

CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

The Senate was called to order at 1:09 p.m., the President in the Chair.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, everyone. And Members and guests, if you would please stand and give your attention to our guest chaplain, Kathy Zabel of Burlington.

ACTING CHAPLAIN KATHY ZABEL:

When we are confused, guide us. When we are weary, energize us. When we are tired, renew us. May the work that we do benefit all those we serve.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you very much, Chaplain Zabel. And now it's my honor to introduce Senator Moore to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Senator.

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

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 so much, Senator. And good afternoon, Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Would the Senate stand at ease just for a moment, please?

THE CHAIR:

And the Senate will stand at ease. Good afternoon, Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Good afternoon and thank you, Madam President. Madam President, does the Senate have -- does the Clerk have Senate Agenda No. 1 on his desk?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Good afternoon. The Clerk is in possession of Senate Agenda No. 1 dated Wednesday, April 14th, 2021.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move all items on Senate Agenda No. 1, dated Wednesday, April 14th, 2021 be act upon is indicated, and that the Agenda be incorporated by reference in the Senate Journal and Senate Transcript.

THE CHAIR:

Hearing no objection, so ordered, Senator Duff.

**Senate Agenda  
No. 1  
REGULAR SESSION  
Wednesday, April 14, 2021**

**SENATE BILL(S) FAVORABLY REPORTED - to be tabled for  
the calendar and printing.**

**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**SB NO. 924** AN ACT CONCERNING THE STAFFING AND  
RESOURCES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**SB NO. 926** AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENCE OF PFAS IN  
CERTAIN CONSUMER PACKAGING.

**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**SB NO. 1031** AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SODIUM  
CHLORIDE TO MITIGATE ICE AND SNOW ACCUMULATIONS.

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

**SUBST. SB NO. 138** AN ACT CONCERNING PRESIDENTIAL  
ELECTORS.

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

**SUBST. SB NO. 183** AN ACT CONCERNING REMOTE MEETINGS  
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

**SB NO. 353** AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

**SUBST. SB NO. 753** AN ACT CONCERNING THE COUNTING OF  
INCARCERATED PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF DETERMINING  
LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS.

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

**SB NO. 1014** AN ACT CONCERNING A MUNICIPAL ELECTION  
MONITOR FOR THE 2021 MUNICIPAL ELECTION AND THE 2022  
STATE ELECTION.

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**  
**SB NO. 1016** AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ETHICS.

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**  
**SB NO. 1052** AN ACT CONCERNING A DISPARITY STUDY.

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**  
**SB NO. 1072** AN ACT CONCERNING FREEDOM OF  
INFORMATION.

**JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**  
**SUBST. SB NO. 363** AN ACT CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF  
THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

**JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**  
**SB NO. 972** AN ACT CONCERNING THE COST OF  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN CORRECTIONAL  
FACILITIES.

**JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**  
**SB NO. 988** AN ACT CONCERNING JUDICIAL COMPENSATION.

**LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE**  
**SUBST. SB NO. 658** AN ACT REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO  
RECALL CERTAIN LAID-OFF WORKERS IN ORDER OF  
SENIORITY.

**LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE**  
**SB NO. 660** AN ACT EXPANDING WORKERS' COMPENSATION  
BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS  
SUFFERED BY HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN CONNECTION WITH  
COVID-19.

**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**  
**SUBST. SB NO. 683** AN ACT CONCERNING HOSPITAL BILLING  
AND COLLECTION EFFORTS BY HOSPITALS AND COLLECTION  
AGENCIES.

**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**  
**SUBST. SB NO. 834** AN ACT CONCERNING WATER QUALITY  
NOTIFICATION.

**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

**SB NO. 1030** AN ACT CONCERNING LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES.

**TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**SUBST. SB NO. 605** AN ACT CONCERNING THE PORT AUTHORITY.

**TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**SB NO. 866** AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY.

**REPORT(S) RECEIVED** - to be referred to committee(s) indicated.

Report - Auditors of Public Accounts - University of Connecticut for Fiscal Years ended June 30, 2016, 2017 and 2018. (Pursuant to Section 2-90 of the Connecticut General Statutes) Date received: September April 13, 2021.

**Referred to Committees on Appropriations, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, and Legislative Management.**

**INTRODUCTION OF SENATE AND HOUSE LIST OF BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS (LIST NO. 49)** - to be waived and bills and Resolutions to be referred to committee(s) indicated.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, does the Clerk have on his desk Senate Joint Resolution No. 44?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

The Clerk is in possession of Senate Joint Resolution 44.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Would the Clerk please read the Resolution?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Senate Joint Resolution No. 44, RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SYMPATHY ON THE DEATH OF FORMER STATE SENATOR EDWIN A. GOMES.

RESOLVED BY THIS ASSEMBLY WHEREAS on Tuesday, December 22nd, 2020, the state of Connecticut, the city of Bridgeport and the town of Stratford lost a distinguished and beloved former State Senator with the passing of Edwin A. Gomes at the age of 84;

AND WHEREAS he represented the 23rd Senatorial District with distinction for more than 12 years, from 2005 through 2012, and 2015 through 2018;

AND WHEREAS he was born on February 25th, 1936, in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and grew up in Bridgeport, Connecticut, the eldest of 18 children;

AND WHEREAS he attended the Bridgeport Public Schools and received an honorable discharge from the United States Army;

AND WHEREAS he experienced racial segregation and participate in the historic March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom during his time in the United States Army;

AND WHEREAS he became a labor representative at Carpenter Steel upon his return to Bridgeport, Connecticut, after his honorable discharge from the United States Army;

AND WHEREAS he served on the Bridgeport City Council from 1983 until 1989, and was elected again to the Bridgeport City Council in 1999, after his retirement from the United Steel Workers of America;

AND WHEREAS during his tenure as a city councilman, he advocated for well-paying jobs, good schools, strong neighborhoods and seniors;

AND WHEREAS he served for six terms as a State Senator and served as a Chairperson of the Labor and Public Employees and Housing Committees, and Vice Chairperson of the Aging and Veterans Affairs Committees;

AND WHEREAS he joined forces with the Brennan Center for Justice, the Connecticut Citizen Action Group and Common Cause in 2002, to bring us a successful legal challenge to the state discriminatory delegate primary system;

AND WHEREAS as a Member of the State Senate, he supported legislation to preserve jobs and vital services in Bridgeport, to promote home ownership and owner-occupied housing in all Connecticut cities, to repeal the death penalty and to reform the state's education system and the state's pardon process;

AND WHEREAS he was recognized for his efforts to help reform the state's pardon process by the Connecticut Pardon Team in 2012;

AND WHEREAS he earned a reputation as a proud representative of workers and marginalized people, and as a person of his word, and will be remembered by his labor representative colleagues as a fighter of the people, a maverick, a labor icon and a good friend;

AND WHEREAS he was a proud lifetime member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored

People, member of the Ashanti Men's Organization and founding member of the Greater Bridgeport Black Democratic Club;

AND WHEREAS he displayed a profound love for the work accomplished by the Connecticut General Assembly and the friendships that were created during his time in the State Senate;

AND WHEREAS he is survived by his son, Edwin Gomes, Jr. and his spouse Mary, his daughters Victoria Whitfield and her spouse Kelvin, Debra Body, Donna Croom, and Doreen Milhouse and her spouse Greg; his siblings Johnny Aranja and his spouse Pam, Carol Aranja, William Aranja, Beatrice Ramos, Donald Ramos, Margarida Ramos, Daniel Ramos and Abel Ramos and his 13 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, six great-great-grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins;

AND WHEREAS he was predeceased by his mother Anna Gomes Aranja and her husband, Joaquim Aranja, his sister MaryAnn Monteiro, his brothers Anthony Gomes, Joaquim Aranja, Peter Aranja, Joseph Aranja, Manuel Aranja, Franklin Ramos, Gerald Ramos, Richard Ramos and Augusto Ramos and his daughter, Elizabeth Sloan.

NOW THEREFORE be it resolved that the Connecticut General Assembly expresses its sincere sympathy and heartfelt condolences on the passing of one of its honorable Members, Edwin A. Gomes, whose death is a profound loss to the State Senate, his family and friends, the residents of Bridgeport and Stratford, and the entire state of Connecticut;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerks of the House of Representatives and the Senate cause a copy of this Resolution to be sent to the family of Edwin A. Gomes as an expression of the high esteem and affection in which he is held.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Mr. Clerk. Good afternoon,  
Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President, and rising to speak on the Resolution, in support of the Resolution. Of course, Ed Gomes was a truly beloved colleague here. The 12 years that he served, that we were graced with his presence, we all learned a great deal about what real advocacy means from watching Ed in every aspect of his service as a State Senator.

His work here and in all of his other capacities was never just work for him. It was a vocation. It was a calling. It was a passion. It was a mission. And that's how Ed went about his daily life.

As a union representative at the Steelworkers, he was so proud of the work that he had done, of the difficult labor struggles that he had participated in, the picket line fights, both verbal and physical sometimes, and all of the other battles that he fought for equity and justice, so that working people would have a sense that they were not alone, and that they had the strength of a union helping them.

Now he brought that with him here when he came to the State Senate, in his work as Labor Chair, Chair of Housing, a voice in our caucus all the time for conscience, for the needs of low-income people, for those who were struggling.

Ed was always intense, always passionate, but at the same time had a wonderful humanity and a great sense of humor. One minute, he would be banging his big fist down on the caucus table in anger about some perceived injustice, and then a couple of minutes later, with that beautiful broad smile on his face, remarking on the irony and humor of something that had struck him.

But he contributed so much in the years he was here. He was, in many ways, a reminder of what service is supposed to be about; that we are here to represent people who need representation. Who count on us to be a voice for them when they think they are voiceless, and need to be persuaded that they are not.

It is a tragedy that Ed was taken from us in that tragic accident just before Christmas. He was still active in his community in Bridgeport. His dear friend, Senator Moore, will be able to say more about his advocacy there and their friendship. She was at one time, of course, his aide here and then became a Senator herself. And of course, we all know that her passion and advocacy, in so many ways, mirrors that of Senator Ed Gomes when he was here.

But it is truly a loss. But we were blessed by the time we served with him, because he reminded us what community service is at its best; those who go about their business with a commitment, with a passion, but with a sense of collegiality and respect for others at the same time. So Ed Gomes was, in so many ways, a model for us all and I think that his family should know and must know that their loss is shared deeply by all of us who came to know Ed over the years. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator. Will you remark further on the Resolution that is before us? Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I rise in support of the Resolution and want to align myself with the comments and remarks of Senator Looney. As we had said just a few weeks ago, prior to this more formal time that we're taking to honor a great man, Senator Gomes truly was a public servant and man of the people from his earliest

days. And from even as a teenager, all the way through his last day. And he never lost his zeal or his passion, or his commitment to fighting for those without a voice.

As a matter of fact, earlier, before we were in Session today, Senator Moore led a press conference regarding gun violence and gun violence in our communities here in Connecticut. And I can imagine, Senator Gomes being there, encouraging and demanding action that we would take for those who could not speak up for themselves, those who had lost loved ones, and for those who say enough is enough, and we've had too much violence in our cities.

And that was, he was not only a friend of working people in his district, but he was a friend of working people throughout the state of Connecticut. There are literally millions of people around our state who have been impacted by the work of Senator Ed Gomes. They may not know who Senator Gomes is, but their lives are truly richer because of someone like Ed Gomes and the work that he did and his passion throughout his entire life.

There was not a day that went by that he did not remind us of why we're here and who we needed to fight for. I remember, as I said a few weeks ago, the first time I met him, at the Fairfield County Labor Council, he was sitting at a table and I was this nervous guy, nervous kid running for office in a special election, didn't know anything about anything. And afterwards, he came up and spoke to me like he had known me forever, and immediately put me at ease and we had a really solid friendship ever since then. He would look at you with that big bright smile, the gaze in his eyes and really just always warm and welcoming.

It's not to say that he wouldn't be, he couldn't be tough and he couldn't get angry at you, and that he wouldn't hold you accountable. Because that was also a part of Senator Gomes, he was a fighter and he

would not accept a half a loaf if he thought he could get the whole loaf. And he would fight to the finish, to the end, to get more, not for him, but for the people he served and those who he represented. Again, not just in Bridgeport or Stratford, but really around the state.

