The Senate was called to order at 11:41 o’clock a.m., the President in the Chair.

THE CHAIR:

(Gavel) Would the Senate please come to order and would members and guests please rise and it is my pleasure to bring forward Rabbi Lazowski, or Senate Chaplain who will lead us in prayer. Rabbi Lazowski.

RABBI PHILIP LAZOWSKI:

Thank you. Our thought for today is from book the prophet, Habakkuk 2:9. “The righteous live by their faith.” Let us pray. Gracious God. In the midst of our busy lives, send us a reminder of your deliberate presence. Be with us as we debate and make decisions for the good of our people of Connecticut. Guide us on the path of wisdom, justice and kindness, and strengthen us for the service you have chosen for us to do. Invoke your divine blessings upon our nation, our President, our state and our leaders. Keep our defenders of freedom in Your safe care. In your holy name we pray. And let us all say, Amen.
THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Rabbi Lazowski. We are joined today by some new members in our circle and we have Senator Bizzarro. We have Senator Slap who I'm sure will be joining us and we have Senator Anwar. Senator Anwar, would you please come forward to do the Pledge, and welcome.

SENATOR ANWAR (3RD):

(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:

Senator Duff, I understand you'd like to recognize another Senator.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I will yield to Senator Kushner for a Point of Personal Privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH):

Good morning, and good morning to all present today. Thank you for this Point of Personal Privilege. It is my honor to introduce to you a troop of the Girl Scouts that is visiting today and they're from Vernon, Connecticut. They are Troop No. 107-18 and
I believe 15 is here too, a couple of folks. And it's my special privilege to welcome them here today because two of these are girls are my granddaughters, Abagail and Sophie and they're long-time Girl Scouts. And Sophie had a very special birthday on Sunday, she became a teenager, a 13-year-old so I'm very proud of my girls. (Applause) Thank you so much for being here and thank you for starting out life knowing that it's important to do things for others and so I'm very pleased that you could join us today, thank you. And thank you for the Point of Personal Privilege, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you Senator Kushner. Mr. Clerk.

THE CHAIR:

Good morning, Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Good morning, Madam President and good morning to members of the circle and a special welcome to our --- our new members as well who are here for the first time. We welcome to you what is a wonderful, great place in our state capital and really a wonderful family here. Madam President, for purposes of marking our Calendar I would like to have our markings.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you, Madam President. I'm sorry -- first before we do that we'll move Senate Agenda No. 1. Madam President, I move all items under Senate Agenda No. 1. I'm sorry, we haven't called it yet have we?

CLERK:

The clerk is in procession of Senate Agenda No. 1 dated Wednesday, March 13, 2019.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you. Madam President, I move all items on Senate Agenda No. 1 dated Wednesday, March 13, 2019 be acted upon as indicated and that the Agenda be incorporated by reference into the Senate Journal and Senate Transcript.

THE CHAIR:

Hearing no objections, so ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President again for our markings. I'd like to on Calendar page 1, Calendar 24, Senate Joint Resolution No. 22, followed by Calendar No. 25, Senate Joint Resolution No. 23. On Calendar page 2, I'd like to mark those as go. On Calendar page 2, Calendar 26, Senate Joint Resolution No. 24 as a go. The Calendar 27, Senate Joint Resolution No. 25 a go. On Calendar -- page 2, Calendar 12, Senate Resolution No. 15 go. On Calendar page 2, Calendar 34, Senate Resolution No. 24 go. And Calendar page 3, Calendar 35, Senate Joint
Resolution No. 26 go; and we'll mark the rest of the items that I've not called as PR and if we can start with the top of the Calendar on Calendar page 1, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you --

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Oh, Madam President, can we hold for one second, please?

THE CHAIR:

Certainly.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Madam President, I apologize, we are going to call on Calendar page 2, Calendar 26, Senate Joint Resolution No. 24 as our first item because that does have to go down to the House.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar No. 26, Senate Joint Resolution No. 24, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE LUBBIE HARPER, JR. OF NORTH HAVEN TO BE A STATE REFEREE.

