time I would then just offer my opinion that this is too rich of a contract for this time that the state is going through, which is too poor. So for that reason I will be voting no and urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution as well. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Sampson.
SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Good afternoon Madam President. I wasn't initially going to make any remarks because I think my colleagues have done a very good job of laying out what is in this contract and the one that we voted on a few moments ago. But I thought it was worth just getting up for a moment and saying a couple brief words.

Certainly I appreciate the hard work of this bargaining unit and the previous one, and I think we all do. We recognize that jobs, no matter where they are, whether they're in the private sector or public sector are sometimes difficult and people should be rewarded for their hard work. My concern is that this is just really not the time to expand or increase the spending in our state government. My constituents have made it abundantly clear to me that they want one thing from me and that is to cut spending. They want Connecticut to be a more attractive place for people to live and work, run a business and to retire and the only way for that to happen is for us to create an environment where that happens and that would be a result of us reducing the burden on the taxpayers.

To Senator Fasano's point, which I thought was very relevant earlier. We have a fine amount of resources that we are going to expend in this state budget biennium and those resources are going to be spent in two significant areas. One is going to be on the labor force for the State of Connecticut and much of the additional -- the balance of the money is going to be spent on entitlements. I think that people need to take a long, hard look about where
that money is truly needed and what's most important.

Again, we have a finite pool of money and we've got to choose what our priorities are. I heard the Governor's speech a few minutes ago and he laid out lots and lots of priorities and -- including transportation, education, and a lot of areas we're not even addressing here. If we're going to run a responsible state budget over the next two years, I think we should think twice before starting with these agreements that ultimately put more burden on the taxpayers and take from other areas in our state budget. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further?
Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President and I'll be very brief. I just have one question for Senator Osten. In this contract I notice in fiscal year 2019 there is a bonus of $40,000. I'll give you a moment or I can show you the piece of paper, whichever you prefer. I'm just curious if I may, if you know, and I don't mean to put you on the spot, but if you know why that $40,000 appears in the contract, if you know the background of that? Thank you, Madam President. Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Yes. Senator Osten.
SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Through you. I do not know the details of the negotiations. I know this was a negotiated issue. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So it just seems like there's a $40,000 bonus in 19 and it just seems odd that giving a bonus and they weren't part of the union or the agreement wasn't signed. That's the type of stuff that drives our constituency crazy when they see you know, a $40,000 bonus and 7 percent increase in contracts and then we sit here and cry about the fact that we don't have enough money. Senator Osten I don't have anymore questions. Okay, thank you. I just didn't want you standing there waiting for me to ask a question. I don't have any. So Madam President, I'm not going to repeat my speech from last time. I'll ask the Clerk to read it only but I have the same objections that I raised the last time this time. It is an idea of priorities. It's an idea of which way we're moving the state and sending a message, helping Governor Lamont and his negotiations and Madam President, I hope we start to go on the right contract -- or right direction and look at contracts differently and I hope we reject this. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

If there were no other people that wish to speak Madam President, I would ask for a roll call vote.

THE CHAIR:

A roll call will be ordered. Will you remark further? Seeing none, if the Clerk could please announce a roll call vote?

CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Resolution No. 11. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted the machines will be -- oops, oops. Am I missing any? Then Mr. Clerk the machine will be closed and Mr. Clerk, would you please announce the tally?

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 11.

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THE CHAIR:

(Gavel) Resolution passes. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, that concludes our business for today. To you for any points of personal privilege or announcements?

THE CHAIR:

Any points of personal privilege or announcements? Seeing none, Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. With that I move we adjourn subject to the Call of the Chair.

THE CHAIR:

Senate stands adjourned.

On motion of Senator Duff of the 25th, the Senate at 2:38 p.m. adjourned subject to the Call of the Chair.