And I'm convinced that somehow Ed Gomes knew almost everybody in the state of Connecticut for the last 50 years, personally, because he would just bring up stories of pretty much anybody, at any time. I mean, I think he knew almost every president that went back for many decades and he had very honest and frank conversations with presidents, kings and queens down to anybody who was around him on a daily basis.

So, God doesn't make too many Ed Gomes. In fact, I think he's probably cast in his own mold. And he is somebody who we loved, we love, who made a big impact on our state, who will always have a presence here in our State Capitol and who has left a tremendous legacy for all of us here in the state of Connecticut, and a legacy that we can all strive to meet each and every day.

We are all imperfect human beings, Ed Gomes included, but he was somebody who always reached for the top and had the highest ideals for people. And I think that we can all strive ourselves to reach those ideals that Ed Gomes was fighting for each and every day.

And we will certainly miss him but we will honor and respect his legacy. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator Duff. Will you remark further? Senator Formica, good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I too rise to speak, to honor Ed Gomes, Senator Ed Gomes, and express my deep sympathy to his family, his friends, and certainly those around the Circle, especially Senator Moore, who I know was very close.

I want to align myself with both Senator Looney and Senator Duff. Their comments seem to really hit the nail on the head as to who Senator Gomes was. He was a passionate fighter for the working man and woman, and that contained almost every fiber in his being when he stood here in the Circle and when he was in Committee work.

I always enjoyed the opportunity to sit and talk with him, and he had an infectious smile and a huge heart. And he was always willing to have a conversation with me. And, you know, he wanted to learn about my business, and how we treated employees in my business, in a small business. He came from the labor side of the field, and we often had good conversations about that and I think we -- I know that I had a healthy respect for him and his opinions, and I believe he felt the same.

He served this state with distinction. He served the Circle with distinction. It is a sad loss for his family, his friends, and the state of Connecticut. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Formica. Will you remark further on the Resolution that is before us. And hello, Senator Miller, it's a pleasure to see you and see you rise in this new role. And we are happy to hear what you have to say about our colleague.

SENATOR MILLER (27TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I want to stand to say a few words about Senator Gomes. I met Senator Gomes as a freshman, but I got the opportunity to serve

with Senator Gomes my sophomore year. We were Co-Chairs of the Bond -- the Appropriations, one of the Committees of the Appropriations Committee, subcommittees.

And Senator Gomes would always say to me, go ahead, you do it. I trust you. Now, I'm a sophomore and I'm saying, why is he giving me all this trust? I don't know what I'm doing. And we would have to come up with an alternative for -- Oh, I am so sorry. I never have my... sorry about that. I apologize. We never -- I apologize.

He always trusted me. And I have to admit, I resented it because I felt that he was giving me all the work. But I'm standing here today because of that. He was teaching me how to stand on my own. He was teaching me that, to tap into my gifts. I really didn't think I could do it. He wasn't the type of teacher that would stand over you and tell you what to do. He allowed you to do it, and then corrected you if you needed to be corrected. And he never corrected me and I respected him so much for that.

Senator Gomes ended up calling me his mama. And he called me his mama because I was always telling him what he could eat and what he could not eat. And I would see him with a muffin and I would say "Senator Gomes, now you know you shouldn't be eating that." And he would say to me, "You're not my mama." And so he would introduce me as his mother, his mama, not his mother, his mama. And in my community that is a term of endearment, and I accepted that term with great love.

I didn't realize how much he gave back until he passed away, and shame on me. I didn't realize the people, the impact that he had on individuals' lives; shame on me. There's an expression, you know, to give people the roses while they can still smell them, and shame on me for not giving him that recognition.

But you know what? He was the type of man that didn't need that recognition, because it wasn't about him. It wasn't about receiving the recognition. It was about making the lives of individuals better.

And so as I stated earlier, it is because of him that I can say that I am a state Senator, because he allowed me, as a sophomore in the General Assembly, to see that I had the abilities to do bigger and better things. So I will truly miss him. I will truly miss -- and I even missed him when he didn't come back to General Assembly, I miss every day him not telling me that I wasn't his mama. But he still will come up.

And I used to say to him, "We can't get rid of you, can we?" And he would just laugh, you know that laugh he had, ha ha ha. But one of the things I always loved to see him, I would walk by, behind him or just stand behind him and just look at him, and that's when he put his hand in his pocket and he would walk down the hall with a swag, and just to see how much respect everyone had for him when he would walk down the halls. And so I hope, I hope that I can be worthy of the person, of what he imparted in me, because I stand here on his shoulders.

And so Senator Moore, I want to say to you, I know that you were very, very close friends and so you know that I pour my heart out to you, because you're going to miss that, because you miss your close friend. And I hope that I can take just a little of that space that he's left behind. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator. Will you remark further?  
Good afternoon, Senator Kelly.

SENATOR KELLY (21ST):

Good afternoon, Madam President and thank you. I had the honor and the privilege to not only serve in the Senate with Senator Gomes, but also to represent the town of Stratford, where I got to work very closely with Ed.

He was a tremendous advocate. When he saw an issue, he lived the issue, his heart was in the issue. And the one trait of Ed Gomes was you always knew where he stood. And for that, the town of Stratford and its people were blessed, because they had an advocate that cared, an advocate who put the time in, and an advocate who got the job done. At the end of the day, that's what people want us to do, and Ed did that so effortlessly.

What I will particularly miss is the smile. Because as much as he was a strong and tenacious advocate, he had a heart of gold and a personality second to none. We would sit here in the Chamber and talk. And you know, he had stories like you wouldn't believe. And he would take you back and take me back to the days in Stratford when my dad worked for Raybestos and Ed worked for Raybestos, and he would just talk about all the old times, living and being around the Greater Bridgeport region.

And whenever I'd go downtown, invariably I'd see Ed Gomes because no matter where you went, you look around, you saw a smile as big as his, you knew, there's Ed.

Barn festival parades, you know, he's the first guy that would come over and be "Hey, Cal, what are you doing? Come on, how's it going?" And Ed was just, not only a very good friend, but just somebody who I admired for his dedication and service to the causes that he believed in. He is one that you don't come by very often in life and as we just heard, a teacher that leaves with you not only memories, but lessons that help myself learn more and how to do this job better. For that, I am absolutely thankful.

We are blessed to have had Ed in this Circle. The people of Connecticut were blessed to have him as a Senator, and the town of Stratford was blessed to have him as a Representative. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much. Senator, will you remark further? Good afternoon, Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, Senator Ed Gomes -- oh, the things you don't want to do, this is one of those things. Senator Gomes, as you've heard from many of his colleagues, was everything that they say he was. Senator Gomes was also an elder to me. And maybe Senator Gomes should have been more like a father figure, but he was more like a brother.

We shared a lot. We both have military service that we talked about. We both worked for labor. We shared many of the same perspectives.

I met Ed Gomes many years ago doing activism work, and I don't know what it was, but we clicked immediately. And actually, the way that I met Senator Moore was through Senator Gomes, and that was just a happenstance thing that I don't even think really registered. And a lot of things that I experienced with Senator Gomes are very important to the work that I do right now.

But I want to say that he was not just a guy who had a big heart and a big smile. He had a lot of the things that those of us around the Circle really need in order to do this job. And one of the things he had was the appropriate emotion for the moment. And sometimes that appropriate emotion was expressed in ways that people don't really think of us as expressing ourselves, which is why I can never do

justice to Ed Gomes, because I can't say certain words in this Circle.

But I remember Ed always being a person about the issues we deal with. And I'm meaning that to say that Ed would sometimes be angry, full of fire. He wasn't just a man who was a big teddy bear. But he was a man who understood how deeply the issues that we deal with impact the lives of real people.

And I also know that because I had the opportunity to have conversations with Ed that not everyone got to enjoy, that sometimes Ed would pull me to the side as they say things that included those words I won't mention. But the reason I bring that up is because I learned through the way Ed operated because when I watched Ed, I thought, that's exactly how we should be. I wasn't really trying to be like that, but I thought, that's exactly how we should be. And I learned through watching Ed, that if you believe that's exactly what we should be, then that's what you -- meaning me -- should be.

I can't tell you what Ed Gomes meant to me, not as a Senator, but as the person he met when we originally met. This Chamber was truly blessed to have Ed Gomes here. And I just remember, you know, Ed Gomes and I kind of switched off on the Labor Committee in terms of chairing the Committee, and I remember how tickled he was and then, of course, there was Senator Kushner after, I just remember how tickled he was to have us being in those positions. And I remember Ed Gomes still chaired the Committee even after he didn't chair the Committee, because he would tell me what we needed to be doing.

And I remember how deeply he continued to fight, even when you didn't see him, even when you didn't know his hand was in it. And I remember thinking towards the end, because Ed had come back again before, that Ed would be back. It wasn't just because Ed had done it before, it was because I needed Ed to come back.

Because Ed has been a friend, a mentor and sometimes a backbone for me. So, you know, at the end, when I looked down and saw Ed, the only time that it has ever been harder for me to do that was when my own mother passed.

This state has lost an incredible human being. An amazing, incredible human being who no words could do justice to describing the impact he has had and that I wish was still here with us today. I won't -- I won't carry on for too long. But I just, I just wanted to rise to say that this isn't something that I do. I don't get up when we celebrate people. I don't get up in memoriam. But when it comes to Ed Gomes, who truly is a unique and special person, it was only appropriate.

Madam President, thank you for allowing me a moment to speak on Ed Gomes, who was like a brother to me in many ways and who I miss so, so dearly. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator Winfield. Will you remark further? Good afternoon, Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Madam President, I also rise to offer a few comments about Senator Ed Gomes. Madam President, I had the privilege of serving with Senator Gomes on the Labor Committee, and it was one of those assignments to a Committee that had its good days and its better days.

When I was in the company of Senator Gomes, I will tell you that there was never a time when I questioned his intensity or his integrity. Because every story he ever told me about his earlier years led me to believe he lived it. When he talked about a sweatshop, he worked a sweatshop. When he talked

about early days of OSHA, he could describe to you the incidents to a tee that brought about those changes. When we talked about pay, when we talked about vacation or time off, every single one of those issues had a story.

And that's what I appreciated most about Senator Gomes. It wasn't what someone told him was important; it's what was important. He had that level of genuineness that you might ask questions about what the import, what the outcome might be, but you could never really question, to my mind anyway, the integrity and the intensity, because it was there.

And frankly, he lived at a time when it made sense to me. We were moving through an age of industrialization. And I think, across the world, many countries have not come anywhere near close to where we have in terms of the relationship between employees and employers, and vice versa.

The screening process, you know, one of the things that nobody ever described to me was the screening process on a Committee prior to getting elected. But you sit in a very small room and you disagree, and it was okay. You could be very upset. You could be agitated, but you never lost sight of what you were there for. You were trying to reach a goal you were trying to come to an end result, and he brought that out in people.

He made me think about things in ways that were not always comfortable for me to think about. Perhaps it's because of my upbringing versus his, and I appreciated that about Senator Ed Gomes.

The thing that I've missed most since his absence is the elevator ride. You could literally be in a room for four hours fighting about Bills, and I don't mean physically fighting, I mean philosophically fighting, and then get in an elevator to go to another floor, then you would talk about, how are

things at home? You would talk about what kind of fish do like? You would talk about any number of things that reminded each one of us how human we are.

And not only do I miss it in respect to Senator Gomes, I miss it because of COVID. We don't have those elevator rides anymore in this building. We don't have that opportunity to be in each other's company, and Ed would never let that happen. He would never walk by me in the hall, he would never turn the other way, he would never, ever want me to think he was disinterested in not only greeting, but having a conversation, even when we hadn't agreed.

I heard it mentioned already here today about his smile. You couldn't help but be warmed by his smile. And I used to say to him, "Where's that big paw of yours?" and he would reach out and shake your hand, and you could tell by the calluses on the man's hand how much he had worked and how hard he had struggled.