THE CHAIR:
Senator Winfield, good morning.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Good morning, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH): Yes, thank you Madam President. Before us is Judge Lubbie Harper with a long and distinguished career in the judiciary. Lubbie Harper was first appointed to the bench on May 4, 1976. Prior to his time in a judiciary, he was in a private practice of law for 20 years. He comes to us as somebody who has a very long record of achievements and honors and I would waste our time by trying to go through all of those things just to say that he comes to us with a record distinction. He has been the Chairman -- he is the Chairman of the Commission and Ethnic Disparities in the Criminal Justice System. He comes to us with a Favorable Report and I would urge adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Winfield, thank you. Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSELL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Great to see you this morning. I stand to associate myself with the remarks of Senator Winfield. Again, this jurist
has had a -- an extremely notable past as he perceives to want to continue to serve the people of the good State of Connecticut in this role as a Referee. I think he's imminently qualified to do so. And at this time, Madam President I would like to yield to Senator Sampson.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Kissel. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President, and thank you Senator Kissel and also my same colleague from New Haven for your remarks. I don't know Judge Harper personally. I've never met him though I know he has done a great deal of good throughout his life and he has been recognized many, many times for that. By many accounts he has also served as an outstanding judge since being elevated to the Supreme Court and then more recently as a Referee. However, on one specific and identifiable occasion I believe he made a critical mistake. A mistake that is something that cannot and should not be overlooked or forgotten with the passage of time.

Back in the 2000s the issue of same sex marriage was a very big issue here at this State Capital and in a quick search that I did I found no less than nine proposed Bills that were submitted between just 2002 and 2005. I mention this to make the point that the mere introduction of that legislation proves that this is something falls within the realm of the law and I believe that in order for this to become the law in our state, it must pass the legislature and be signed the Governor. And numerous times during
this period members of both parties and two separate Governors acknowledged that fact. While all this was happening and this debate was going on here at the Capital during that several years there was also a court case moving through the lower courts that ultimately became the mechanism that allowed the State Supreme Court to change our law.

Now I want to stop for a second and explain very clearly for the record that my opposition to Judge Harper's reappointment has absolutely nothing to do with the issue of same sex marriage itself. I supported civil unions when they were proposed and passed and I believe that gay couples should have the right to marry. I do not believe, and I think most people agree with me that religious institutions should not be forced to participate in marriage ceremonies that they disagree with, but I believe this is the current law and I am certainly satisfied with it.

My issue is not that same sex marriage because law in Connecticut, rather it is how same sex marriage became the law in Connecticut, which was by the actions of four individuals who were members of the Supreme Court back in October of 2008 and not this legislature.

In my opinion this is a very clear and textbook case of judicial activism. Black's Law Dictionary defines judicial activism as a philosophy of judicial decision making whereby judges allow their personal views about public policy among other factors to guide their decisions. When a judge puts these factors above the requirements of law in an effort to comport with their own biases and
opinions, they have stepped outside their proper role.

Everyone here knows about the three branches of government and the role of making laws falls to us, the state legislature. The judicial branch is not supposed to have this power. And judges are repeated cautioned throughout their career never to cross that line. Judicial activism usurps the power of the elected branches of government, damages our system of government and the role of law.

It's also worth noting that this concern is precisely why we are here today. The legislature's Judiciary Committee as well as the House and Senate are charged with confirming judicial appointments after reviewing and approving candidates based on their record and judicial temperament. If we as members of the legislature do not stand and protect our role among the three branches of government, then who will? If there's any doubt that this case was a case of judicial activism I would ask you to consider how you would feel if a similar case came before the court today to reverse that decision. It is simply wrong for the court to make laws. The court should not be leading the public. It is us, the representatives of the people who are alone accountable directly to them, and we are subject to replacement by election. We are the ones that bring the wishes and concerns of our constituents forward to make the policy that suits them. The court's role is simply to interpret and apply those laws and not to change them.

In this case it seems like many are willing to look the other way simply because the policy matter in question is popular today. Our society is going to
continue to change over time based on the will and the whims of our constituents and so will the people that sit in these chairs. The policy of same sex marriage was bound to happen. The proof is that I don't think anyone in this room would doubt that any one of those proposed Bills would have become law between 2008 and now. There was no reason for the court to step in to make that happen.

