The Senate was called to order at 1:34 o'clock p.m., the President in the Chair.

CLERK:

The Senate will convene immediately.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, everyone. The Senate would please come to order. Members and guests, please rise and direct your attention to Reverend Grubbs of New Haven. Reverend Grubbs.

REVEREND BONITA GRUBBS:

Let us pray. Your creative power, O God, is at work in and around us. As individuals, we have principals by which we live and make decisions. The backgrounds and experiences of everyone gathered here today are different. Their journey to these hallowed halls is both individual and purposeful, like one piece of thread inserted into a needle, requires keen insight and foresight and eyesight.
Therefore, I beseech You to shine Your light upon each one who's gathered here today and the proposals that are presented. Connect all who gather here to the advancement of compassion, justice, fairness, and equality. And through the collective work of this day, help all who are gathered here to shape the diversity of opinions into a beautifully woven and colorful garment of mutuality and inclusion. Surprise us with the joy of working together and achieving much for the good of Connecticut's cities and towns. In your name, I pray. Amen.

THE CHAIR:

Reverend Grubbs, thank you so much, for that -- your very beautiful words. And with that, I'd like to invite Senator Mary Abrams to please come up and lead us in the Pledge of Alliance.

SENATOR ABRAMS (13TH):

[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:

Thank you, Senator Abrams. Mr. Clerk, is there any business on your desk?

CLERK:

The Clerk is in possession of Senate Agenda No. 1, dated Wednesday, March 27, 2019.
THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff, good afternoon.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Nice to see you today. Madam President, I move all items on Senate Agenda No. 1, dated Wednesday, March 27, 2019, be acted upon as indicated, and that the agenda be incorporated by reference into the Senate Journal and Senate transcripts.

THE CHAIR:

Hearing and seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Before I mark the calendar, I would like to yield for any points of personal privilege or announcements?

THE CHAIR:

Yes, indeed, Senator.

SENATOR BERTHEL (32ND):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I rise for the point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.
SENATOR BERTHEL (32ND):

Thank you, Madam President. Today, we are joined in the Senate Chamber by a very special group of students from the Leadership Greater Waterbury Program of the Greater Waterbury Regional Chamber. Leadership Greater Waterbury is a nine-month personal and career development program which creates lifelong partnerships and develops community awareness among future leaders in civic, professional, and community organizations in the Greater Waterbury area. Its goal is to provide a creative, interactive environment for participants to meet regional leaders and discuss the challenges that affect greater Waterbury. Students are exposed to multiple perspectives regarding Greater Waterbury's challenges, opportunities, and assets.

And during the program, they are encouraged to get involved in the Greater Waterbury region. Participants are lifelong learners, with five to 25 years of work experience, who are interested in developing their careers, striving to become better leaders, and committed to community service.

Madam President, the program has more than 300 alumni. It is my pleasure, at this time, to introduce the members of the Leadership Greater Waterbury class of 2018 and 2019. There are quite a few names, if you'll indulge me.

We have with us, Zachary Keith from the Waterbury Development Corporation, Carrie Bastian [phonetic] from Ion Bank, Nancy Carlson [phonetic] from Ion Bank, Rachel Pellot [phonetic] from Liberty Bank,
Carmichael Guglioty [phonetic] from MacDermid Performance Solutions, Adamere Adone [phonetic] from People's United Bank, Brandi Young from Post University, Stephanie Dionne from Post University, Marya DiPerna from Post University, Naomi Toftness, from Post University, Emily Lafferty from Thomaston Savings Bank, and Mohammed Hassan from Ion Bank, and Tony Omega [phonetic] from the University of Connecticut, Waterbury Branch. Madam President, I would be remise if I did not acknowledge two of their mentors that are here with them today, David Krechevsky from the Waterbury Chamber and Sean Wisonan [phonetic] from Post University.

Madam President, at this time, I would like to yield to Senator Hartley from the 15th for additional comments.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Berthel, thank you so much for introducing this very distinguished group of people. Senator Hartley.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And I rise for a point of personal privilege, if I may?

THE CHAIR:

Yes, please proceed.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH):
Thank you, Madam. And so, I adjoin with my colleagues from the Greater Waterbury area to welcome the Leadership -- the Chamber's Leadership Group here today. The Leadership Group has had many distinguished graduates who have gone on to work in the community and throughout the state of Connecticut, and -- and some even here in the legislative arena. And I'm very proud of this class, like all the other classes. You will note that it is a very diverse group, well represented by women and who have gone on in their community, as I know these graduates from Greater Chamber Group will go on to work with us collectively. And I also want to recognize the companies from which they come as they have been named by colleague, Senator Berthel, they are great corporate partners to us in the Greater Waterbury area. It's a pleasure to have you here. And thank you for your indulgence to my colleagues, and to Madam President, thank you.

THE CHAIR:


SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

I apologize. I write -- I stand for a point of personal privilege, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):
Thank you, Madam President. Since our last meeting in the Chambers, the city of Bridgeport lost one of its Representatives, Ezequiel Santiago, who was a State Rep for 11 years in the House but also served many years in the Common Counsel in Bridgeport and was very loved in the community. I would ask that the Chamber take a moment of silence for him.

THE CHAIR:

It would be our honor. And if all the membership would please join us in a moment of silence for Representative Ezequiel Santiago. [moment of silence] Thank you.

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff, do you wish to proceed?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry. I'd like to yield to Senator Fasano, please.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

If I may, I know we had the Leadership Greater Waterbury folks here, I would ask that they rise and
that we give them a -- a welcome, as our tradition is, please.

THE CHAIR:

Absolutely.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

So, please rise so we can recognize you. [applause] Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, for purposes of marking the calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. On Calendar page 1, Calendar 55, House Joint Resolution Number 69, go. On Calendar page 1, Calendar 56, House Joint Resolution Number 70, go. On Calendar page 2, Calendar 57, House Joint Resolution Number 71, go. On Calendar page 2, Calendar 58, House Joint Resolution Number 72, go. On Calendar page 59, House Joint Resolution -- I'm sorry, on Calendar page 2, Calendar 59, House Joint Resolution Number
73, go. On Calendar page 2, Calendar 23, Senate Resolution Number 22, go. On Calendar page 3, Calendar 60, House Joint Resolution Number 75, go. On Calendar page 3, Calendar 61, House Joint Resolution Number 76, go. On Calendar page 3, Calendar 62, Senate Resolution Number 25, go. And then, Madam President, all the way over on Calendar page 15, Calendar 77, Senate Resolution Number 23, go. And if the Clerk can call the items in Calendar order, please? Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Mr. Clerk, would you please oblige?