So I was pleased to be able to be here today, Madam President to share my voice, the comments about someone that I really did respect, really do respect, and really do miss. He was a great part of this institution, and I found him to be someone that was very helpful in getting me to a place and understanding, even when I didn't want to agree, where it was very, very difficult not to. So thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Miner. Will you remark further?  
Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise to comment and praise Senator Ed Gomes. I didn't meet him as Senator Ed Gomes. I first met Ed as my brother in

the labor movement, as a steel worker. That's how it was described to me. It was like, "Come meet this guy. He's a steel worker. And you need to get to know him because he's a real fighter for workers."

And my mentor was a friend of Ed's, Phil Wheeler, a lot of people up here remember Phil. And when Phil told me this is one of the good guys, that was all I needed to know. That's how Ed was described.

And I think what was important to know is that we recognized Ed in the labor movement as somebody who stood up for workers every day, not just factory workers that were from his experience, but childcare workers, homecare workers, you know, retail workers, the Fight for 15, for the fast food workers. He just was somebody who identified with the struggle of working people. And that was who he was, and it was critical, it was to his core.

So when I came to the Senate, as a freshman Senator, I never got to serve with Ed. Had I served with him, I certainly wouldn't have been the Chair of Labor. I would have been on the Committee and I would have gotten to know him even better and learned more from him as a Legislator.

But what I learned, I didn't even know what this Circle was when I got here that everyone talks about so eloquently. But what I learned from Ed was that you have to be true to your beliefs when you come here to legislate. And I've heard many people talk about Ed and the courage he had and the positions he took, and the way he spoke to the issues and the way he fought for the issues that became policies of this Chamber. And I hope to learn from that. I hope to have his courage.

I will say that it's wonderful to sit at his desk. When I first sat down, I went through the drawers and I know Senator Moore was instrumental in getting the office in shape so I could sit down at this desk. But I found little things in the drawers that

were Ed's and I kept them. And right now I have a whole ream of paper on my desk that is his stationary. And it's just a good reminder of who he was and what he brought to this General Assembly. And it's a good reminder to me of who I strive to be.

I will say that some of the most difficult days I had were the very first days as State Senator where I had to bring out a Bill. And when I brought out the Paid Family Leave Bill and I turned around, and you know, I sit over there, I turned around, there was Ed standing there, with a big smile, really excited. He was always so encouraging. When I said to him, "I don't know what I'm doing up here." He said, "Don't worry, you'll be fine."

He didn't just have your back in that rhetorical way. He had it in the very real sense. He was right there behind you, ready to support you. And I know he did that for a lot of people, regular working people, other Legislators, his family, his friends. He was just an amazing man.

And so it's easy to hear all the praise for him today and the acknowledgement that he so deserves. I wish I could have served with him. I know I would have learned a lot of the tricks of the trade from him. We will miss him and we will never forget him. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And like Senator Kushner, I want to rise in memory of my friend, Senator Ed Gomes. I can't remember the first time I met Senator Gomes, but I do remember the first time I spent real quality time. And anybody who knew

Senator Gomes knew that he was a fierce judge of character, sometimes even a harsh judge of character. And I don't know how I played my cards right, but somehow he judged me to be on the good side of the ledger.

But I remember one day we were sitting at -- we were we were invited up to labor night at the then New Britain [Ratcats]. And we sat next to each other for seven innings of the baseball game. And in the course of those seven innings I don't think we watched more than a couple of minutes of the actual gameplay. Instead, Senator Gomes briefed me on a few of his grudges, a few of the folks he thought were steering his hometown of Bridgeport in the wrong direction. And I listened carefully and took notes as Senator Gomes went through folks who he didn't think we're doing right by the community that he served.

He was a steel worker, but he also had a backbone of steel. But he didn't approach things with a hard edge but with a broad and happy smile, always with a joke close at hand. He was a happy warrior for the poor, for labor unions, for good government, a happy warrior against corruption, for communities of color and for his own Cape Verdean community.

He was someone who served as a mentor for me and for many, many of my colleagues. But I see over to my left his proudest mentee, Senator Marilyn Moore, who does such an outstanding job of representing her community and standing up for the same things that Senator Gomes fought for his entire life.

You know, I'm struck that Senator Moore has a rule in the State Senate where you're not allowed to use foul language around her, and if you violate that rule, you put \$1 in the tip jar. Senator Gomes lived by a different code and I think more than made up for that. But what he fought for every single day were the working people of this state. Were people in the shadows, people who did not have the ability

to hire lobbyists in this building, people who didn't have the power to fight for themselves, but who needed an advocate.

We've lost Senator Gomes, and we miss him. But although he was not a tall man, his shadow is cast over all of us. We remember him. We love him and hopefully his backbone of steel will inspire us to do well by the people of this state. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise to speak and to think fondly of former Senator Gomes. I begin by offering as a Legislator who didn't always agree with Senator Gomes, we had some fierce debates. We engaged in some dialogue and policy debates. But we always ended that debate with a handshake and an acknowledgement that we fought a good fight, and that we were always friends and colleagues.

As a Representative of Fairfield and also working in Bridgeport, I had an opportunity to work with Senator Gomes on community issues and he could not be more proud of his mentorship and proud of the success of current Senator Marilyn Moore. He speaks of her as a proud mentor, but also as an individual that saw great things in her, and was so happy to see it realized. And I agreed with him from that concept that he had a great judgment of people, a great judgment of friends.

It didn't matter if you disagreed or if you battled. If you were his friend, he was always there for you. And he himself had the same kind of commitment on his friends of labor. As a former steel worker and an advocate for the working men and women all through the state, he was beloved. You couldn't go

to a union hall and have people not know Ed Gomes. He fought tirelessly, fearlessly and passionately for the working people. And I admired him for that I truly did.

But what I admired the most about him, beyond his pride in being a Cape Verdean and sharing some interesting recipes of food, was the fact that if you went anywhere in Bridgeport, if you went to schools, if you went to community centers, there was an acknowledgement of how much he was appreciated. You walked into a school, and the teachers clamor to come and say, Senator Gomes, Senator Gomes. If you went into a community event where there were activities, people stopped, gave him big hugs.

He was truly beloved, because he didn't care about the trappings of what the Senate offered, and what the General Assembly in the title offered. He was genuinely interested in the wellbeing of the people he represented.

He fought. He was constantly fighting. And you saw that fighting spirit in his constant struggles with regards to his health and the challenge of party politics in which he had to come through the ranks as an independent party member, a working family member, discarded, but he fought back.

And I remember as a friend visiting him after his massive heart attack and his rehabilitation. I remember saying to him, "Ed, you've used up seven of your nine lives. You are remarkable in your resiliency and fighting spirit." And you know what? He did come back and he ran for election again and won. He won, literally almost as a write-in candidate. It reflects the love and the affection and the true spirit of a man that represented his community.

So I rise to acknowledge his incredible service to our legislative body, but most important of all, his love for his community. His love for the people that

he represented and the way he has battled back in many turns in his election successes, reflects that the people truly did know that he cared about them. Because in return, they returned him to this Circle twice over.

And truly, I'm grateful that this Chamber has had the moment to acknowledge his contributions. And I want to acknowledge the value that I have in knowing Ed Gomes as a friend. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator. Will you remark further? Good afternoon, Senator Slap.

SENATOR SLAP (5TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I rise to acknowledge Senator Gomes and to offer a few words of condolences for his friends and family. And I count myself as very blessed to have known him.

I first got to know Senator Gomes when I was a staff member working at the Senate Democratic Caucus. And I have to admit, I was a little intimidated by him. He was referred to earlier by one of my colleagues as a happy warrior. And I think for whatever reason, I saw the warrior part, you know, most easily kind of at first, and I was a little intimidated. But I got to know him, he gave me a chance and we struck up a really great relationship.

And I could tell that he was one of the most genuine people I had ever met. You know, he never forgot where he came from. He never forgot his values and what he was about, and I came to really greatly admire him.

And a few years later, I left the Senate Democratic Caucus and I hadn't seen him for a couple years. And then I ran for State Representative and I, at one point, looked at the donation list and I realized

that there was a donation from Ed Gomes. And I had not asked for it and I was honestly kind of surprised. Very touched and surprised. And eventually, I got to see him again. And, you know, and I thanked him, and he looked at me like, of course. You know, what are you, crazy? Of course. Like, we're loyal, I'm loyal. And he was. He was just a remarkable person.

And, you know, I regret that I did not have the chance to serve with him but I really did come to appreciate and greatly respect him, and wish that we did have more time with him. So again, I just want to extend my condolences to his friends, family, Senator Moore. And I know that he'd be, you know, so proud of the work that you're doing now in that seat. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Good afternoon, Senator Moore.

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

Good afternoon, Madam President. This is a little tough for me. I rise in support of the Resolution for my friend, Ed Gomes. You know, I was listening to people and they really do know Ed. They know the core of who that man was. He was a man's man. He was a man of honor. You could bank his word. He was loved. He was a fighter. He was a scrapper. He was everything that you would, if you had a son, that you would want your son to grow up to.

As many of you know, I've known Ed since I was about nine or ten years old. Ed teased that I was a little girl playing in the dirt and Ed walked into the house that my father owned and threw dirt on me and said, "What are you doing down there in the dirt little girl?" That's some made-up story, but it was close.

But I remember Ed from being about nine or ten years old as being a tough guy, a really tough guy. I remember him among his brothers who were my friends, being a scrapper, fighting, never understood that until much older when I thought about what he had been through. He went to prison because he was homeless and he was hungry and he stole some food. And because he didn't have any place else to go to, he was sent to Cheshire Reformatory.

When he came out, he thought he wasn't qualified to go into the army, but they accepted him nonetheless. He built all these skills while he was in the army on how to negotiate, how to get things that nobody else could. I listened to Ed tell these stories a million times over. But I listened to him because every time he told a story, I would pick up something else that helped me understand who is this guy?

I started working with Senator Gomes in the early '80s working on a campaign, but I knew him because my mother and his mother were both of Cape Verdean descent. My mother and his mother had been friends. I was friends with all of his brothers. They taught me all the bad and the good things that I know today, and they taught me a lot.

But what I hold in my heart and I don't think there has been a day since Senator Gomes has passed that I have not thought about him. Every time something happens in Bridgeport, Ed would be called upon to go out and fight that.

He was like the big brother that you went home to get to finish the fight when someone started it, because Ed could finish the fight. I remember when he was in the city council and he had called out some people on the council to invite them outside. Someone called me and said, "You have to come and get Ed." And I was like, "Why am I doing that?" "He listens to you." I did not know that until that day. And there have been many instances where Ed has

listened to me. And I have sat and talked with him for many, many, many hours. I think I have spent more time with Ed Gomes than any other man talking, listening, arguing, having disagreements, and still walking away knowing, that is my friend. That is my friend.

And that I thought I was convincing him many times to do things in our ride up. When I became his legislative aide, we would ride together and I would talk to him about some of the things that I wanted him to do. But I never asked him to do it, I would just give him my thoughts on breast cancer, what we needed to do for women. By the time he got to Hartford, he would be saying those same things about we have to do this, we have to do that. So I knew he was listening to me.

But as I stand here today, and the fights that I've taken on and the stands that I've made on different issues, I know that Ed was influencing me every single day and all of the stories that he told all the people that he met. He met H. Philip Randolph, right. That was one of the most proudest moments in his life. He didn't even understand that for us he was like that man. For us in the community and here, he met with everybody.

When I was his aide, I couldn't believe how many people would come to Ed and ask to meet and he would not turn people down. I remember one of the first calls I got and received as his legislative aide is a woman called from Bridgeport and said she needed money for a spend down. I didn't know what a spend down was. And I said, "Well, what is that?" She said, "Well, I have to spend down before I can get these services." And I said, "Well, what do you want Senator Gomes to do, write legislation?" She said, "No, I want him to give me the spend down money." And I said to her, "Oh, he can't do that. That's not what he's here for." But Ed gave her the money.

When I told her -- I said I got this phone call that she wanted this money. She said she needed it for her spend down. And he says, "Oh, yeah, well I give them money like that." He didn't care about money. He would give you the last dollar, his last penny, he'd give you whatever he had. He never, ever, ever, in all the time I've been around Ed, has never asked for anything for himself.