Madam President, I will be voting no on this confirmation today and I'm fairly certain that my vote is not going to change the outcome, but that's not the same as saying it doesn't matter. It does matters. It matters because I believe someone needs to be on the record reminding this body of our role to be a check against the judicial branch when it exceeds its authority. And it matters to me. I want to be consistent always. I started my comments today by saying that we're all judged by our records, and certainly everyone in this room understands that completely. For me this one item in Judge Harper's record excludes from his eligibility to serve on the bench. It was wrong in 2008 when it happened. It was wrong in 2011 when he was appointed to the Supreme Court and I voted no at the time, and it's still wrong today. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator, thank you. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President and good afternoon. In 2011 I voted against Judge Lubbie Harper to become a member of the Supreme Court in and part because I
felt similar to Senator Sampson, that he portrayed an area of judicial activism and I don't believe that -- that is the role of a jurist in a courtroom. However, today I will be supporting Judge Harper only because of the fact that he is moving to a position of a State Referee and in the position of a State Referee he will not be deciding outcomes of cases which will set judicial president or a case law and in that respect I feel very comfortable in supporting somebody who has spent a -- I won't say a lifetime, but a lifetime in the practice of law and spent many, many years in a courtroom. Had Judge Harper been before us again for a re-nomination to the Supreme Court where he would have been able to set case law and -- then I would not have been supporting his nomination today. However, in the role that he is seeking, I feel that he is qualified for that position and I will be supporting the nomination today. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Witkos. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, rising in support of the nomination of Justice Harper, I certainly concur with the comments of the Committee Chair and the ranking member that Justice Harper has had a distinguished career, not only as a judge and later as a member of the Supreme Court, but in general as a public servant. He is someone who was -- a celebrity in New Haven before he was out of high school because he was a star basketball player at Wilbur Cross High School in the -- in a time when the school was winning and competing for many --
many championships. And unlike so many others who unfortunately go astray with the lures of early celebrity, he was someone who was motivated both to achieve in his own right but also to be an example to others and from a very early age he became a mentor. First to younger athletes and then later when he became a lawyer to younger attorneys who were -- who were coming up in the profession and he continued with that as became a judge. He had a very distinguished practice. He was council to the New Haven Board of Education for a substantial period of time in his practice, a broad and diverse practice. He was a very distinguished Superior Court Judge handling both civil and criminal cases with great wisdom and insight and knowledge of the law and I think his service on the Supreme Court was superb. My only regret is that with the passage of time he has aged out of being able to continue as an active member of that court. And -- but we are still very fortunate to have his service as a State Referee.

His reach into the community has been extraordinary. Recently the University of New Haven has set up an endowed scholarship fund in his name to recognize his activities there as a mentor and member of a number of advisory boards there. He is someone who really has been a gem for the State of Connecticut, not only for the legal profession, not only for the Bar, not only for the Supreme Court but for our community in general. He is sort of the -- I think in many ways, the model of what you think a public servant should be. In fact this year, he was named by the New Haven Register as its Citizen of the Year. And again, I think -- I can't think of anyone whose nomination we should be celebrating more than
that of Judge Lubbie Harper, so I enthusiastically support it. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, Mr. Clerk would you please announce a roll call vote and the machines will be open.

CLERK:

An 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.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? We're going to close the machine and Mr. Clerk, if you could announce the tally?

CLERK:

Senate Joint Resolution No. 24.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I move for suspension in order to immediately transmit this down to the House of Representatives.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Can the Clerk please return to the call of Calendar?

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar No. 24, Senate Joint Resolution No. 22, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF TONI M. FATONE OF WEST HARTFORD TO BE A WORKER'S COMPENSATION COMMISSIONER.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSELL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance and adoption of the Joint Committee's Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR KISSELL (7TH):
Thank you. Toni Fatone was educated at the University of Connecticut where she received a Bachelor of Arts Degree. She also graduated from Stetson University College of Law in Florida where she received her Juris Doctorate. Prior to her interim appointment as a Worker's Compensation Commissioner she served as a Deputy Commissioner of Administrative Services from 2015 to 2019. I would also state from my personal observations, I have known Ms. Fatone for probably close to 25 years, actually probably longer than that. She has been an advocate for various health groups, both in a capacity as a lobbyist but also Executive Director of various associations. She has extensive background in medical knowledge and advocacy and just has a sterling personality and integrity -- great integrity.

And with that I believe and the Committee believes that she is deserving of appointment and I urge adoption of the Resolution. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Kissel. Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. I would -- I just rise to associate myself with the comments of Senator Kissel and to make a motion that if there's no objection this nominee be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:
Seeing no objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar No. 25, Senate Joint Resolution No. 23. RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE DONALD R. GREEN OF MERIDEN TO BE A FAMILY SUPPORT MAGISTRATE.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSELL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance and adoption of the Joint Committee's Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR KISSELL (7TH):

Donald Green attended at the Trinity College where he received a degree in economics. He graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Law. Prior to his interim appointment as a Family Support Magistrate he served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Connecticut Attorney General's office from 1996 through 2019. I believe and the Committee believes that he is deserving of this full appointment and urge adoption of the Resolution. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator. Senator Abrams.