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar 54, House Joint Resolution Number 69, resolution confirming the nomination of the Honorable Barbara N. Bellis of Shelton to be a judge of the Superior Court.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kelly.

SENATOR KELLY (21ST):

Thank you, Madam President. Pursuant to Senate Rule 15, I will be recusing myself from consideration of this nomination.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, sir. It will be so noted. Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Good afternoon. Great to see you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Madam President, I move acceptance and adoption of the Joint Committee's resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Please, will you remark?

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Judge Barbara Bellis of Shelton is currently the presiding civil and administrative judge at the Fairfield Judicial District. Prior to her appointment to the bench in 2003, Judge Bellis practiced at the law firm of Mulvey, Oliver, Gould, and Crotta. She is a graduate of Boston College and the Catholic University Law School. Judge Bellis is an active member of the legal community serving on several committees and commissions relating to Civil Commissions, Judicial Review, and the Rules Committee.
Madam President, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution reappointing Judge Bellis for another term. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much. Will you remark further?
Senator Bradley.

SENATOR BRADLEY (23RD):

Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. It's a pleasure to speak and thank you for being acknowledged. I just -- I -- I -- I would be remiss if I didn't stand up and speak on behalf of Judge Bellis. As a -- as a attorney who practices out of the city of Bridgeport, I'm in front of Judge Bellis with great frequency; she is the presiding judge of Bridgeport. And I can just tell you, if I can just share with you a small story. When I first ran for this seat, that was formally held by Senator Ed Gomes who has done a fabulous job, there was an issue in terms of submitting ballots to the -- the Secretary of State at the time, and Judge Bellis had to hear this matter before her. And I can tell you, I haven't met a person who's more fair, more honest, more transparent, a person who holds the letter of the law. And even though the -- her verdict went against what I would have liked, she -- she really was an outstanding judge.

And -- and many years after, being before her as an attorney, we talk about that experience. And she said, you know, Dennis, I believe that democracy requires people to fight and I believe requires people to have their name on the ballot and go
through the process. It just -- it's -- her mentorship and her honesty throughout that process says a whole lot about her.

So, I second this nomination as going forth and I -- and I -- and I really commend her for her years of service and leadership in -- in the bench.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator Bradley. Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Seeing no one else wishing to speak on Judge Bellis' reappointment, but the fact that Senator Kelly had to recuse himself, we do need a roll call vote at this time. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

I do -- I do see that. Will you -- will anyone remark further? If not then, we will open the machines for a roll call vote.

CLERK:

An Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate. 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 senators voted? Have all the senators voted? It appears so and the machine will be closed. And would the Clerk announce the tally?

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution Number 69.

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THE CHAIR:

(Gavel). The resolution is adopted. Mr. Clerk, would you please continue with the Call of the Calendar?

CLERK:

Page one, Calendar Number 56, House Joint Resolution Number 70, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE ALEXANDRA D. DIPENTIMA OF SOUTH KENT TO BE A JUDGE OF THE APPELLATE COURT AND A JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Good to see you.
Good afternoon.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable -- favorable report and adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and adoption of the resolution. Will you remark, Senator?

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. Before us is Alexandra D. Dipentima. She is currently the chief judge of the Connecticut Appellate Court. She was first appointed in 1993. She is a graduate of Princeton University and the UConn School of Law. She has many honors in her record and she also has served on many boards and commissions; just to name a couple, she was a member of the Judicial Performance and -- Performance Evaluation Advisory Board, the chair of the Public Service and Trust Commission. She comes to us on a vote of 35 to 0 out of the Judiciary Committee, and I urge adoption.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):
Thank you very much, Madam President. I stand in support of the re-nomination of Judge Alexandra Dipentima as well. I wish to associate myself with the remarks of Senator Winfield, I urge my colleagues' support. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes, Madam President. Sorry about that I was doing some [laughter] business. If there's no objection, I'd ask that this item be moved to consent.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing and hearing no objections, we will move that to the Consent Calendar. Mr. Clerk, if you would proceed, please.

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar Number 57, House Joint Resolution Number 71, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE JOHN F. MULCAHY OF -- JUNIOR OF GLASTONBURY TO BE A STATE REFEREE.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):
Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance and adoption of the Joint Committee's resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and adoption of the resolution. Will you remark further?

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

The Honorable John F. Mulcahy had attended Middlebury College and Cornell Law School. He was first appointed to be a judge of the Superior Court in 1979. Since then, he has had a long and distinguished judicial career, in addition to serving as a State Referee in the Hartford Judicial District. He also serves on the Council on Probate Judicial Conduct. I believe, and the Committee, believes that he is deserving of reappointment. And I urge adoption of the resolution. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Seeing no other senators wishing to speak on this resolution, I would move it to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:
Seeing and hearing no objections, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar Number 58, House Joint Resolution Number 72, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE J. LAWRENCE PRICE OF AVON TO BE A FAMILY SUPPORT MAGISTRATE.

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:

Motion is on acceptance and adoption of the resolution. Will you remark further?

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. Before us is J. Lawrence Price to be a family support magistrate. first appointed in 2018. He is a -- a -- I'm sorry, a graduate of the Purdue -- Purdue University and the Columbus School of Law. And he is before us on a positive vote from the Judiciary Committee and I urge adoption.

THE CHAIR:
Senator Winfield, thank you. Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I wish to be associated with remarks of Senator Winfield. I urge my colleagues' support of the resolution. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator, thank you. Will you remark further?
Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. If there are no further comments and no objection, I'd ask that this be placed on consent.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing and hearing no objections, so ordered.
Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar Number 59, House Joint Resolution Number 73, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF PEDRO E. SEGARRA OF HARTFORD TO BE A WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSIONER.

THE CHAIR:
Senator Kissel. Senator Winfield, I guess you have the honor.

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:

On acceptance and adoption of the resolution, will you remark further?

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes, Madam President. Before us is the Honorable Pedro Segarra of Hartford to be a -- a -- a Workers' Compensation Commissioner. He comes to us on a favorable report from the Judiciary Committee. Many of us know that he is also the Past Mayor of the city of Hartford. He has many distinctions [sic] and honors. And I would urge adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Thank you very, Madam President. And I did find my notes regarding [laughter] Commissioner Segarra, and I stand in strong support of his arena -- actually, he came through at the end of last year. I wish to be associated with the remarks of Senator Winfield.
and urge my colleagues' support of the Honorable Pedro Segarra as a Workers' Compensation Commissioner. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Senator Looney, will you remark? [crosstalk]

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Speaking in support of the -- the resolution, I've known Commissioner Pedro Segarra for a -- for a long time. He had had a distinguished career, both as a -- a social worker and an attorney in private practice and entered public service as a member of the Hartford City Council, became President of the Hartford City Council, and then Mayor of the city of Hartford. And now more -- most recently as a Workers' Compensation Commissioner. He is thoughtful, hardworking, conscientious, is an extraordinary public servant. And I believe the state will -- will greatly benefit from his continued service. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Looney. Senator Bradley.