In fact, I was thinking about some of the things that I've done for him since he's passed. And I think he would be saying, "Why did you do that? I didn't ask you to do that. I don't want you to do that."

When I hear about people standing here talking about him, he's probably saying, "What are you all making such a fuss over?" Because he was a great man. And what I've tried to do for my friend, and for my former colleague, is establish things that will be long after I'm here and many of us, to carry his legacy.

We established a Greater Bridgeport Ed Gomes Black Democratic Club in his name because it was something that he wanted. It was one of the places that I had been with him all over the state attending meetings. When he left he said he was going to do it. He never did it. And he kept saying, "I'm going to start a club." I said, "Good, Ed. Go start the club." He'd say, "Well, I'm going to start the club." I said, "Well, go ahead and do it." What he was really saying to me was Marilyn, get it started. But I refused. I said Ed, you just have to do it. I don't have time.

So the last lap is on Marilyn Moore because I did start the club and it's been established. And I've started a scholarship fund, hopefully for young men who come out of the system who need a trade. And we're working on that. We've raised close to \$40,000 in Ed's name and people were very generous because he was so generous.

And I wanted to share, I was thinking when some of the Senators were speaking about how Ed could dig deep and it wasn't about him. When there was the Same Gender Marriage Bill I was his aide. And we grew up Catholic, and Ed was still Catholic when he passed. How many priests called? How many religious organizations called on Ed, telling him not to do that?

I remember that, at the time that I saw Ed really break down emotionally, and say, "It is not right for us to discriminate. It is not right, Marilyn, and I'm going to vote for that Bill." And I was really surprised, because I had heard so many things from so many people that had put pressure on Ed.

But that's the kind of guy Senator Gomes was. He didn't care about the outside pressures. He cared about what was right to do, all of the time. And I think that is so unique. Because as Legislators, we get pulled in different ways for different reasons, and we bring our own stuff to the table. But somehow Senator Gomes was able to push that to the side and always try to do the greater good, even if it wasn't best for him personally. That's what he did.

And so for me to be here, to stand in this Circle, to talk of my friend, to hear how much people loved him means so much to me, to know that I am in a place where people appreciated someone who was so different from the rest of us, who came from such a different place but who spoke his mind, who was true to who he was. And always, always, popular or not, friend or foe, smiled, shook hands, took time to speak to everyone in his path.

And the most grateful thing I am of my relationship with Ed is how he shared all of his friends. All of his acquaintances with me. He would never let someone walk up on us and ignore me. He would say, "Do you know Marilyn? Do you know Marilyn?" And that is because we were standing someplace and someone

totally ignored me while they talked to Ed. And he was so upset, he ripped the guy. He said, "I'm not going to let that happen. I'm not going to let people ignore you."

So all of my friends, really, that I have right now who are ride or die are because Ed loaned them to me, and I now am their friend. And they've taken care of me just as much as they would have taken care of Ed.

And so he's given me so much in my life. He's been good to my children, my family, and my community, that there's never going to be enough that I can do to say thank you. The only thing I can do while I am here in this space is walk in his shoes, do the work that he would want me to do and remember not to back down if it's right, not to carry fear with me if it's right, and to keep getting into good trouble.

And finally, I want to say that I don't know that there will ever be another Ed Gomes, because he was just so unique in everything that he was, everything that he did. But I carry with me every single day. And as I make the decisions that I make, I often think about what would he do? But also, there's many days I have open conversations, because I believe he's hanging around with me, many days, because I involved in things that I don't think I even want to be bothered with but somehow Ed is pushing me to do those things. And I'm grateful. I'm grateful for being here and to be in this place when Senator Gomes can't be here. I thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator Moore. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If there are no further remarks, I would ask that the Chamber please observe a moment of silence for Senator Gomes.

(gavel) And the Resolution is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, for the purposes of marking our Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. On Calendar Page 1, Calendar 159, Senate Resolution 42, I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

On Calendar Page 1, Calendar 160, Senate Resolution No. 43, I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

On Calendar Page 2, Calendar 180 -- I'm sorry, on Calendar Page 2, Calendar 180, Senate Resolution No. 8, I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Calendar Page 3, Calendar 52, Senate Bill 89, I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Calendar Page 24, Calendar 209, Senate Bill 1005,  
I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Calendar Page 27, Calendar 230, Senate Bill 1003,  
I'd like the mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Calendar Page 6, Calendar 75, Senate Bill 831, I'd  
like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Calendar Page 18, Calendar 176, Senate Bill 1021,  
I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Calendar Page 16, Calendar 165, Senate Bill 927, I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Calendar Page 11, Calendar 129, Senate Bill 909, I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Calendar Page 18, Calendar 178, Senate Bill 914, I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

And on Calendar Page 10, Calendar 125, Senate Bill 608, I'd like to mark that item go.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

And everything else marked as a PR, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, so ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

And would the Clerk call the Bills?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar No. 159, Senate Joint Resolution Number 42, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF ARI SANTIAGO OF WEST 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 Committee's Favorable Report and adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, Ari Santiago would be in the position on the Board of Regents for a four-year term. He is CEO of IT Direct, hosts a podcast, Made in America with Ari Santiago. He is, as we heard in this hearing, a relentless advocate for the state of Connecticut and it was refreshing to hear his energy and such great passion he has for his home state. He is dedicated to helping students turn dreams into businesses that will stay and grow here.

He serves on the Senate -- on the CT Technology Council, Senator Murphy's Manufacturing and

Aerospace and Connecticut Advisory Council, Boys and Girls Club of Hartford. He has his BA out of Tufts and I would urge adoption of the Resolution and support. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Duff. Will you remark further on the Resolution that is before us? Will you remark further? Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. If there is no objection, I'd like to place this item on the Consent Calendar, please.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar No. 160, Senate Joint Resolution No. 43, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF SUZETTE BROWN OF BLOOMFIELD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MATERIALS INNOVATION AND RECYCLING AUTHORITY.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, Mayor Brown would be a new member of MIRA and she brings local government perspective as far as cost, environmental impact and town support for solid waste disposal solutions. We felt that her testimony was, really, she brought a really great, as I just said, a great perspective to MIRA and will do an outstanding job on that board, especially as it faces its struggles that it currently has.

She has an education from Liberty University. She's current Mayor of Bloomfield, a youth advocate, experienced in public and private sector and an ordained minister, and I would urge adoption of the Resolution.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further on the Resolution that is before us? Will you remark further? Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 2, Calendar No. 1807, Senate Resolution No. 8, RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MEGAN L. HASTINGS OF SUFFIELD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MILK REGULATION BOARD.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

And the Senate will stand at ease.

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, this is a job that is coterminous with the Governor, and Ms. Hastings is a dairy farmer from Suffield, actively engaged in the sale and distribution of milk. She discussed the impact of COVID on her business, and how actually things are improving for her because people are looking to buy food and dairy closer to home.

She was very passionate and enthusiastic about milk, and so I think she'd be an excellent member of the Milk Regulation Board, and I would urge Committee Members to please -- I'm sorry, I would urge my Senator colleagues to please vote for the Resolution. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

And seeing no objection, so ordered and I will say  
for the Chamber's benefit that I have indeed visited  
the Hastings Milk Farm. It's been in the family for  
five generations, and the yogurt is excellent.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I would like to remove  
Senate Joint Resolution No. 42 from the Consent  
Calendar, and if we can have a vote on that  
Resolution, please.

THE CHAIR:

And when we reach that item we will --

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

We've already passed it. I'm just removing it from  
the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Yes, we are removing it and it will be voted upon by  
roll.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, on Senate Joint Resolution No. 42. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Senate Joint Resolution No. 42. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? The machine will be locked. And Mr. Clerk, would you please announce the tally?

CLERK:

Senate Joint Resolution No. 42:

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	32
Those voting Nay	1
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

And the Resolution is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I want to, before we go any further, thank everybody, including our IT department and Legislative Management and Clerk's

Office and staff and everyone who worked to make this electronic voting just happen so well. It was really great. So kudos to everybody who was involved in that, it went very smoothly.

Secondly, I just want to make a clarification, because there's a little bit of confusion on the first Insurance Bill that we're doing, it's Calendar Page 23, Calendar 205, Senate Bill 89 that was marked go. Okay? Thank you, Madam President. So Mr. Clerk, if you want to call our first Bill.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 3, Calendar No. 52, Senate Bill No. 56, AN ACT  
DETERRING AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT  
APPLICATIONS.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, Senator Slap.

SENATOR SLAP (5TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Good to see you. I want to -- well, I'm going to first move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill, and I seek leave to summarize, please.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, and the question is on passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR SLAP (5TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I do want to thank our new Senator, Senator Miller, who is Chair of the

Aging Committee, but she has yielded the floor to me to bring this Bill out, that has been a labor of love for a few years now. And I want to just briefly summarize what the Bill does and why this Bill is so important.

This Bill would prohibit employers from asking prospective job candidates in the application, asking them their date of birth or attendance dates, school or graduation dates. And it really fixes a loophole, if you think about it, because this is not something that any employer would ask in terms of age.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Slap, it is getting very loud and very difficult to hear your remarks, so I'm just going to ask our Members and guests to give their attention to you, sir. Senator.

SENATOR SLAP (5TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So again, this Bill fixes a loophole in that employers would not ask age-specific questions in a job interview, but they would be allowed to, and currently do -- not all, but certainly some -- in the job application process. So this Bill prohibits that, from asking employee's age, birth date, attendance date, or graduation date.

Now, there are a few exceptions. One if it's a bona fide occupational qualification or need and that is defined already in state statute and in federal statute, actually. And then the other exception is if it's required by state or federal law.

So why is this Bill important? I would argue it could not be more important than it is right now and it's extremely important, because we are in Connecticut, and we have the sixth-oldest workforce in the nation. And if you think about it, there's so

many people who have lost their job because of the pandemic and so many people who are going to be looking to go back to work. And we want to make sure that older workers aren't vetted based on their age.

And when I talk about older workers, I mean, anybody age 40 or over is in a protected class. And we know that age discrimination starts for women in early 40s and just a few years later for men, and people of color feel it disproportionately. So this Bill is also about equity.

And we know that as people go back to work, we want them, especially our older workers, to get a fair shake. We want them to get that job interview. We want them to get an opportunity to get reemployed. And this Bill is going to help accomplish that. It's been many years in the making and I think it's actually similar in a way to the Pay Equity Bill that prohibited the pay history question that this Chamber passed just a few years ago, and we were one of the national leaders, I think, just the second state in the country at that point to ban the pay history question. And today, we have many, many more states that have followed suit.

This Bill is similar in that we will become a national leader, one of the few states in the country to prohibit this practice and that's something I think that we could all be proud of. I do want to thank a couple of people who I worked with on this Bill, Representative Joe Sarah, who of course is no longer serving, but he was my Co-Chair on the Aging Committee and was a great champion, as everyone knows, for older folks and for our seniors.

Senator Kelly has been a tremendous champion for seniors and a great partner on this Bill as well and right from the get-go, he was on board and really helping to lead the charge.

Senator Kushner and Representative Robin Porter of the Labor Committee helped to get this Bill, pass it

out of Committee, it was two years ago now, and I want to thank them for their leadership on this as well.

I want to thank you, Madam President and your leadership and the Lamont administration for making this Bill a priority and your advocacy for it and for our older workers. Also the AARP, Bernie White, Sheila Diamond and Gail Crockett with the Seniors Job Bank, one of the many organizations that help older workers get reemployed.

So I'll end my comments there by asking my colleagues to join me, urging passage of this Bill now, and really helping us to become a national leader and help protect our older workers when they need it the most. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator Slap. Will you remark further? Senator Kelly, good afternoon.

SENATOR KELLY (21ST):

Good afternoon, Madam President and thank you very much. I too rise in support of this Bill. Because for too long, in too many instances, I have heard too many people tell me that they've lost out on job opportunities, they don't get interviews, they lose their opportunity for employment, because of their age. And it's most unfortunate that in this day and age, that still persists. That people look at age as not being a value that here before an employer is a person with immense experience, insight and wisdom, that this is a person that is actually going to enhance whatever occurs in the workplace.