SENATOR ABRAMS (13TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Point of Personal Privilege. I would like to stand to proudly endorse the nomination of the Honorable Don Green. He is a fellow graduate of Maloney High School, an incredible man whose done, along with his wonderful educational background and experience in the field, he's also been an incredible servant. He served on our Board of Education in Meriden, on the Meriden Housing Authority. He's been on the Connecticut Commission on Children and a board member of the Boys and Girls Club, so I think that he comes at this with incredible experience and knowledge and the community of Meriden is happy to share this with the rest of the state. I think he'll do an incredible job. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Abrams, thank you so much. Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes, thank you again Madam President. I rise to again associate myself with the comments of the previous speakers and ask that if there is no objection, these be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing none, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.
Page 2, Calendar No. 27, Senate Joint Resolution No. 25.  RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE ROBIN L. WILSON OF NEW HAVEN TO BE A JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President.  I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President.  This is Robin Wilson who sits currently on the Superior Court in New Haven.  She was first appointment on June 1 of 2003.  She is completing her second term and going for a third.  She comes to us with a Favorable Report of the Judiciary Committee and glowing reviews and I would urge adoption by the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.  Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSELL (7TH):
Thank you very much, Madam President. I'd like to associate myself with the remarks of Senator Winfield. Judge Wilson really does come before us with sterling recommendations, excellent reviews and she's a tremendous public servant, an asset to the good people of the State of Connecticut. And seeing no objection I would actually move this to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered. And Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Speaking in support of the Resolution. As the Chairman and ranking member said, Judge Wilson is really one of the bright lights on the Superior Court and in the State of Connecticut. She has served now for almost two full terms of 16 years. She was quite young when she was first appointment, and still quite young, and is someone who has had an active career. Most recently, for the last -- nearly for the last decade she has been serving and handling civil trials in New Haven. She's had experience in other judicial districts and GAs prior to that. She is very thoughtful and very penetrating in the questions that she -- that she asks of attorneys. Somebody who carefully researches all of the cases that come before her and is really a model of a bright, hard-working jurist in the state so we're very fortunate to have her serving in the Superior Court with many years of service still ahead of her. Thank you, Madam President.
THE CHAIR:

Senator, thank you so much. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar No. 12, Senate Resolution No. 15 CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF ROLLIN -- ROLLIN COOK OF WEATOGUE TO BE COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTION.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, Rollin Cook was voted on favorably after his February 7th nomination hearing. He comes from the Columbia College where he received a BA in Criminal Justice Administration. He also received his MBA from the University of Phoenix. He's worn many hats in corrections over his three decades in the profession working up to the Salt Lake City County Sheriff's Office from an officer in the late 1980s all the way up to the office as Chief Deputy from 2004 to 2012.
From there Cook was taken on for six years as the Executive Director of the Utah Department of Correction where he developed evidence-based programming and rehabilitation services for offenders, built labor union ties and established committees on Women in Leadership and LGBTQ issues in corrections. He was also co-chair of the Utah Substance Abuse and Mental Health Advising Council and has held membership in the Utah Multicultural Commission and a Utah Peace Officer Standards and Training Council, the Commission on Criminal Justice -- Juvenile -- I'm sorry, Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice among others.

Madam President, we have worked very hard over the last few years to move forward on criminal justice reform and one of the -- one of the key people who have been involved in that was Commissioner Scott Semple who was formerly the Commission in the Department of Corrections. Commissioner Semple was liked and admired and respected by members on both sides of the aisle and from what I understand, Commissioner Semple pointed to Rollin Cook to be the person that he wanted to be his successor after he retired. And again, somebody who was so esteemed by members of the legislature and the public and in the criminal justice world, I certainly would take Commissioner Semple's word very strongly and take that under advisement heavily.

I had the opportunity to meet with Rollin Cook in my office. We had him obviously, the Executive and Legislations Nominations Committee where he presented himself in a -- in a very positive light. In fact you know, there has been we all recognize some criticism but the work that he does is one that certainly is not easy and one that many times brings
criticism because it's a very difficult type of work to be involved with. I think he's since then has had many meetings, talked to many Senators about his role in Utah, what he's done and the work he has done there as well. I think many people seem very comfortable with his time in Utah and the fact that he has worked his way up through the system.