SENATOR BRADLEY (23RD):

Thank you. I'm just getting familiarized here with the process here. So I apologize, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:
I feel your pain, Senator.

SENATOR BRADLEY (23RD):

Yeah. Thank you very much. I think you and I both; right? Nevertheless, Your Honor, I -- I want to echo the sentiments of our president pro tem, Senator Looney and the remarks that have been made here by Senator Kissel and -- and Winfield, as well. I -- I just -- I would be remiss if I didn't stand up to speak about the people who have been extremely influential in my life.

And I really want to hark on this particular nomination -- re-nomination. This is only the second Hispanic person who's ever been nominated commissioner of this particular branch. The first, I believe, [inaudible - 00:27:25] Vargas in the history of the state of Connecticut. I think, you know, that's a -- a huge sense of pride for the Hispanic community, but also it's -- it's -- it's something that we should consider as this new administration looks to nominate commissioners and people to the bench.

We -- we -- I -- I stood up and spoke on both, right, on kind of both sides of the aisle of people, a woman who is very fair, openminded and progressive in the way she -- that does her duties as a -- a judge and -- and the same sentiments with -- with Commissioner Pedro Segarra here, who's also a person who's been a huge mentor of mine. And -- and I think we need to do more to encourage people, female, minorities, and everyone else to be part of
this process in nominating them to these positions. Thank you very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bradley, thank you so much. Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. If there's no further discussion and no objection, I'd ask that this item be moved to consent.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

[inaudible - 00:28:38].

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson, would you please repeat your request, because there's a concern in the Chamber that not everyone heard. Senator?

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Can you hear me? Thank you very much, Madam President. That's much better. I -- I just ask that this item not be added to the Consent Calendar. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:
So ordered. So would we open the machine and 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 senators voted? Have all the senators voted? The machine will be closed. And would the -- the Clerk announce the tally?

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution Number 73.

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THE CHAIR:

(Gavel). Senator Duff -- and the resolution passes. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I'm going to yield to Senator Hwang for a point of personal privilege and an introduction.
Thank you so much. Senator Hwang.

Good afternoon -- good afternoon, Madam President. Thank you, Senator Duff. I want to take a moment, to welcome, sitting up in the Senate chambers viewing area, honor students from Fairfield University that are visiting this Capitol. Now, from what I understand from their faculty advisor, they are studying political psychology. And they were to visit this office, this chamber and the circle, and this building to learn about political psychology. I don't know what they meant by that, but nonetheless, if we could, from the circle give a warm welcome to the honor students from Fairfield University. Please stand. [applause]

Thank you, Madam President. And I actually look forward of meeting with them afterwards to learn what they have learned to teach the rest of us. Thank you, Madam President.

Senator, thank you and I'm sure those students have a lot to take under advisement and consideration.

Madam President.
Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. I would also like to join in welcoming the -- the students from Fairfield University as -- as an alumnus of that institution. I was unable to -- to meet them for their -- their luncheon earlier today because we were in caucus, but would hope to have a chance to meet with them before they leave this afternoon. And I know that they are -- from speaking to their faculty advisor, they are a group of extraordinarily talented and hardworking young people that we expect great things from. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator. Clerk, is there any business on your desk?

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar Number 23, Senate Resolution Number 22, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF DAVID A. LEHMAN OF GREENWICH TO BE COMMISSIONER OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):
Thank you, Madam President.  Madam President, I move acceptance of the Senate Committee's favorable report and adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

On exception -- on acceptance and adoption of the resolution, will you remark further?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President.  Madam President, David Lehman was unanimously voted on favorably after his February 26th nomination hearing at the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. He is a -- has a BS in Business Administration from Washington and Lee University.

He has worked in the financial sector for his entirety of his 20-year career, with almost 15 years at Goldman Sachs, first as a vice president from 2004 to 2006, then as a managing director, and then, has since served as a partner in the company. His senior level roles -- I'm sorry, he -- he plans to use his private sector experience to evaluate existing programs, reform marketing to change the perception of Connecticut among members of the business community. And many of us, if not all of us, around the circle, have had the opportunity to -- to meet with him as well, and those of us who have questioned him in the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee.

Encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship, prompting the arts, tourism and historic preservation are some of his priorities. I know he has visited a number
Mr. Lehman is eager to form partnerships with CERC, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center to execute business recruitment, retention, and growth strategies. Madam President, I urge adoption. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. And I'm [laughter] sorry to Senator Looney. So I -- I will be voting favorably, but I just wanted to be on the record publicly that that was not an easy decision. People around the circle know that this nominee was supposed to be up before us a little bit earlier and, yet, we find ourselves here today. And I that's because many people around the circle have thought deeply about the way in which this nominee comes before us.

I hope nothing but the best for this nominee because the state is going to depend on the work that he does. But I think it's important for us, as a body, to make sure that the people of the state who, I think, for many of us, have been contacting us, know that we have thought deeply about the individual, no matter which way we vote.

I spoke a little bit earlier to some people about his association with a proximity to a particular company and that company's role in the economic
downfall that we saw several years ago and how that has affected the way people think about him. And I bring that up for a reason. I know in -- in this discussion, many of the people who have contacted me, have talked about the way in which it was put forward that people don't have real reasons for opposing the individual and that they may have done a search on the internet. But I know that many of the people who contacted me, did more than just a search on the internet. And I want to recognize that, because I think it's important. Because, when we talk about the people who are our constituents, the people of the state, we need to be accurate and we need to not be speaking what -- since some of them appears to be down.

I know that for myself, I went back and watched his performance before the commission, and I went back and read the report that many of us have seen. And I'm voting for him, partially, because the Governor has put him before us. And I think the Governor should have the ability to put people before us. And if I'm gonna vote them down, I would vote them down in the same way that I would vote down a judge, which I've said is very difficult at times, but it would be because I am absolutely sure that that judge should not be there. Mr. Lehman and I had the opportunity to have a conversation. I -- I recognize what he wants to do. I hope he does it. And I thought it was important to stand up before you guys voted whether positive or negative and put that on the record. Thank you, Madam President.

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

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

Thank you. I would like you to know that I also sit on the Executive noms, and had the opportunity for him to come before us, and I was not really pleased with what we received during that meeting. But I did have an opportunity to meet with him several times in my office and, still, I was not there yet. But I asked him several questions about Bridgeport and, although, I don't represent all of Bridgeport, it is the -- it needs an economic engine. And we are the center of the state when it -- when we start talking about coming through Connecticut and we're in much need of development.