Particularly when we look in an economy today, where people no longer are, I'm going to say company personnel that stay with a company for 20 and 30 years. That the average is now just four or five years, that this is an opportunity that our economy

is missing. And this Bill not only rectifies this issue, but also puts Connecticut on a path that's going to capitalize on this wisdom and insight, and get it back into our economic ballgame for the benefit of our entire community.

And for those reasons, I believe this is a smart piece of legislation, and I have to thank Senator Slap for bringing this forward and sticking with it, staying on it and advocating for this to make sure that this Bill not only gets to this point, but stayed the course the entire few years that we've been working on this.

Like Senator Slap, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the contributions of former Representative Joe Sarah, who also was a huge advocate and his input and collaboration made this a reality for today.

So those two individuals, as Chairman of Aging, did a fantastic job to put this Bill in the position it is, as well as just the support of AARP, the advocates, and to all those individuals and stories that I've heard, countless stories I've heard over the past few years. Those stories were not forgotten, and they will not be forgotten because of this Bill.

So Madam President, I firmly stand in support of this Bill and ask the Circle to do likewise. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Kelly. Will you remark further on this Bill? Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Speaking in support of the Bill, I wanted to commend Senator Slap for his advocacy on this. This is a Bill I'm sure we would

have passed last year, except for the pandemic and interruption because it is so broadly supported. The fact is that age discrimination is rampant in our society, and rampant in employment decisions.

And that is extremely unfortunate, because as Senator Kelly said, often there are people with, with relevant experience, years of commitment in a certain field, and knowledge and maturity who are bypassed, not only bypassed but not even given a chance to get their foot in the door for an interview, because of the arbitrary decision about age.

And it's ironic that employers are injuring themselves in this way by not considering older potential employees in many cases, because they are there waiving and dismissing the value of that experience, in that an older employee is, perhaps in many ways, apt to be more loyal and more committed to the organization that he works for than younger employees who now no longer even have the belief that they're likely to be employed long term anywhere for any great length of time.

So this Bill, I think, is one that will help create greater fairness and equity in the employment interview process. It's a very important bill and I think that Senator Slap would bring it forward is doing a great service for the state of Connecticut. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator Looney. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Senator Slap.

SENATOR SLAP (5TH):

Thank you, Madam President. May I suggest, if there's no further comment and no objection, that this item be placed on the Consent Calendar?

THE CHAIR:

And seeing no objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 23, Calendar No. 205, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 89, AN ACT CONCERNING TRAVEL INSURANCE AND SUICIDE.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment, LCO 6711. I ask that the Clerk please call the Amendment and I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

LCO No. 6711, Senate Schedule "A".

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Madam President, this is a strike-all Amendment. This Bill, this Amendment, seeks to -- actually, I'll speak on the -- I'd like to speak to the intention of the Bill after the Amendment, if it's adopted, if that's okay by the Chamber. This Amendment simply makes a change to the underlying Bill at the suggestion of our friend, the Senator from Milford, intending to adopt more inclusive and compassionate language to best reflect language around suicide, and would suggest that the Amendment before us is technical in nature and designed to use the best, most up-to-date terminology in our statutes. Madam Chair -- Madam President, I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. And will you remark further on the Amendment that is before the Chamber? Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise in regards to getting a better understanding of this very important Bill. But before I address the Amendment and ask some specific questions of the proponent of this, I want to make an extra effort to acknowledge Senator Slap and his great advocacy on behalf of his constituents, the compelling stories of the Brennans and the great work that he did on their behalf. And also through us, the testimony of many of the people who advocated, including the insurance carriers and their advocates, and understanding that their initial reaction was probably not appropriate.

And through this Amendment, I think we're able to address some of the language technicalities. So through you, Madam President, some questions to the proponent of this Amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you. Thank you, Madam President. So this is replacing Section 1 of the current existing Bill, what were the technical adjustments in language that accommodated the request? And where did the request come from? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes. Thank you, Madam President, and through you to the Senator, to the honorable Ranking Member. The language before us in the Amendment simply replaces the phrase, I think "committed suicide" with "died by suicide", and it was a request from a colleague of ours from the town of Milford.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Through you, Madam President. Did this have input from the insurance carriers to understand the technical aspect in regards to proposals related to the legal interpretation of the term suicide versus died by suicide? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

I believe there is no substantive impact of the language change. It's simply to reflect the most current available usage of the term. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Lesser. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Through you, Madam President. Then why would this be necessary if it wasn't a substantive change relative to the language interpretation? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

You know, I guess, through you, Madam President, that I don't think it's strictly speaking necessary. I think this though is a type of language that is preferred by folks who work in the world of suicide prevention as a more compassionate and more up to date, way to describe the act. And it's my understanding that this is language that they're suggesting we use throughout the general statutes to best capture the -- you know, whenever we discuss suicide in the statutes. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Lesser. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Through you, thank you. I just wanted to be, for legislative intent that there was no significant substitute revisions relative to this language. I

want to thank the good Chair for that clarification. But I also acknowledge, again, from the great work of Senator Slap, that this was a request made by the family that that initiated this proposal. And I want to acknowledge the good work of Senator Maroney in that Bill as well.

So, again, what was the role of insurance companies and their reaction and their support of this Bill? Could you clarify that and define that? Because it's important, because I think the challenge I had in the beginning of this legislative process, as I remember it, there were some obstacles and objections to it. But upon getting feedback and getting the public hearing process, there was an understanding and a clarity in regards the purpose of this Bill and an agreement from all the shareholders in this process. Through you, Madam President, would that be correct?

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Hwang. Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I hadn't spoken to the to the intent of the Bill yet and I know that since this is a strike-all Amendment, we can do that at this time or we can do that after adoption. It doesn't make a difference to me.

You know, this whole Bill stems from a tragic story from one family in West Hartford and Senator Hwang is right. This was brought to us by Senator Slap on behalf of the Brennan family of West Hartford. They were planning to take a trip, and purchased travel insurance. And then tragically, shortly before their trip, their son Shawn took his own life. And I can't imagine the grief the unspeakable pain that that caused the Brennan family.

And I think what I understood from them and understood from Senator Slap and from the West Hartford delegation, was that one measure of comfort they had was that this international trip that they had booked, at least they had purchased travel insurance, so at least they were financially protected there. And discovered, much to their surprise, that there was an exclusion that limited their ability to use their travel insurance policy.

So Senator Slap brought this to, well I guess the family went to the insurance company, and they fought the family and fought the family. And so out of desperation, they took this issue to Senator Slap, and he brought that to the attention of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee.

And initially, you're right, Senator, there was opposition from the company. And after the public hearing and after some thought and deliberation, they agreed to sit down with a family and with Senator Slap, and they worked out language that I think is a compromise. That starting on October 1st, 2021 ensures that no policy exclude coverage for people who die by suicide, simply because they're a traveling companion, for instance, of someone who purchased the travel insurance.

I think this language reflects a compromise. My understanding is it's supported by both the travel insurance industry, but more importantly to me, by the Brennan family and by my friend and colleague, Senators, Slap. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Lesser. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I want to thank the good Chair of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee for his explanation, and I appreciate that. And it also

shows the fact that despite differences in the initial presentation of this Bill, a noble effort, an important effort, through engagement, through public input, through the collaboration of a bipartisan effort and with the shareholders impacted by this, we were able to draft this Amendment, most important of all reflecting the personal wishes of the families impacted.

Because truly, this is what the intent of this Bill. So as a result of these kind of engagement and thank the good Chair for his explanation, I rise in support of this Amendment. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Hwang. Will you remark further, Senator Sampson?

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I have quite a few questions on the Bill itself. But while we are speaking about the Amendment, I just, I want to search for some clarification, just looking at the language, it appears that the only thing that's been changed, and this is a very, very short Bill, as it is only seven or eight lines long. The language is being changed in the Amendment.

The original Bill said that no insurance company shall issue a travel insurance policy that excludes coverage because the insured spouse, child and so on, and refers to commits suicide. And the new language says dies by suicide. Yes, I'm correct about that.

And I'm just curious, through you, Madam President, what exactly is the difference between committing suicide or dying by suicide? Just for my own edification.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And Madam President, through you, I think the idea is that suicide is a result of a disease. It's a result of an untreated or unsuccessfully treated medical condition and using the term commit suicide suggests that the person who took their own life necessarily had control over their actions.

I think that is seen as, at least by some of the community of activists around that issue, as playing into a stigma around mental health care and suicide in particular, that has a long and unnecessary history.

And so the request came to the Insurance and Real Estate Committee that we substitute this new phraseology with no singular or substantive impact on the Bill, as a more compassionate and less stigmatizing way of discussing mental illness in general, and suicide in particular.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Lesser. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And I appreciate the gentleman's answer. So the way I understand it is that there's no substantive change. These in fact are the same thing, someone who commits suicide, in my mind, is someone who is successful in the act of committing suicide, and someone who dies by suicide is the same thing.

So is it solely based on the notion of eliminating the stigma of the term commit suicide from a mental

health standpoint that we're making this change?  
Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, I think that's a fair  
assessment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. The only reason why I'm  
bringing this up is because as Members of this body  
know, there are states across our country that have  
laws regarding assisted suicide and we are  
contemplating one in the Connecticut General  
Assembly this year, as we have had previous years.

And I don't know if there is a difference when it  
comes to assisted suicide whether someone could be  
referred to as committing suicide or simply dying by  
suicide. And I understand this is a sensitive  
subject, and I'm not trying to apply any stigma to  
it whatsoever. I am just trying to get to the bottom  
of the reason why we made this change.

And it does concern me to a degree that there is a  
potential based on this language that if this state  
enacted a law that approved of what is being termed  
assisted suicide, although I don't personally agree  
with that term, that there might be coverage  
provided.

Are there protections, through you, Madam President,  
to prevent someone from being eligible because  
another person as described in Section 1, insured

spouse, child, dependent relative or traveling companion, if they were to commit assisted suicide or die by assisted suicide in this state, if that became law or another state, like in Oregon where they have, are there any protections to prevent this policy for paying out under those circumstances? Through you, Madam President?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. And through you to the honorable Senator, as I think the gentleman knows, the current laws of the state of Connecticut I don't believe allow for assisted suicide. I would defer any questions on possible future legislation to the Public Health Committee or another Committee of cognizance.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Lesser. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I will accept that as a no and I will reserve the rest of my comments for once we are on the Bill itself, depending on the outcome of the Amendment. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Amendment that is before us? Senator Maroney.

SENATOR MARONEY (14TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise in support of the Amendment and to thank Senator Slap for bringing the

Bill before us, to thank Senator Lesser for his willingness to make this language change and also Senator Lesser had requested that I confer with Senator Slap and he I believe he had checked with the family, and he'll speak that this language change was okay with them.

I also want to thank Tom Steen and the other members of the Connecticut Suicide Advisory Board. They've been educating me on the importance of changing the language around suicide. One thing that I think we are seeing more and more is that words matter. Right? And we've seen that words become thoughts, thoughts become actions, actions can become habits, but words matter. The words we choose and the words we use matter.

And one of the things that was said in a presentation I attended is that you commit a crime, you die by suicide. And so I think it's important that as a state when we can, we lead, and we control the things we can control. And so we're trying to set the example of changing this language, especially as we're unfortunately at the forefront of a potential looming mental health crisis.

We have seen that suicide is another epidemic. It's the second leading cause right now of people between the ages of 10 and 24. And so when we can lead, I think it is important that we do lead. So I thank Senator Lesser for making this change and I appreciate all of the work he has done. So thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Maroney. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment? If not, let me try your minds. All in favor of the Amendment, please -- Senator Formica, I do apologize.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you. No, I apologize, Madam President. I was late to the draw. Would we stand at ease just for a moment, please?

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will stand at ease. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I would like to yield to Senator Lesser.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I'll unyield to Senator Lesser and I think we'll just call for a voice vote on the Amendment, please.

THE CHAIR:

All right. We will now have a voice vote on the Amendment that is before the Chamber. All in favor of the Amendment before the Chamber, please signify by saying aye.

MEMBERS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? And the ayes have it. The Amendment is adopted. Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I believe I've already largely summarized the Bill, now as amended. I would just express my gratitude again to Senator Slap and to the entire West Hartford delegation for supporting this legislation, as well as to Senator Formica and to all the other Members of the Legislature who've worked on this. And I think it is important legislation that will protect folks going forward.