I actually, thankfully through the National Conference of State Legislatures, which hopefully many folks here are involved with have colleagues who are friends from Utah and spoke to many -- a few people, a couple of people I should say, from Utah about Commissioner Cook. He's brand new. He's -- I don't -- he's not from his area. He's a blank slate of sorts and trying to make sure that really the confidence that Commissioner Semple had in him, we would have the same confidence as well. And what I've learned is that people in Utah really do admire him. He's worked very closely with a number of different groups including even the ACLU. He had very good partnerships with them also. So I believe that this is a -- an excellent nominee. Somebody who will do really good work, will continue on the same path that we've had over the years with Commissioner Semple and building upon many of the criminal justice reforms that has made Connecticut a leader in the nation, continuing to break new ground so that we lower our crime rate -- our crime rate, we make sure that people when they leave they have good jobs and that we can -- they can become tax paying citizens who are contributing to our society. For all those reasons, Madam President I would move adoption and urge my colleagues to support this nominee as well.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator Duff.

SENATOR KISSELL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I have not had the opportunity to meet with Rollin Cook as yet. I know that's in the works. I have watched the hearings that the Executive and Legislative Nominations had regarding this particular nominee. As folks in the circle I'm sure are well aware, my district has the most number of correctional facilities of any Senate district, that's six. We used to have seven. I would estimate right now there's probably over 6,000 inmates in my district in those facilities of various determinations as to whether they're dangerous or not. I appreciate the fact that now, soon to be Commissioner Cook is looking forward. I for one would like to break the cycle of recidivism. I don't need more inmates in my district. I need law-abiding, tax-paying citizens that want to live, work and raise a family in the State of Connecticut.

I want to commend at the time, acting Commission Cook this past weekend. Many of you may be aware that there was a walk away from the manufacturing program for inmates at Asnuntuck Community College in Enfield. At the outset of the creation of that program, a little more than two years ago I objected. Not because I don't want to see inmates trained in a skill set where they can come back into society and be able to give back and earn a living and do all of those productive things we want folks to do because the vast majority of inmate aren't doing life without possibility of release. They're going to be back out in society, but I never felt
that Asnuntuck Community College was the appropriate facility to have the program. That was my major concern. I have the utmost respect for whether it's correction officers, parole officers, probation office. I believe in this instance over the weekend it was parole officers that had the daunting responsibility to keep an eye on these folks in a facility that was simply not designed to be a secure facility such as correctional facility or a jail or prison or anything like that. So when this walk away did happen, and again it's called a walk away. There was an emergency alert. Everybody in, at least I know in Enfield, over our telephones, later I appreciate the fact that representatives of the Department of Correction reached out to me and kept me apprised both Saturday and Sunday as to what was going on. But I want to really commend soon to be Commissioner Cook for putting a halt to these furlough programs, not just at Asnuntuck Community College but there's others. It's my understanding there's a woodwork program in Eastford and others throughout the state until its determined exactly what happened over these last few days in Enfield so we can make sure it doesn't happen again. There was not anything tragic that occurred, thank God. No injuries to anybody to my knowledge, thank God but I've got to be honest, I have a 15-year-old and when the phone call in from the Enfield Alert System on Saturday afternoon, you know my 15-year-old goes, this is making me nervous Dad. You know, this guy could be anywhere in town. And I told you know, Asnuntuck is on the other side of town and you've got to cross some very busy streets and typically when someone leaves a facility, whether it's an outbreak or a walk away or a prison escape the last place they want to be is where they were. They want to get as far away as possible, but you know,
just chatting with my 15-year-old on a Saturday afternoon it was unfortunate that that sort of ran through his head. And I'm thinking how many other families in our neck of woods that that's sort of running through their head, and in particular, the people -- the neighborhoods and there's densely populated neighborhoods right near Asnuntuck Community College. And the way I'm looking at it is, okay, it's sort of a nice Saturday afternoon for this time of year but weatherman -- weather personnel say that it's going to get really cold in a few hours. And so wherever this individual may or may not be, they're not going to want to stay outside where it's going to be freezing. The other information I had from corrections on Saturday that he was doing time for a robbery two. Robbery two is a serious crime and there was no way to really know at that point in time, was this a plea bargain from something even more serious and that's what -- so I didn't know the facts as to exactly what this individual was in for.