And I spoke to him about that, what did he know about Bridgeport, and he didn't know a lot. But I do wanna say, he offered to come to Bridgeport and spend a full day with me on Monday. I had him meet with three large developers and several small businesses; it started out as one, but nine other businesses showed up. They all had an opportunity to meet with him and talk to him individually. I did not give them any of my views, but I wanted him to understand what Bridgeport needed. And I wanted him to understand the people who are interested in Bridgeport but we need support.

And I want to tell you that I received calls the same day and some emails the following day from all of those large businesses, and I'm talking about someone who -- businesses who can bring in over the next 20 years, 7,000 jobs to sustain Bridgeport, and
that's what's important to me. And for that reason, and because those people, who understand business much more than I do, I will be supporting Mr. Lehman today. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Leone.

SENATOR LEONE (27TH):

Thank you, Madam President. It's great to see you up there again today. Thank you. I rise to make a few comments and to articulate where my point of view is coming from for my constituents in -- in my region. This nominee, as we all know, has had a past in -- in some cases constituents are concerned. They voiced those concerns to me and I am sure many in this room have heard some of those concerns, as well, mainly due to the past working with a company down in Wall Street that was part of the fiscal crisis back in 2008, much of what we are still recovering from.

And so, you know, as we try to vet our candidates and our nominees this body, the responsibility is to do the due diligence to make sure that you get all the facts. So, you have the information coming from one aspect. It's important to always give the other side, and the person, the respect to come up and articulate why they see that they should be nominated and also have a vision for the state of Connecticut. This nominee has made those rounds, answered many people's questions, as well as with myself.
The important thing here is about what can this person do for the state of Connecticut in regards to economic opportunity and economic growth. There is a skillset there that we can argue or debate that may not have been there to the degree that we need going forward. Having that access to capital and intellectual expertise, not just within the state, but around the -- around the nation or even around the country and having some of those contacts possibly come to Connecticut and help with our economic growth, I think is a huge benefit -- potential benefit for the state of Connecticut.

Importantly, we have a new Governor who's come in and is entitled to bringing in and the team that he wants to select. Now, those decisions are going to be reflected upon the Governor going forward based on the success of his nominees.

It is my sincere hope, that it's going to be a positive economic benefit, not just for the state but for each and every one of our towns, whether it's a rural town, whether it's a suburban town, or whether it's an urban town. Every town needs an opportunity to grow and to succeed, and we need to do that collectively. It's the job of this position to make that happen.

So, as body determines this nominee going forward, I try to keep that in mind, that what are the benefits going forward? We all have something that we would always like to undo in our past. This is a chance for this individual to give back to the state of Connecticut, to prove his worth, to prove that he has somethin' to offer, and to prove that he can help move us forward. He, and the Governor, will be
measured by that statistic going forward. And it is my hope that he is -- that he, both they, he and the Governor, succeed in that respect because it's only going to benefit all of us.

Importantly, it's our job to make sure that that happens if it's not going according to plan and we have the opportunity to provide oversight going forward. So, based on that, and I know there are people that may lean one way or the other, but I see the greater good here and the greater potential benefit at the state, that I would be supporting this nominee going forward. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator -- Senator Cassano and then Senator Sampson.

SENATOR CASSANO (4TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I just want to follow up on Senator Leone's comments. People don't realize, but as we sit around the circle here, the people who we are appointing and the Governor's staff is just 50 feet down and two floors up. They're in the same building. They may have been in the same building for the last eight years that I've been here, but we rarely see them.

And there's a difference coming out of the business world and being an elected official. We live different lives. We do things in different ways. And we need to do a better job of doing it together. They're two floors away -- two floors away in the
other end of the building. There should be a lot more communication.

There a lot of things that we know in our communities, and Senator Moore's example of going down there first hand and seeing those problems and trying to deal with those problems, is what I would hope we get out of this new administration, out of the new commissioners that we're putting into place, including this one. They can't work in a vacuum. If they work in a vacuum, we can't get our job done. And so, it requires that we work together as a partnership. And I hope that's what the future brings. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Cassano. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I -- I will not be supporting the nominee before us, and it's based on two very different, but significant reasons. The first, is I don't know that I necessarily agree with what has been the perceived current mission of the Department of Economic Development, which seems to be creating a environment where our government is actively engaged in communicating with businesses to promote economic development. The problem I have with this, is, it's very much like corporate welfare. It's a situation where the government establishment has the ability to create, what I think are, dangerous ties to people in big business.
I believe our economic development policy ought to be based on American ideals and principals of creating an environment that is conducive to business. Throughout our history in this state, we've had Waterbury, the "Brass City," Meriden, the "Silver City," and so on. And there was no Department of Economic Development at the time to create those industries or grow the economy in ways that saw Connecticut in a much more prosperous -- prosperous era. The reason why that happened is because there was an environment that allowed those businesses to succeed. I believe that that's the way we should create economic development in our state, not by hiring someone who has the connections to big business in a way that we can lure certain industries here, because that will naturally happen at the expense of other businesses. That's reason number one; that doesn't speak to Mr. Lehman, himself.

The reason why I object to this candidate is -- is simply because, he has made it clear, that he is willing to endorse the economic agenda of Governor Lamont, an agenda that includes mountains of new taxes, an increase in the minimum -- minimum wage, new impediments to business. And I believe we need someone who has a greater vision than that. And for those reasons, I will be voting no today, Madam President. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):
Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, on November 6th of 2018, Governor Lamont was chosen by a clear and decisive margin of over 40,000 votes to be our state's chief executive for the next four years. And with that electoral mandate, comes the -- the responsibility and also the discretion to assemble an administration to implement the vision and the programs that he was elected to pursue. And Governor Lamont has -- has told us that Mr. Lehman, in the Governor's view, is a very significant and vital component of his economic development team that he hopes to carry forward in a way that will have a transformative effect on the state's economy for the -- for the good.

Now, this nomination as, we know, is really the -- the only one that the Governor has made so far that has generated any significant controversy, given Mr. Lehman's history at Goldman Sachs during the economic crisis of 2007 and 2008. However, applying the standard that the Governor's appointment enjoys a strong presumption in its favor, which I believe is part of our democratic process and part of what goes with the mandate that he won in that election. On balance, and in this case, admittedly a close balance, I will support the resolution and wish Mr. Lehman every success in this critically important position, because his success will, in fact, enhance and give us a much needed boost in economic development for our state.