And I will note that I believe the family has asked that we refer to this as Shawn's Bill or Shawn's Law if it should be passed into law, so I urge Members to support it.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the legislation as amended? Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise in support of this Bill. And I see it fitting to be Shawn's Law. But I also want to extend my deepest sympathies to the Brennan family. This is a small measure that will be irreplaceable to the loss that they have suffered.

I also want to acknowledge many other families that have lost loved ones, and the explanation on the Amendment was greatly appreciated. And I want to take a moment to acknowledge and thank Senator Maroney's explanation that indeed, when it comes to the issue of suicide prevention, mental health, that words do matter. And that to change the language in

the Amendment has now been clarified to me, that it reflects our efforts to educate and raise awareness on the idea that you die by suicide. It is not an act that anyone wishes upon themselves or any one of their loved ones would wish upon their family members.

So I rise in support of this and but also an important acknowledgement that the language that we are using in this Bill is indeed important. But I also want to acknowledge the fact that this is where collaborative legislative process works. That we as Legislators in Committee listen to the people that offer value, contrasting viewpoints. That through public hearing and public input, that we take those thoughts, those words, those experiences, and then we make and craft legislative Bills that affect people's lives.

The idea of one size fitting all, the idea that one side has a greater viewpoint doesn't work. And this Bill reflects that through the public process, through good input from people, has an opportunity to solve an issue, to solve a problem that you hear from all sides of this perspective is valued.

And I truly hope that as we begin this deliberative session in the Circle, that we engage in that same thought. That we take contrasting viewpoints. We take the public's input that will be impacted by the laws we make, just as we have done by the slight change of language that gives us an opportunity to educate and to raise awareness.

So I want to thank Senator Maroney again, I want to thank Senator Slap for his incredible work on behalf of the Brennan family. But I also want to acknowledge the Suicide Prevention Council for their insight and awareness. This is when legislative process works. When collaborative, bipartisan viewpoints and all shareholders and viewpoints are heard. That's how we make better policy. So through

that process, I urge support. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I want to start my comments on this Bill by also offering my condolences to the family that was affected by the events that led to this Bill coming before us. Obviously, any death is a tragedy and suicide is no less of a tragedy and I certainly am sympathetic to what happened to them with the denial of their insurance claim on a travel policy.

But I also would suggest that one thing has very little to do with the other, and the policy that we make in this building should not be colored by a specific incidence, even if it is a tragedy and that the thought should be about what is actually good policy for the citizens of Connecticut.

We heard several of the speakers, including my dear friend and the Ranking Member of this Committee, Senator Hwang mentioned that words matter. I believe Senator Maroney said the same thing, words matter. And I paid attention a lot to the words that were used during this conversation. And it seemed to me that the Members of this body want to pat themselves on the back for some sort of compromise.

This is not any sort of compromise in any way, shape, or form. This is a mandate. And it's a mandate that not only forces an insurance company to offer a product they didn't choose to, and it is also a mandate on every person that will purchase a traveler insurance policy to pay a higher premium as a result.

It's not the worst thing in the world. It's a minor policy change, like many of the ones we make in this body all the time, but it is reflective of the complete tone deaf nature of this body and what our role is.

If you really wanted to have a compromise, what you would do is you would draft a compromise. You would do something like an informed consent, or you would say, insurance companies are now required to offer the additional coverage for suicide for an additional premium, leaving it up to them, and to the consumer to decide if they want it or not.

But instead, this body once again uses a hammer to do something that could have been done with a simple conversation. This is not the only Bill that will be characterized as an insurance mandate to pass this particular Session. And it's not even going to be the only insurance mandate that will pass this body today.

This has to do with travel insurance, which is not at the forefront of our conversation about the costs impacting the average citizen in our state. But most insurance mandates do, in fact, make a huge impact on the finances of our constituents. And this mandate is only different in that it affects someone who's purchasing a travel policy by choice.

I'm going to vote no on the Bill, Madam President for a couple of reasons. Number one, it's not a compromise, as I said. I believe that we should have been thoughtful and come up with a better solution like giving consumers a choice to include this coverage or not, instead of including it on every policy and charging every person for it, whether they want it or not.

And I also am very concerned with the lack of clarity on whether or not states that allow for what they call assisted suicide, and the potential of our own state adopting such a policy, to have an impact

on this. And I believe it's something that if we had taken the proper precautions, could have been taken care of right in this Bill. But instead, we will no doubt be back trying to craft a fix to it at some point in the future, as we often do.

So with that, Madam President, I urge my colleagues to think twice before they're thinking they're making some sort of great compromise when they're actually just forcing the will of one group on another, and recognize that people should, above all, in a free society have the choice to make their own decision about whether they want a particular insurance coverage and want to pay for it. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Sampson. Will you remark further?  
Senator Slap.

SENATOR SLAP (5TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I do want to address my good colleague's comments, just briefly, and then I'll provide hopefully just a little bit of context about the Bill. This is indeed a compromise, one that was worked out with the travel insurance industry and the family and mental health advocates. And one that I should say the travel insurance, the insurer, actually supports, and will lead to changes and improvements nationally. So all across the country, travel insurance policies. And I've been told not just by this insurer, but with the handful of insurers, will be changing.

And part of the problem with a buyer beware, you know, and this is the issue that came up with this family, the Brennans, is that they were told look, if you had initially -- and this is what I what I'm hearing from my colleague -- is that look, if you have a concern that one of your family members might die by suicide, then take out a rider. Take out an

additional coverage, but that's not realistic. That's not how mental illness works. That's not how suicide works. And to tell a family too bad because you didn't get that rider seems to me unnecessarily cruel and insensitive.

And I do want to provide a little context here. One of our councilwomen, Beth Kerrigan in West Hartford, first brought this issue to my attention and reached out and introduced me to Robin Brennan. And this was a couple years ago, and we had a meeting and I was in awe of her strength. And felt, of course, as any of us would, incredibly sad for what she and her family had gone through. And that they had planned a trip, and prior to the trip occurring her son Shawn had died by suicide.

And when eventually she looked to the travel insure for reimbursement, they found the fine print and said, "Well, too bad. It's not covered." And this, as I said, seemed to me and to Councilwoman Kerrigan and certainly to Robin, as very, very unfair, and not something that any consumer travel insurance could really foresee. And it needed to change.

So we reached out to the insurer in question, and it is true, as Senator Hwang and I want to thank him for his remarks and his partnership on this Bill, as well as of course Senator Lesser and Senator Formica as well, that they pushed back. And, you know, and raised some concerns.

I will say that as we continued to talk about the Bill over that next year or so, that I do give them credit that they came to the table and they were willing to think about it differently. And as I said, this compromise includes their thoughts and ideas and not only that, but their pledge to change the policy nationally, which I know, to the family, is incredibly meaningful.

I do ask for the indulgence of the Chamber for just a moment. I have just a few sentences, a statement

from Robin that she wanted me to read on the Senate floor, and she's anticipating final action here. So if you will forgive us, you know, hopefully this will be even more appropriate when the House passes it and the Governor signs it into law.

She wants to "Thank the entire Connecticut General Assembly and the Insurance Committee Chairs for supporting this Bill in honor of my son, Shawn. I miss him every second of every day, but it gives me some solace to know that another family will not have to endure additional heartache because their loved one suffered from a mental illness."

That's what this Bill is about. It's about changing the way that we think about mental illness. It's changing the way we talk about mental illness. It's changing the way we treat mental illness. It's about empathy. It's about decency, even if we have to legislate it sometimes, and it is about the love that a mother has for her son. It's Shawn's Bill, and I urge my colleagues to adopt it and pass it. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Slap. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I know it's not natural to get up a second time, just Senator Slap characterized my comments in a couple of ways that I just disagree with and I would like to have the opportunity to clarify that.

Again, with the term compromise, I'm delighted to hear first off that the insurer involved has agreed to update their policy across the country and I think that's wonderful. And I think that's the way it ought to be. That is them making a decision based on the facts before them, and making a good choice that benefits not only this particular family,

although I don't believe it will affect them as far as this claim goes, since that has already passed. But it would affect folks going forward by making a new and updated policy. But that's how our marketplace works in a free society.

I do not believe it's ever okay to legislate what is right or wrong. I believe that's up to the people on the street.

I also never characterized this Bill or my interpretation of what should have happened as buyer beware. What I suggested was informed consent to give consumers an actual choice.

When you say compromise, the Legislature was involved, the family was involved, and the insurance companies were involved but the consumer on the street was not asked if they want their travel insurance premium to go up. Because if you just ask them a blind question like that, they would probably say no.

Again, I never intended my comments to turn this into a discussion about right or wrong or the sympathy for this family, because I share it. Obviously, I said from the outset, that it's a tragedy anytime someone loses their life and I feel very sincerely for this family. And I also recognize their desire to do something in the memory of their loved one.

But when we make policy in this Chamber, it has to be based on what's good public policy. And another insurance mandate doesn't strike me as good public policy. Informed consent, with the choice being left to consumers is good policy. And I would just ask my colleagues in the future, when we have a situation like that, to consider that as Option A instead of immediately going to the blunt brute force of we say so and we will force you to do it our way, which is what this body resorts to in almost every circumstance.

I'm going to vote no on the Bill, Madam President, as I said, but I have no doubt it's going to pass. And I'm actually happy in that respect for the family's sake. Though I don't believe that we've done anything to advance what's good public policy in the state simultaneously.

The insurance company that is adopting this policy nationally of their own free will is doing the right thing though. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon. I rise in support of this Bill and for the record, Jack and Robin Brennan are cousins of mine, second cousins of mine. And I was advised that there is no conflict here that I should recuse myself because this is a broad Bill that covers many people in the state, but I wanted the Chamber and everyone to know that there is a connection.

I didn't see Jack or Robin Brennan since we were kids, probably 35 years, 40 years, until they came in to have dinner at my restaurant, which happens to be in the same town as the Brian Daigle Foundation. Many of you don't know Brian Daigle, but Brian Daigle was a classmate of one of my daughters and the son of Paul and Ann Daigle, who committed suicide while he was in college, at a very young age.

And they formed a foundation to try to raise awareness for this mental illness, for suicide prevention, to try to channel their grief into some good. Because as we know, those of us who have experienced loss, it is a lifetime change in our

being but if we can do a little bit to try to help move things forward so that the next person or the next family doesn't perhaps suffer the same pain, that helps us heal. And that's what Paul and Ann Daigle did for Jack and Robin Brennan when they came to talk about the loss of their son, Shawn.

I know that when my wife died of a heart attack, I got involved in the American Heart Association Heart Walk. It helps. Many of us around here are involuntary volunteers, as I would call that, after a grief-stricken event and you channel that grief to try to move things forward.

And I think that's what the Brennans were doing when they approached Senator Slap, not this Session, because this Bill has been around a couple of years. And it's been around a couple of years because there were things that needed to be corrected. There were things that needed to be adjusted. There were conversations that needed to be had. And those conversations were had.

And I have great respect for my colleague who spoke about good public policy. And I agree, we should focus on good public policy. And I respect my colleague's opinion.

But suicide, it's time for suicide to come out of the shadows. It's time for mental illness to come out of the shadows. And I believe that's good public policy, if we can recognize that and if we can, in a way, help through conversation, cooperation, communication, and collaboration, create something that takes us very small step toward achieving that end.

This Bill, I think, is indicative of what I was just talking about. It brings people together. It gives them an opportunity. The insurance companies are on board. And it, I think not only helps Jack and Robin and the family, but I think moving forward, it will help other people. So I stand in support of this

legislation. And I want to thank Senators Slap and Lesser, Hwang, and all of those who worked on this Bill. Thank you, Madam President, for the opportunity.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, Mr. Clerk, would you kindly call the roll and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, on substitute for Senate Bill No. 89. Immediate Roll Call Vote has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Senators, we are going to be having another roll call vote so please do not leave the Chamber. We will be voting on the Age Discrimination Bill very shortly, so don't go far.

Have all the Senators voted? The machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk, would you kindly call the tally?