So I want to commend the incoming Commissioner for taking a proactive approach to safety and security. It's very reassuring to myself and my constituents in North Central Connecticut. We are a leader in the nation when it comes to good correctional practices. It was painful for me to see Scott Semple, former Commissioner leave. I had known Scott for decades. Back when Carl Robinson erupted in a riot and at least one inmate was killed and building burned to the ground and I was in my -- probably my second term, 25 or so years ago. At that time Scott Semple was a member of CERT and he has been a wonderful public servant through corrections through all those years. But we all deserve our retirement when we decide to take a
different course in our life and turn a new chapter
and I wanted to thank former Commissioner Semple at
this time for his outstanding service for well over
two decades and welcome the new coming -- incoming
Commissioner Cook to a daunting job, but a job that
while it can be complicated and difficult, also has
vast potential not only for the individuals in the
Department of Corrections and the employees in the
Department of Corrections, those COs and parole
officers and probation officers and all the folks
with boots on the ground, but if it's done correctly
it can break the cycle or recidivism and turn a lot
of lives around. I wanted that on the record, Madam
President. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel, thank you so much. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I'd like to align my
remarks with Senator Duff and Senator Kissel. You
know, Commissioner Cook is somebody who has
certainly grown in the job and I mean that in the
sense that when he was the Chief Deputy over at Salt
Lake City he commanded over 700 employees with 2,200
prisoners with a budget of $68 million and as the
former Executive Director for Utah Department of
Corrections, he oversaw 2,200 employees, 7,000 plus
inmates, 15,000 offenders and a budget of over $315
million and as Senator had remarked, he not only
grew in his position but he grew different programs
within the correctional facility and that's
something we hope we can emulate here and even go
beyond that. So I wish Commissioner Cook all the
best of luck in his new role and if there's no
opposition I'd move this to the Senate Calendar, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing none, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar No. 34, Senate Resolution No. 24. RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF TIMOTHY LARSON OF EAST HARTFORD TO BE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President move acceptance of the Senate Committee's Favorable Report and adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I never heard of this guy before. (Laughing) Madam President, we all certainly know Senator Larson and who has moved on to other -- other challenges and another position within state government, somebody who we very much miss here in our circle for his many years of service to our state, not only in the Senate but
also as a State Representative and a former Mayor of East Hartford. Somebody who comes from a long lineage of public servants and one who always worked very, very hard for us and for his constituents in his district. So Madam President, Senator Larson was unanimously voted on favorably after his March 5th nomination hearing. He holds a BA in Sociology from Eastern Connecticut State University, and again he -- he's somebody who I know will bring a very creative approach to this -- to this position that he holds. One who will reach out. He knows this building. He will just do a fabulous job and I'm just very, very happy for him for this new challenge that he has and happy for the state that he was selected by this Administration to -- to move on and be the Director of the Office of Higher Education. So, unfortunately Tim did not have the opportunity to have one of the good-byes in the circle, but again we do certainly appreciate his service here and we'll miss his good naturedness. He has an excellent replacement that has come in to the district, but we wish him well and know that he'll do a fine job and excellent job as the Executive Director of the Office of Higher Education. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff, thank you. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, thank you Madam President. From our side of the aisle we wholeheartedly support Tim Larson as the new Executive Director of the Office of Higher Education. He has the management skills I believe necessary to run the department. As he moved out of
this Chamber he's also moving out of the office where he's in now, that's one of his main priorities he shared with the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee, to pack up years' worth of data and books and computers and staff and move to a new location in the upcoming year. So from our side of the aisle we wish him all the best and look forward to working with him in the future. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Witkos. Senator Cassano and then Looney.