So, we have a great deal invested in the Department of Economic and Community Development. And the Governor believes that -- that this appointment is critical to implement that vision. So, I believe we
should go forward with -- with hope and allow the Governor to carry out the mandate that he was elected to pursue. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Looney. Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I apologize to Senator Looney for going out of turn. I had left the chamber. I thought there may be a few more speakers. So, I apologize to Senator Looney.

Madam President, I rise in support of the nomination and the reasons for that are as follows. I've had the opportunity to talk to David at great lengths about his vision of DECD. And what I recognize, is his vision is much different than the visions we've had over the years, one of which, corporations need to earn the credits, not just be given 'em. That we're not going to lure businesses in by giving a loan and in two or three years wiping out that loan. That this is a longer engagement, a longer process. And I think, that as he gets more involved in our government and more involved with the issues surrounding Connecticut, I think, he'll have a voice to say on many of the issues that are out there. And I think that is very healthy.

Madam President, I also believe that a first-term Governor, in particular, should be given a certain amount of efforts given their pick particular -- particularly in economic development. And
therefore, I think that Governor Lamont, who did win the election, is leading the state, has chosen somebody from a field, which I think gets high praise.

So, I look forward in supporting this nomination here today, working with him in bipartisan spirit, as we do in this chamber, and moving Connecticut forward. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, we will open the voting machines.

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 senators voted? Have all the senators voted? The machine will be closed. And the Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Resolution Number 22.

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THE CHAIR:

(Gavel). Resolution is adopted. Senator Duff. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page three, Calendar Number 60, House Joint Resolution Number 75, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF ELEASE E. WRIGHT OF HARTFORD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and the adoption of the resolution in concurrence with the House.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. This is a six-year part-time volunteer position. Ms. Wright was unanimously voted on favorably after her March 15th -- March 5th nomination hearing. She has a
Bachelor of Science in Education from UConn. And she's being re-nominated to the Board of Regents. She spent 30 years at Aetna in various roles. She has worked for the State of Connecticut. And I urge adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further? Seeing and hearing no further remarks, the machines will be open.

CLERK:

Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate. Have all the senators voted? The machine will be closed. And the Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution Number 75.

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THE CHAIR:
(Gavel). Resolution is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page three, Calendar Number 61, House Joint Resolution Number 76, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF PETER M. ROSA OF AVON TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

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 in concurrence with the House.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. This is a -- again a six-year, part-time volunteer position. Mr. Rosa was unanimously voted on favorably after his March 5th nomination hearing. And he's being re-nominated to the Board of Regents, and has been very much a part of the community and appointed to a number of different positions and also worked a number of different positions. I would urge adoption.
THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Seeing no further discussion, the machine will be open. And Mr. Clerk, will you announce the roll?

CLERK:

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 senators voted? Have all the senators voted? The machine will be closed. And would the Clerk announce the tally?

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution Number 76.

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THE CHAIR:

(Gavel). Resolution is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:
Page three, Calendar Number 62, Senate Resolution Number 25, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF ANDREW MAIS OF WILTON TO BE INSURANCE COMMISSIONER.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. The job is a four-year, full-time position. Mr. Mais was unanimously voted on favorably after his March 14th nomination hearing. He has a BA from Yale University in Organizational Behavior. Mr. Mais started off his career in journalism but soon made a transition towards various roles in the healthcare field. He served as Director of Public Affairs with the New York State Insurance Department from 2007 to 2011. And then has since worked in senior level management positions at a nationally operated insurance industry group. He's also a current MC Fellow with the Deloitte Center for Financial Services -- I'm sorry, Eminence Fellow, with the Deloitte Center for Financial Services LP. And I urge adoption.
THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I rise in support of Mr. Mais' nomination. I've only known him a short time, but I have been really favorably impressed by his depth of expertise in both government and in the private sector, his knowledge -- his knowledge of property and casualty insurance and his commitments to the rights of consumers and -- and to healthcare.

He was quoted in the Hartford Current just a short time ago, commenting on a matter in which insurance companies had removed homeowners' coverage for families affected by crumbling foundations. And he -- he said this quote, this was -- this was in the Current, "The insurance department stands ready to help anybody if they encounter an issue with their insurance company or even just have a question." I was really impressed by that statement. It reflects my personal interactions with him. And I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Lesser. Senator Haskell.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):
Thank you, Madam President. I stand in support of Mr. Mais' nomination. There aren't many things that folks in my district feel unanimously about. And yet, in the wake of the announcement that he would be the Governor's choice for the Commissioner of Insurance, I heard from literally dozens of constituents, in Wilton, in Richfield, in Weston, who spoke favorably about his work in the community.

I just want to highlight for the Chamber, very briefly, some remarkable portions from his testimony that leave me very inspired and excited to work with him in this new role. First, he said, I want everyone who needs coverage to have it. Insurance is a complex business. And yet he brings those steadfast moral values I believe to an office that is so important as we work to protect Connecticut citizens in the years to come. He also says, healthcare, to me should be a right, not a privilege. And that's certainly -- certainly a value that I share. I look forward to working with him to make that a reality for all of Connecticut citizens in the -- the weeks and months and -- and years to come.

So, I'm very excited to be working so closely with -- with my constituent now in a new capacity up here in Hartford. Perhaps, he and I can carpool sometimes because we both have quite a long drive. And I urge the Chamber to vote favorably on this nomination. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you, Senator Haskell. Will you remark further. Will you remark further? If not -- 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 and hearing no objections, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 15, Calendar Number 77, Senate Resolution Number 23, RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF AN ARBITRATION AWARD BETWEEN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS - CONNECTICUT BARGAINING UNIT (AFT CONNECTICUT, AFT, AFL-CIO).

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. It's a pleasure to stand before you again. And it's my honor to bring out this contract for the Assistant Attorney Generals. It's actually two different bargaining units that we will be talking about today in one arbitration award.
And first, I would like to just talk a little bit about the process that came for us to be here today. The Assistant Attorneys Generals worked on negotiations for -- since 2016 and came to a point where they had several items that they could not agree upon between the parties. And so, this went to arbitration. In addition to that -- the other bargaining unit is Assistant Attorneys General holding the position of department head. They were certified in 2017 and, they also, negotiated a contract and came to a point where they could not come with several items that they did not have agreement on and those went to arbitration also.

 Arbitration occurred and we most recently got this contract referred to us in March. Actually, a corrected copy was submitted to us on March 4th, 2019. It was forwarded from the -- it was forwarded to the Appropriations Committee. And as we have in the reserve for salaried accounts, $92 million dollars, it was approved by the Appropriations Committee and forwarded to the House and the Senate in two different resolutions for us to decide on whether or not this contract should be approved as an Arbitration Award, not as a negotiated agreement. The agreement covers the fiscal years from the period of November 16th through June 30th, 2021. There are two bargaining units.