CLERK:

Substitute for Senate Bill No. 89:

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	32
Those voting Nay	1
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

And the legislation is adopted. Senator Duff. Sorry, Mr. Clerk. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, for purposes of markings, please, and a vote.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. On Calendar Page 27, Calendar 230, Senate Bill 1003, I'd like to mark that item PR.

THE CHAIR:

Yes, so ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And I'd like to remove Calendar Page 3, Calendar 52, Senate Bill 56 from the Consent Calendar, and I'll ask the Clerk to please call that for a roll call vote please.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered. Mr. Clerk, if you would kindly call the roll on that item and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Bill No. 56. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Bill No. 56. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate, Senate Bill No. 56.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? The machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk, kindly call the roll please.

CLERK:

Senate Bill No. 56:

Total Number Voting	32
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	32
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	4

THE CHAIR:

The motion is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 24, Calendar No. 209, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1005, AN ACT CONCERNING REQUIRED HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR NEWBORN CHILDREN.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I've recently become quite familiar with the process of enrolling a newborn child onto parent's health insurance. And through discussions with our hospitals in Connecticut and with patient advocates, I became aware of this issue.

Under existing law, a parent has up to 60 days to add their child on to their health insurance. Prior to that, the coverage is extended automatically. This Bill, Madam President, would convert that to 120 days, or the length of the hospital stay, whichever is longer.

It's specifically concerning parents of kids with complex or complicated medical conditions. Oftentimes, parents have a lot on their minds and the last thing they're focused on is enrolling a child on their health insurance.

And so, Madam President, I would submit that this Bill would protect parents of children with birth conditions or complex medical conditions that might result in an extended hospital stay initially upon birth. Through you, Madam President, I urge passage of this Bill.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the legislation before us? Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Through you, I do have some questions related to this Bill. I think the concept of health insurance coverage for newborn children is incredibly important as they go through from birth onset to the care that's necessary to be conscious and aware of early diagnosis of potential illnesses or disease that could be addressed.

But through you, Madam President, and to the proponents of this Bill, what is the current statute? Is it 61 days? And what was the rationale? And then the extension to 121 days, which is nearly doubling it, what would be the rationale for that selection of dates? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, I think the intention of both the existing language but of this Bill before us is to provide basic consumer protections for insured individuals, people who have insurance coverage and want to make sure that their children are covered on their birth.

The explicit intent of expanding this is to ensure that a child born with a complex medical issue, who has an extended stay in the hospital, doesn't result in a parent obtaining a surprise medical bill simply by failing to contact their insurance company within a prescribed amount of time. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Through you, Madam President. Again, I guess my question was, what was the rationale to extend from 61 to 121? Was there any specific data? Was there any specific rationale for the doubling of that date? Or did we just make an arbitrary decision to 121 days?

I'm trying to better understand, because the current statute affords 61 days and for many of those cases, there is ample coverage. But again, my question

specifically, where did the good Chair make the determination to doubling to 121 days? Was there a data point and how did we reach that conclusion? Through you, Madam President?

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. And through you to the honorable Ranking Member, I would refer the gentleman to the testimony we receive from Dr. James Moore, who's the Director of Neonatology at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center, who talked about how this issue affects real-world families with newborn children.

And often, what will happen is either the family will get stuck with the Bill or the hospital has to, and these are families with insurance who are entitled to insurance but simply due to the -- you know, 60 days seems like a long time. And I'll tell you, 60 days after the birth of my first child, this year felt like an entire lifetime of joy and wonder, but I will tell you that it's my understanding that parents of kids who have complex medical conditions may have other things on their mind than getting on hold with their insurance company or their employer's HR. And so this gives them a little more breathing room to access the benefit that they already have. And I hope that answers the gentleman's question.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And it is an opportunity for me to give appreciation for the great work of

the physicians and healthcare providers at Connecticut Children's Medical Center right down the street here. They do tremendous work. And indeed, I appreciate the good Chair's use and referral to Dr. Moore's testimony. And in fact, a bit of a surprise, it was one of two testimonies that was provided on this very important subject matter.

And I will want to add for record the testimony of Dr. Moore, which answered my question. He specifically talked about in his testimony in regards to the four Hartford neonatal ICU units, that they provide service to children born with intensive care needs. And he talks about the specific numbers. That out of the 848 patients that go across and utilize their NICU unit, 183 of them stay greater than the 30 days and the average length of stay for these patients under the NICU unit is 79 days. That is an important data comparative that I referred to.

I rise in support of this Bill because of those data points. Those families that have loved ones, that the miracle of a newborn baby that needs neonatal care, that the average stay, as offered by Dr. Moore at Connecticut Children's, is 79 days. And for our coverage at 61 right now, it does not provide the coverage for those unusual cases. And it adds to the burden and challenge of parents that are providing care and parents that are undergoing the dramatic challenge of a lifestyle change and the multitude of adaption that they need to undertake. And the ability to be able to extend that to 121 days based upon the data points that we have is an important barometer.

I appreciate the good Chair's pointing it out and I wanted to accentuate that truly this data point is important when you look at the average stay of children that requires NICU is 79 days beyond the comparison.

But through you, does this have a fiscal note?  
Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, no.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

It's interesting how we calculate fiscal notes in this Office of Fiscal Analysis. Obviously, the extension of any insurance coverage increases potential incidences. And obviously, as we do the fiscal note on this, there is going to be an additional cost to the insurance companies that will be undertaking these insurance policies.

As the good Senator Sampson has mentioned earlier, that it always comes out in a cost, even though our fiscal analysis does not provide that. And as the good Chair quickly said that there is no cost, one of the biggest priorities that we will have in this legislative session is to be able to better contain and manage health care costs.

I would offer that even though the fiscal note does not offer any costs to the State of Connecticut, the extension of this policy will increase cost to consumers that will be purchasing these policies. So when we look at the fiscal analysis, we need to count not only from the standpoint of the fiscal analysis that's provided related to the state, we need to wholly understand the entire ecosystem of health care costs.

But for me, I'm aware of those considerations and costs. And it is indeed a choice. But it's a choice that I have a better understanding when we realize that these are cost considerations to address.

So for me, the idea of being able to provide care for young infants to be able to get the neonatal care that they need, in order to survive and have a viable, sustainable and healthy future life span, and to the benefits of the parents in the peace of mind, and the health considerations of their loved ones.

I urge support of this, but I also want to consider that health care cost does not exist in a vacuum. And that we cannot, by pure policy, wave a magic wand and say we have a better policy. Because as we have explored, and many times and many times in the future of this Circle, that health care costs does not exist in a vacuum. So for all of those that want to purport to have a magic solution to containing health care cost, I throw caution to the wind. Because if we had a solution, we would have done it 30, 40 years ago.

I think the only way we can truly contain health care insurance cost is to understand with every policy that we make in this building, that we need to consider the fiscal analysis. On that basis, the weight of this calculation for me, to ensure that we have better infant health, is one that will lead me to support this Bill. But I would urge us in the Circle to throw caution with every health insurance mandate, every magical solution that is being presented that will solve and address health care insurance costs, to look at it wearily, to look at it intellectually, but to also look at it from a basis of real-life practicalities. So thank you very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. I think I will start where the previous speaker left off, which is a conversation about the rising cost of health insurance in Connecticut, and the responsibility of this body in the direction of health care costs going forward.

This particular Bill has a very friendly title, AN ACT CONCERNING REQUIRED HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR NEWBORN CHILDREN. And obviously, I believe the title is intended to and absolutely does evoke a sense of emotion and concern, since we all want to make sure that newborn children have adequate health care.

But as was pointed out, this state has been on a trajectory of rising costs in almost every aspect. The other day, there was a report about us having the highest electricity costs in the lower 48 states. We are well known for our costs for business regulation. We are perennially on the most-taxed list and we have some of the highest insurance premiums for health care in the entire country also.

And I served several years in my role in the Legislature as the Ranking Member of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, where we often debated insurance mandates like the one before us. And what was immediately obvious to me is something that is no secret, which is that every insurance mandate sounds good, because every one of them is an increase to the amount of coverage and protection afforded to the policyholder.

And of course, we all want that. We want to see people have the maximum amount of protection and coverage that is possible. But what is not often discussed with the proper keen eye for rational and

good public policy, as I mentioned on the previous spill, is the consequences of what sounds good and is continually voted favorably year after year.

Insurance mandates come through this building and are passed to the point where we have some of the most insurance mandates in the entire country. And the previous speaker and my good friend, the Ranking Member of the Insurance Committee pointed out that it's ironic that the same folks that want to suggest that this body can do a good job of controlling the cost of insurance by having a government takeover are some of the same folks that are continually passing legislation that raises the cost of insurance.

So I have not made a decision how I'm going to vote on this Bill, Madam President, and I'm actually going to leave it up to the Chairman of the Insurance Committee to convince me that this is good policy and this is an insurance mandate we ought to do. Because throughout my tenure here, I have always tried to keep an open mind that we do need to, in some respects, provide mandates on insurance companies to make sure they are providing the proper coverage to their consumers and policyholders.

But we've got to be smart and we've got to think about which ones are really important and which ones are valuable, because we know that every one we do is going to raise the premium. So we got to pick and choose, what is worth raising the premium for?

So I want to start just by asking a couple of technical questions based on the language that I'm not quite sure about. Through you, Madam President, the very first thing is in Section B, which appears the same language both in Section 1 and 2, there is a discussion about -- well, let me ask the first question. Section 1 and Section 2 appear to be identical except for the reference to the type of policies that are being mandated to provide this coverage, which I believe appears in Line 6 of

Section 1 and Line 30 and 31 of Section 2, I presume this has to do with self-insured plans or private insurance carriers. Who exactly is mandated to have this and what is the difference between Section 1 and 2? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And through you to the good Senator, Section 1 refers to individual policies, Section 2 refers to group policies.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate that answer very much. So the sections are basically the same and appear to be enforcing this new coverage mandate on both types of policies, which are private insurance products, not any sort of government insurance product or the self-insured plan that all of us happen to participate in.

But I noticed that in that language under Section B, it says coverage for such newly born child shall consist of coverage for injury and sickness, including necessary care and treatment of medically diagnosed congenital defects and birth abnormalities within the limits of the policy. Sorry for reading that, but I thought it was easier to just say what it says. Does that mean that the coverage is limited to the policy or is only limited to the items that are listed here, which is injury and sickness including necessary care and treatment, et cetera? Or is it the entire policy coverage that exists if

the policy had been maintained in force without this mandate? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President, and through you to the Senator. The language that he's referring to is all present in existing law and is unmodified by this Bill. I would clarify that Senators use the phrase new mandate several times to refer to this section. I would clarify that and dispute that characterization.

There is already a requirement in existing law that insurance cover newborn children. And the question isn't whether or not insurance is required to cover newborn children or not. That is the law in the state of Connecticut. The only question before us is at what point does the parent have to notify the insurance company that their child is still covered? And that could either be 61 days under existing law or 121 days, or upon discharge from the hospital, whichever is later if this Bill were to pass. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And I appreciate that and I'm happy to debate with the Chairman the definition of mandate but I was really just looking for an answer to my question. And I understand its existing language but I think it's important to clarify exactly what is intended here.

Because I believe if it was only language that was to specify that the policy continues, whether or not the policyholder notifies the insurance carrier or pays the premium, then I don't think that we go through the trouble of putting this characterization in Section B of what the coverage actually consists of.

And to me it's important. I mean, without seeing this language, I would have assumed that the coverage would have been whatever is under the policy. But now that I read this, I feel like this language might limit it to only the things specified here. Because it says a few items and then within the limits of the policy, but it doesn't say just within the limits of the policy, it only specifies these items.

So if the Chairman doesn't know, that's fine, but I it is important to me that we have a clarification of whether or not this coverage is limited further than what the limit, the policy itself actually says. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, Madam President? No, I think the gentleman is correct that there are limits in the existing law over what coverage is required of newborn children. Specifically, it's clearly listed in line B but it may also be coverage required under the federal Affordable Care Act. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate the answer. Although I don't think I still know really what's happening here and whether or not this language somehow limits the amount of coverage they would have had had the policyholder notified under the normal circumstances. I suspect that this language does limit that coverage in some way and I don't necessarily think that's a good policy, if that is the case.