SENATOR CASSANO (4TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I rise in support of Tim Larson. Tim and I were Mayors together several years ago. We've been close a long, long time, good friends. Tim is from a neighborhood that is legendary east of the river called Maybury Village. Maybury Village was an old, government, established housing project and it's incredible the number of people that still together to support Tim, to support his John and the comradery that exists over all of these years is phenomenal. All of it is based on people. They are people oriented. Tim going to Higher Education I think is just tremendous for the State of Connecticut because people that need help, people that need direction, that's going to be his priority and so I'm thrilled to be able to second the nomination for Tim Larson and wish him nothing but the best. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator Cassano. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Speaking in support of the Resolution. Obviously we're here to celebrate Tim Larson's nomination. I want to commend the Governor on the -- on the appointment although it did cause us all -- the work of a special election. Senator Anwar will be a worthy successor. But Tim, as we all know is someone who is always interested in promoting economic development for the State of Connecticut starting with East Hartford but then spreading beyond -- beyond that because he was -- he did so as Mayor of East Hartford and State Representative and as State Senator. He always had a sense of looking to promote Connecticut businesses, looking to put our state on the map in a good way, looking to provide incentives, connections between government and employers, all of the things that he will be now doing officially as part of the administration in this position as the Director of the Office of Higher Education, and specifically promoting connections between Higher Ed and employment opportunities in the state. So, I think it is a perfect fit for him although we will certainly all miss him here because he was a -- I think one of our most popular and beloved colleagues, someone who in caucus could always be counted upon to say something pragmatic, sensible, filled with good humor and also wisdom and insight so he will be missed, but we will also I think celebrate the fact that he'll now have a chance to do great deal of good in another capacity. So thank you, Madam President.
Senator Looney, thank you so much. Senator Anwar, and welcome.

SENATOR ANWAR (3RD):

Thank you, Madam President. I join my colleagues to rise in support of Senator Tim Larson. He's a good friend of mine and I'm actually sitting in the seat that he had vacated, so it's truly an honor for me and every time I would talk to him I said, how do I feel those -- those big shoes that you have because you've done such good work? And I've served with him as the Mayor of the town of South Windsor where he was our State Senator and he would be available to people in East Hartford, South Windsor, Ellington and East Windsor and then make sure that he would be their voice. So I look forward to trying to do the good work that he's done and continue the work. But I just want to mention about the amazing work that he has done and how hard working he is, and I wanted to wish him the most success and I will be supporting him, of course. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Without objection I'd like to place this item on Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing none, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.
RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF DAVID JIMENEZ OF HARTFORD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

Sen. Duff.

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

Sen. Duff:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, this is a six-year, part-time volunteer position. Mr. Jimenez was unanimously voted on favorably after his March 5th nomination hearing. He has a BS from University of Texas, JD from Hofstra University School of Law. He is being re-nominated to the Board of Regents and is the Principal of Hartford-based Jackson Lewis, PC. He's also the co-chair of the firm’s corporate Governance and Internal Investigations Practice Group where he advises employees -- I'm sorry, employers on litigation and other complex matters. Madam President, I urge adoption of the Resolution.
Thank you, Senator. Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS (8TH):

Thank you, Madam President. This side of the aisle also urges confirmation for Regent Jimenez. I think as a reappointment he's done stellar work in his first term on that board. He's seen many changes as we have gone through several different Presidents I think. The President we have now, President Ojakian is the calm, steady hand that we need to lead the Board of Regents or lead the CSSU system and I think the historical perspective that David can bring to the Board is critical and crucial at this time as we move forward. So I urge the Chamber's adoption of the Resolution before us. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Witkos. Will you remark further? With that we'll call roll call vote and Mr. Clerk, if you will call that and the machine will be open.

CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote -- an immediately 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 Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? If so we'll close the vote and Mr. Clerk, would you announce the tally?

CLERK:

Senate Joint Resolution No. 26.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I believe that concludes our business for today. We just need to have a vote on the Consent Calendar. If the Clerk can call the items on the Consent Calendar followed by a vote thereof. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar 24, Senate Joint Resolution 22.  
Page 1, Calendar 25, Senate Joint Resolution 23.  
Page 2, Calendar 27, Senate Joint Resolution No. 25.
Page 2, Calendar No. 12, Senate Resolution 15. Page 2, Calendar 34, Senate Resolution 24.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk and the machine will be open.

CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Consent Calendar No. 1. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Consent Calendar No. 1.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? The machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you announce the tally?

CLERK:

Consent Calendar No. 1.

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THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, that concludes our business for today. I hope members don't get spoiled by all these short sessions but they'll change in a -- in a month or so, but anyway that concludes our business for today. I'll at this point yield to any members for Point of Personal Privilege or announcements if we have any left. Madam President, if there's no announcements or Point of Personal Privilege I move that we adjourn subject to Call of the Chair.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, the Senate stands adjourned. Go forth and govern with civility. (Gavel)

On motion of Senator Duff of the 25th, the senate at 12:42 p.m. adjourned subject to the Call of the Chair.