 As I've already said, the first bargaining unit is comprised of Assistant Senate Attorney General. The unit was certified by the State Board of Labor Relations, meaning that enough members felt it was right to become a bargaining unit. And the other bargaining unit was certified in November of 2017.
I will get into the direct provisions of the Arbitration Award in a minute.

There are 180 -- 182 employees in the Assistant Attorney General Bargaining Unit Board Team and the Assistant Attorneys General Department Head Bargaining Unit. In the grand scheme of things, the size of the bargaining units is relatively moderate in comparison to some of the sizes of our other bargaining units.

The -- I'd like to talk a little bit about the history of the wages of the Assistant Attorneys General. In July 2008, there was a 3% general wage increase along with a 2.5% pars, which is essentially an annual increment. In January of 2019 and January 2010, in January of 2011, and in January 2012, in January 2013 for the first six months of '13, there were no wage increases for the people holding the titles of Assistant Attorneys General. Which means, they essentially went through 4-1/2 years of no wage increases. This was not all that this bargaining unit had accountable for their wages.

July 2013, there was a 3% general wage increase along with longevity inclusion for those who are receiving it. As you know, that -- those -- this will eventually -- this process will eventually be -- become moot as new bargaining members or new state employees do not receive longevity.

In January 2014, there was a 3% pars that was delayed from September of 2013. In January -- in July 2014, there was a general wage increase of 3%. And in January 2015, there was a 3% pars. July '15,
there was a zero, as 2016, 2017, 2018 were all zeros.

And in 2019, in accordance with the SEBAC Agreement, there was a $2,000 dollar lump sum payment. This Bargaining Unit has seen fully almost ten years of zeros over -- over the last 11 years when you look at this in its totality. It is significant to say that -- that this -- that this Arbitration Award, according to the Governor is -- has a lower increment package with a percentage of 2% as compared to 3.1% under other contracts approved under the 2017 SEBAC Agreement in a letter that was sent to Senator Fasano and Senator Formica from the Governor's office, of which I received a copy this morning. And I -- I pointed out that we need people who are in the Assistant Attorneys General's office, because in 2016 and 2017, the operating expenses for the Attorneys General's office were $30 million dollars. The revenue generated by the Assistant Attorneys General were $636 million dollars, well, worth the price that we pay our Assistant Attorneys General to do the job that they do. In the -- this -- these numbers are directly out of the annual report submitted by the Assistant Attorneys General, the -- the Attorney General's office.

In 2017-2018 fiscal year, the operating expenses were $32 million dollars. The revenue generated $707 million dollars. It is clear to me, and should be clear to all, that Assistant Attorneys General's job relates to revenue received by the State of Connecticut, something we are always looking to see.

I urge my colleagues to support this Arbitration Award. And I stand ready to answer questions in
specificity. Again, $707 million dollars in fiscal year '17-'18. And I look forward to us approving for job classification, this wage increase. And I look forward to answering questions through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Osten. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you. I rise for the purposes of some questions and a few comments with regard to this item.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, first, let me say that I will be opposing this Arbiters Award, this resolution today. And my opposition is certainly not based on the great works of those folks that make up these bargaining units. My opposition rests with the economic climate we
have still here in the state of Connecticut. And I feel that, for a number of reasons, this particular Arbiters Award is much too generous for the times in which we sit. So, for the purposes of questions for Senator Osten, if you wouldn't mind Senator, this bargaining unit is a new bargaining unit. I believe I heard you say back in 2016, which would then entitle it -- entitle the unit to benefit from the SEBAC Agreement. Would you explain how that works, please, through you, Madam President?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. And I look on it a little bit differently than my colleague in your presentation of the question. I look on the SEBAC Agreement as a benefit to the State of Connecticut.

Fully, $25 billion dollars was given up by workers in the SEBAC Agreement that we had before us a number of years ago. And as a matter of fact, the benefits that were assumed by the SEBAC Agreement were put in every -- every single budget that we have seen since then, whether they were Republican budgets, Democratic budgets, budgets that we worked on together. We all added in the benefits that were assumed in the SEBAC Agreement. And so, I -- I would pause that the question is reversed. But this bargaining unit was allowed to bargain and was certified by labor relations in -- in 2016. And in -- that allows them to be a part of the SEBAC
Agreement. Although, they don't receive all the benefits. As the Governor stated in his letter to you, this bargaining unit receives less wages overall. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Osten. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you very much. Madam President, through you, less wages, are you referring to the -- the step increase that reduced from 3.1 to 2?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Referring to the paragraph on the letter from the Governor that says that the -- and many people may -- may not have this copy of the letter, so if you would give me a little bit of, you know, allow me to repeat what's in this letter. It says, "Regarding the underlying concerns that were raised in the letter, I don't have that letter. I would like to note that the entire bargaining process, including interest arbitration and submission of post hearing briefs was concluded under the prior administration. The 2017 SEBAC Agreement that was approved by the General Assembly contained language that the Assistant Attorney General will be governed by the provisions of the 2017 SEBAC Agreement. The award other than the Assistant -- Assistant Attorney
General's Department Head stipends is consistent with the wage pattern that 42 other bargaining units agreed to as part of the 2017 SEBAC Agreement. Further, the Arbitration Award before the legislature is actually more favorable to the state as that award includes a lower increment percentage of two percent as compared to approximately 3.1% under this 2017 SEBAC Agreement." Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you very much. So, thank you for that answer. That was the answer that I thought. So, it's a 1% difference. And in -- in regard to the -- to the letter that the Governor sent, that I received late last evening, as a response to a joint letter that we wrote last week, that letter, which I wasn't going to have much conversation about today, but that letter was a -- was a question that we asked Governor Lamont, who as a candidate for governor, indicated that he thought that we needed to bring the bargaining units back to a table and sit around and work out more equitable opportunities so that we could help, again, move Connecticut forward.

I take and have no dispute with the good Senator's discussion with regard to bargaining units. She has a long history of support there. And I, too, support workers, having been a small business owner my entire life and working with employees and single
moms who we've been able to help create opportunities so that they could raise their children and buy their homes in this economy.

With regard to this particular bargaining unit, the raises that they did not receive in 2008, 2009, 2010 were in the height of the great recession. And I would argue that there would be many small businesses and businesses in general here in the state of Connecticut that would be happy to have survived that period in our economic history with regard to just being able to stay in business, much less be able to give their employees the opportunity to have raises. And then, to be followed with a 3% in '13, two 3% in '14, one in the beginning and one in the end, and then '15, another 3%. So, I -- I think it's the equity that I speak of is not just regarding the bargaining units, but the fiscal climate. And I -- I will refer to the arbiter's report, page 20. And the good Senator did quote the Governor as saying that this discussion with the bargaining units and the negotiation was occurred before his tenure. But page 20, then OPM Secretary Barnes, testified that Connecticut's credit rating has been downgraded nine times in the last eight years and has the third worst of all states, and that's a quote from the -- the report. That Connecticut has the fourth highest per capita tax burden. A rating that does not reflect the more recent tax increases. That the state has long-term obligation, he argued, of $80 billion dollars. Most of these obligations related to employee pension and health benefits and state subsidized municipal benefits. He goes on to argue in this brief, that Connecticut's weak economic recovery and the levels have not returned to prerecession levels, which are
those dates that I referred to. And he also mentions an important trend about the outmigration of millionaires which has increased, while the migration of millionaires into the state has decreased. And those are the words of Secretary -- former Secretary of OPM Barnes. Given that he said those things, my only interpretation would be, he would be arguing for the state in opposition of these particular raises.

I -- I think I probably wouldn't have more questions. So, to have you stand, I -- I apologize. I was trying to move along. So, as I started to say, the letter that we sent to the Governor indicated that he had spoken often about the need to come back at the table. And we were prompted to write that letter as a result of the previous contracts that were approved that mirrored the $2,000 dollar cash increase, the 3.5% wage increase, followed by a 3.5% wage increase, both of which, as the good Senator referred to, carried with them an additional 3.1% step or annual increment. And we asked in the letter to the Governor, we said, Governor, you know, you've had these conversations; you wanted to come to the table, you thought that you might be able to talk about bringing these things back, yet you've made no comment on any of these awards. And we ask that you stand with us and -- and -- and speak out on these things. And again, we just got that letter late last night with the Governor's response, really not answering the question, in my view, but he did respond. And I thank him so much for that.

So, today we stand here with yet another award, an arbiter's award. And the difference with this award
is that not only are we getting the discussion about the -- the $2,000 dollar cash bonus, 3.5 plus the 3.5 plus, but the department heads get an additional $6,000 dollar cash award, followed the next year by a $12,000 dollar cash award. And that, I believe, was the reason for the -- going to arbitration.

All of the other sections pretty much were agreed to by the State's negotiators. And I have a little bit of concern about that, as there were, I believe eight times in the arbiter's award, where it was -- where he noted that the State, for example, on page 26, said it has not presented any evidence. Then on page -- the following page, the State did not, in either of its briefs, argue that the salary information contained in the report supported it's last best offer. And that goes on six or seven times. So, I spoke about this at the committee meeting and I asked the negotiators about, you know, who were we fighting for? Where was the fight taken? And -- and how well, you know, do we think we did? And -- while they expressed dismay about the arbiter's award and his interpretation of their good work, I find it concerning that that type of statement was sprinkled throughout the arbiter's award.

As I said, as a small business owner with employees all of my adult life, I know the value of good employees. But I also know the value of economic opportunity and the value here in the state of Connecticut. And I don't believe, and I would tend to agree with Secretary Barnes and his opinion, that we have seen a very slow, if any, recovery or return to prosperity here in Connecticut. And I'm hopeful. I'm hopeful that this new Governor and this --
new administration is going to try to do some of the things that we need to do to move our particular economic system forward.

You know, we're sitting -- well, let me just say, Governor -- thank you very much for the opportunity to discuss it. And my last comment will be, from the OPM analyst for OFA, we were able to get what the anticipated percent increase in fiscal '19 for these wages for the Assistant Attorney Generals would be 10.8% and the fiscal '19 base wages increase for the department heads would be 20%. And I submit that, in this day and age, in this economic status that we have in the state of Connecticut, this is not the type of percentages that we should be giving out, regardless of the quality of work. And one final thing with regard to the comment that the Senator made about the $633 million dollars and the $770 million dollars or whatever the number was in revenue, I -- I submit that there are many agencies that operate here in the state of Connecticut that do not generate revenue and depend on our Department of Motor Vehicles and depend on our Assistant Attorney Generals to be the cash register for our state, to compensate for those many agencies that do not have the opportunity or the mission to raise money. So, we need those fundraisers. And that being said, I thank you, Madam President for your time and I urge my colleagues' rejection of this arbiter's resolution. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Formica. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Senator Osten.
SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

I would just ask for a Roll Call Vote, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Yes. We will open the machines. And if you would call the Roll Call Vote, please, Mr. Clerk? Senator Fasano, will you remark further?

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Once again, [laughter] I thought the debate was going to go a little longer and walked out of the Chamber. So, let me just say first of all, I urge rejection of this award for a number of reasons. It's been said that the history of the wages for those folks who are under this agreement have been stagnant for a while. And there's a reason for that. This body voted on a budget not to increase those line items. And why did we do that? Because we can't afford it. Because Ben Barnes, when he spoke, is absolutely right, that we cannot afford the wages in the case and the benefits that go along with it. So, that's why those line items were frozen. Now, and this body made that fiscal decision to go ahead and do that. If the argument is that the Attorney Generals do good work, and it's not against these guys at all, but they raise revenue. Well because in statutes, we provide for the remedies which include collecting these fees and costs and penalties. So, of course, they're going to raise. That's why we hired them. You can't look at them and say because
they're bringing in that much revenue, they deserve a -- a wage increase. No, we right the statutes to stack it in that favor. And anybody who's had administrative proceedings enforcement actions, at the end of the day, you settle out the matter because you can't fight an unlimited resource like the state of Connecticut. So, I question whether or not that is a -- a worthwhile venture in that regard.

Madam President, we've seen OPM Secretary Barnes state with clarity, protecting the state of Connecticut, he says that Connecticut rating has been downgraded nine times in the last eight years, and has the third worst rate -- rating of all the states. A poor credit rating impacts our ability to access capital at reasonable rates. Connecticut has the highest tax burden; the fourth highest per capital tax burden of all the states. Talks about Connecticut residents are leaving the state of Connecticut. This is someone, who for years have been doing the books and records, and as the accountant for the State of Connecticut says, we are in trouble, do not support this agreement, if you would, to the arbiters. He's on our side. He is telling us, in his testimony, through the arbiters, this contract is going to tie the hands of the state fiscally to the point of strangulation.

Now, that's under the ability to pay provision. Interestingly, under the ability per pay -- to pay provision, the unions strike back with an argument that the restructuring deal that passed on partisan lines when we were tied 18 to 18 in the State's Senate with the Lieutenant Governor at the time casting the, not this one but the former, casting
the deciding vote to do the recalculation of the union benefits or the union debt by moving it out of a bunch of years. And that would give us more flexibility for income. And that was debated in this chamber, arguing it's going to cost us more and the argument was backed, yes, but we're going to save some money, so our fixed costs go down because we're going to take that debt, refinance it, and span it out over time.

And in the same -- the very same breath, the union says in here, you did that, you got more money, now you got to give us more money for our contracts. And then, I said, why did we ever do that? Why did we ever refinance so our constituents, although it was bipartisan -- partisan vote, Democrats voted yes, Republicans voted no, but the argument was it's going to give us more flexibility in the budget, and immediately, the unions go after that flexibility and say, well, you got more money to pay. That certainly is going to send a flair in this building, to say the next time you see a refinance package come here that's been talked about in this building, whether it's teachers or the existing deal and you're going to spread that over the time, recognize it's going to be thrown back in your face. It's going to be thrown back in your face.

We also said that the rate that we had, which was, I think, 8.1% or something, we dropped down to 6.9% for investment return. They argue, well, that's the lowest rate around the country; and it was, so that we made sure we made the right payments. They're saying, therefore, since you lowered it so much, you're probably going to make more money in the market, therefore, there's more room to raise union
contract wages. We're not doing it for that. We're doing it for social services. We're doing it for our towns who need pilot money. We're doing it for ECS. Those are the things we're doing this for. So, we can get mental health in order by giving the proper finances and care for kids programs. That's we do it. We're not making room to get more fixed obligations by union contracts. That isn't why we did it. And that was the argument, I might add, in this circle. And yet this refinance is being thrown back at us like, well, now that you've got this extra money, we get to spend it.

Madam President, that's the economic reason why we should reject this contract. Madam President, I would also like to point out some other reasons. It's been said -- I did write a letter to Governor Lamont, Senator Formica and myself did, as Senator Osten correctly pointed out. And one of the things that was said in that letter was that the 2017 SEBAC Agreement that was approved by the General Assembly contained language that this agreement is going to follow.

Well, I got to tell you, I beg to differ. That 2017 agreement specifically says the Assistant Attorney General Bargaining Unit, the unit will negotiate and arbitrate provision of their collective bargaining agreements through June 30th, 2022 -- 2021, but will be subject to the health care benefits and every -- and all those other things, pension health care. But the wage issue and other factors are not specifically part of the agreement. It's excluded in the back of the SEBAC Agreement they were negotiating at the time. And it was, look, you're negotiating, we're going to exclude you from this
agreement. So, why the argument is a letter -- the letter says, well, we can't deviate from this document. No, you can't, specifically, the Attorney General's Office. So, I disagree that somehow their hands were tied relative to these negotiations.

To further that argument, I might add, in the Arbitration Award, it was said that the 2%, as I think Senator Osten pointed out, the lower increment of 2% is compared to approximately 3.5% under -- 3.1% under the SEBAC Agreement. In other words, they should have gotten 3.1%. But they only got 2%, so this is a better deal. Well, either you're saying you can negotiate the prior terms or you can't negotiate the prior terms. You can't say, you can't negotiate the prior terms, but we did. Either you do or you don't. You got to live by one reading of the contract or the other reading. You can't selectively pick.

But I would argue, with what I showed you in this document, being the SEBAC Agreement, plus the fact that they did negotiate other terms in the agreement, leads you to the conclusion that the original 2017 SEBAC Agreement can be negotiated. So, what do we really have here?

Madam President, Governor Lamont argues that it's going to take two-thirds to reject this agreement. Now, I would push back on that and say, no, it's majority to reject this agreement. It should be two-thirds to approve it, majority to reject -- to approve the agreement, I should say in the positive, it takes more than 50%. I've been taught by professor over there in the corner that perhaps I am wrong in that interpretation. I would argue it is
foggy at best, murky at worst, and we'll have a conversation later. But I would think that this has to be done by majority in this case to be approved.

Madam President, I would also point out one last thing. In the letter, Governor Lamont said, he argued that the case has been decided virtue of arbitration by each parties coming in and giving their side of the tale and making an argument. Madam President, the Arbitration Award points out to a woefully inadequate representation by the State of Connecticut. Nine times -- nine times the arbitrator points out the State failed to present evidence or failed to do their job, or did not make any argument in the brief, or did not present any evidence, or did not offer any evidence on the record; nine times. Why not send it back and give the State a fair chance of making a fair argument that this contract should not be as it is presented here today? Nine times.

And if you read the arbitrator's decision, they are not soft ball, they could have, it is they should have and they didn't. You read this, you read this, it's a total failure by the State. They made a facial argument and didn't back it up by one piece of evidence. Almost like a laying down for this agreement. They said the salaries were -- are going to be higher than private sector when you add in other benefits. Presented no evidence. It goes on and on in this agreement. So, how could you say our constituents got a fair shake, because that's whose paying for this? That's whose going to end up paying for this, our constituents. How do you say they got a fair shake when the arbitrator said, no, they didn't? There's nothing in the evidence to
support their position other than them facially saying it.

Madam President, I would ask that this contract be rejected; that the matter go back to arbitration.

Madam President, may I also say that Governor Lamont argues, if it goes back, you don't know what's going to happen. I -- I -- I agree with that. But what I do know is, when you have nine instances in which the arbiter says, we didn't make any evidential advancements on the very issues that go to salary and wages, I would think we got a pretty good chance, if we produce some evidence at this proceeding, some relevant evidence at this proceeding that perhaps we're right as the state of Connecticut. And perhaps, Ben Barnes, former OPM Secretary is correct when he says, we cannot afford this contract period. So, I urge rejection. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, would the Clerk please announce a Roll Call Vote and the machine will be opened.

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. Immediate Roll Call Vote, in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:
Have all the senators voted? Have all the senators voted? Mr. Clerk, if you could please announce the tally and the votes. Will be closed -- the machine will be closed.

CLERK:

Senate Resolution Number 23.

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THE CHAIR:

(Gavel). The resolution passes. Mr. Clerk?

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, if we can now call the items on our Consent Calendar, followed by a vote please?

THE CHAIR:

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

CLERK:

Page one, Calendar 56, House Joint Resolution Number 70. Page two, Calendar 57, House Joint Resolution 71. Page two, Calendar 58, House Joint Resolution 72. And page three, Calendar 62, Senate Resolution
25. 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 Number One. An Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate on Consent Calendar Number One.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the senators voted? Have all the senators voted? The machines will be locked. And would the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

Consent Calendar Number One.

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THE CHAIR:

(Gavel). Resolution is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. That concludes our business for today. I will yield to members for any points of personal privilege or announcements. With that, Madam President, I don't see any announcements or points or personal privilege, so I will move that we adjourn subject to the call of the Chair.

THE CHAIR:
Thank you so much. We stand adjourned. (Gavel).

On motion of Senator Duff of the 25th, the Senate at 3:02 p.m. adjourned subject to the call of the chair.