Just moving on, in Section C, Lines 19 and 20, and then it's repeated again later on in the Bill, it says that we are changing the timeframe to 121 days after the date of birth, or the date of discharge from the hospital. And forgive me for being a nuisance as far as the language written here, but I'm not quite sure whether that means 121 days after the date of birth is quite clear, but is it 121 days after the date of discharge? Or 121 days beginning on the date of discharge? Because it doesn't -- I don't know if that after carries over and I would just hate for us to have a dispute if somehow someone actually was making their report on that 121st day, and I'm just looking for some clarification on that. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. And through you to the gentleman from Wolcott, no, the date of discharge, not 121 days after the date of discharge.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So in fact, there is no coverage beyond the date of discharge, only 121 days after the date of birth?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

No, I apologize, through you, Madam President, if I was unclear in any way. So existing law requires that the insured notify their insurance company within 61 days of birth. This Bill would shift it to a two-part test, either 121 days, or the date of discharge, whichever is later. So those are the two questions, 121 days from date of birth, or the date of discharge from hospital, or from the initial visit to the hospital, whichever is later.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And that clarifies it much better for me, Mr. Chairman, so I appreciate that very much. I was reading that incorrectly and now that you've explained that it's an either/or, which I should have noticed by reading whichever is later, it does make the language much more simple to understand.

There was some conversation a few moments ago about neonatal care. Not being a doctor, my understanding would be that if you had a newborn that was undergoing neonatal care, that would happen without them ever being discharged from the hospital. First off, I don't know if I'm correct on that, so you might want to correct me. And if so, wouldn't that fall under the second category or the coverage

continuing on up until the date of discharge from the hospital? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, that's why we need this Bill, is to ensure that no matter how long a newborn is in the hospital receiving neonatal care, that they are covered by their insurance.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Thank you for that answer. So that would mean that if some situation occurred where the child was actually in the hospital undergoing neonatal care beyond 121 days, it would be covered even if it was 300 days, for example.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President. Correct.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Thank you for that clarification. So as I said, I'm undecided on

this Bill. Obviously this would be a benefit to anyone that happens to find themselves in this situation. Although I have to admit that my gut instinct on a few things is number one, I believe it is the responsibility of the parents of a child, if they're interested in looking out for their newborn child, clearly they have responsibilities as new parents. They have responsibilities to make sure their child is clothed and fed and, you know, looked after and made safe. And I believe one of those responsibilities would be to make sure that there is health insurance coverage maintained for that child also.

So I can understand someone having a child and the excitement and newness of the situation creates a set of circumstances where someone forgets to notify the insurance company about the birth of the child. And I believe this original Bill was passed with the idea that well, because of that, we're going to give those parents 60 days to figure that out and make that proper notification.

And this Bill, of course, is going to not only extend that to 121 days, but also for any length of period, as long as that child is still in the hospital receiving care, even if it was a very long time. And I don't know how long a child could potentially undergo neonatal care for, but I believe it could be a pretty substantial amount of time, depending on complications.

So my understanding of this Bill is that this language also provides that there is no requirement for these parents to pay their insurance premium for this coverage to be in force. Is that correct? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, is there a line that the Senator is referring to?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. In Section 1, it is on Line 23 of subsection C. And in Section 2, it is on Line 46 and 47, Subsection C.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President. This only applies if the insurance is in effect. So no, you have to have insurance for this entire Bill to be applicable.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I don't mean to disagree with the good Senator but I don't believe that's what it says here. It says quite clearly that this coverage is extended and then it says in order to continue coverage beyond the period, provided failure to furnish such notice or pay such premium or fees, shall not prejudice any claim originating within such period. And I just would draw your attention to the report from the Office of Legislative Research, which even in their notes indicate that there is nothing in here that says that the person has to pay the premium for this coverage to be continued.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, I think the gentleman is a little bit confused as to the intent of the underlying law. So the law is intended to make sure that the coverage is extended automatically to newborn children for a specified period of time at no additional cost to the insured. And this Bill would preserve that current practice.

So no, it would not result in an additional cost to the insured and would therefore not result in anybody being prejudiced because of nonpayment of an additional fee for the coverage of their newborn child. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. So if I'm understanding this correctly, because there may be an additional premium charge for the addition of the child to the policy, that is not taken into consideration for the coverage to be in effect, but the policyholder would have to maintain their policy by paying the premium, not taking that into consideration in order for this to be in effect. Is that correct? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

As I stated previously, through you, Madam President, this Bill only applies to people who have current insurance. So if you are not insured either because you have not purchased it or you have not paid your premium, none of this Bill would apply to you. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate that answer. And, again, I, we seem to be talking past each other just a little bit, or maybe I'm just not following completely. But my understanding is that the purpose of this Bill that is before us is entirely to make sure that coverage is in place, even if the policyholder fails to notify the insurance company or pay the premium. That's what it looks like to me.

And if you could correct me where I'm wrong in that assumption, by pointing to the language or clarifying the section that I had read a few moments ago, Madam President, I would really appreciate that.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, Madam President. Again, all of this line of questioning, through you, references underlying language in existing law. So if the gentleman wants to refer to Lines 15 and 16 and 17 and 18, they're referring to payment of a specific premium or subscription fee to provide coverage for a child. So that would be, to my reading, the additional cost of

enrolling a new child, not to whether or not the insured has a valid insurance policy.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I'm going to just move on from that. I don't know that it's clear reading the language of the Bill and I think it's something that we should definitely look at a little more clearly to make sure that everyone is understanding what is going on here and what the policy is intended to do.

The Chairman mentioned during his remarks on the Bill and its merits, real-world families. I'm just curious and I don't know the answer to this question. Again, I am open-minded and I don't, you know, categorically deny that we want to expand insurance protections for people in our state, even if it does create a cost. But in this particular case, I want to make sure that we're making a good choice so I want to understand this Bill as thoroughly as I possibly can.

Did any real-world families testify before the Insurance Committee in favor of this legislation? And if so, how many of them? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

No, through you, Madam President, we heard from a doctor at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center who was speaking on behalf of his patients. We

didn't hear from any directly. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Do we know, since no one seemed to be affected enough by this to come and testify on their own accord, through you, Madam President, do we know how many people might have been affected by this, maybe in the last year? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, I don't have that information but it would be a good question that the gentleman might want to pose to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center or the Children's Hospital at Yale, or other hospitals throughout the state that would probably be better able to answer that question than I am directly.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I would simply state that that is a question that should have been asked immediately at the presentation of this Bill proposal and not at this late hour where we are talking about final passage. Because it goes directly to my concern, which is, well, what exactly is going to happen if we make this Bill into law?

How many more people are going to be afforded this coverage and get this additional benefit, which is a positive? And also, what will that cost, which will affect people's premiums, which is a negative?

Without that information, I think it's impossible for any of us to make a correct vote. And it just boggles my mind sometimes, Madam President, that we do not have this information when we are debating policies like this. This is something I would be expected to be asked if I was proposing as Bill and trying to present it as something positive for this Chamber to vote favorably on.

I have another question, Madam President, which is one of the first things that I asked was about these two sections seem to affect different types of insurance products, and the answer was that this is for individual private insurance and group private insurance. I take that to mean that this insurance mandate, which I'll just go back to the fact that it is in fact a mandate. Anytime you are going to pass a policy that is going to put a requirement on someone or something that was not there before and in this case, the requirement is simply an extension of time, and that extension of time could be significant under the second part of the two-prong test, which we said was the date of discharge from the hospital, which could be far longer than 121 days. That is, in fact, a mandate.

And I really don't feel like debating semantics. I'm being completely upfront and trying to explain that I understand that there is a role here for this body to decide sometimes about what protections need to be in insurance policies. But we have to weigh that against the cost of those things. To argue about whether or not it is in fact a mandate when it clearly is, is not the point.

The point is, who is actually going to be provided protection and at what cost? And let's figure that out. So why does this Bill before us seem to cover

private group and private individual insurance, but it does not appear to cover the vast majority of people in the state, which I believe are covered under some sort of public group insurance plan? Or maybe not a majority, but a significant portion of the population is what I'm trying to say.

Madam President, is it true that the self-insured people among us that the folks that are purchasing insurance or have it through their state employee program or their municipal insurance program, they would not be afforded this expansion of coverage? Is that correct? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, as the gentleman understands, the cognizance of the Insurance Committee is limited to plans that are not regulated by ARISA, but are instead regulated by the Connecticut Department of Insurance. So this would cover all lives regulated by the Connecticut Department of Insurance. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And I appreciate that answer, although it is worth noting that this would absolutely not apply to the people in this room, or state or municipal employees. They would not get the benefit of this additional coverage.

It's also worth noting that this body is contemplating a shift in the way consumers are able

to purchase insurance with a public option. And that public option, my understanding is, is an extension of the type of insurance program that the Chairman just mentioned, which is not regulated by the Department of Insurance and is therefore a self-insuring plan. And that program would also not have this coverage.

I'm going to close my remarks just with my concerns about this Bill. And again, I remain undecided although the conversation we've just had, Madam President, is not condemning the language before us but it does raise some concerns. It really does. I think that the original timeframe of 61 days was a realistic timeframe that took into consideration new parents and the excitement of a newborn et cetera.

This seems like something else entirely, where we're actually affording a great length of insurance coverage, where I believe that it is the personal responsibility of parents to be responsible for their child by, as I said, you know, being responsible for clothing and feeding and making sure that they have the proper health care.

I'll leave it to the Chairman to do his best to convince me that this language is worth it, and that this is an insurance mandate that we should pass because the ultimate benefit outweighs any potential costs to consumers. I hope he's able to do that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President, for the second time, and I greatly appreciate that. I just want to, before I start, I want to extend my thank you to Senator Looney, for cosponsoring and raising this very

important newborn insurance policy consideration. And the reason I am saying that is I greatly appreciate that we're able to evaluate, analyze, and deliberate over a single issue, a single insurance mandate that is not pooled into an omnibus Bill, where we have the potential and perhaps in the future, debates in this Circle of a Bill that may have 25 other insurance mandates and which we're forced to vote a yay or nay on 25 very important issues.

I'm very grateful that we have an opportunity to be able to do the analysis, to weigh the pros and cons and the fiscal deliberation that's necessary for this Bill. And I'm grateful for it because through my analysis and through the Ranking role that I have, I rise in support of this Bill. But I think it's important for us to understand the incredible complex and difficult challenge in understanding the health insurance marketplace.

So through you, Madam President, I do have some particular questions in regards to the current marketplace that we're in. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you very, very much. As mentioned earlier, Section 1 and 2 talks about individual and group marketplaces. Through you, Madam President, to the good Chair, is this proposal applicable to the fully insured marketplace, the self-insured marketplace, and the Partnership Plan 2.0? Is the specific applicable to all three of them, or to two of them, or just one of them? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, the Bill before us only is applicable to the fully insured marketplace. I believe the Partnership Plan is a plan that is offered by the comptroller to municipalities. And as a matter of practice, the comptroller both for state employees and for plans issued by the Partnership Plan has a historically implemented all coverage requirements that apply to the fully insured marketplace.

This Bill does not apply, through you, Madam President to the self-insured marketplace, which as I explained earlier to Senator Sampson, is governed by federal law, ARISA, and is therefore preempted from action by this body.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate the quick explanation of the three different marketplaces, the fully insured, the self-insured and the Partnership Plan. And it's interesting. So this plan would only apply to the self-insured marketplace. Is that correct? Through you, Madam President?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, no.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

If I had intended it to be a trick question, through you, Madam President, I meant the fully insured marketplace. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Again, I would reiterate my earlier answer which is that although the language of the Bill only references the fully insured marketplace, I would just in response to Senator Hwang's earlier question, refer him to my earlier answer, which is that the plans issued by the comptroller, as a matter of practice, if not law, do comply with all existing coverage mandates. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, and I appreciate that clarification. But through you, Madam President, they're not required to do it under Partnership, the program controlled by the comptroller. They're not required to do so. And I think another important part of it is, through you, Madam President, to the proponent of this Bill, the fully insured marketplace, the self-insured marketplace, do they have an audit and transparency requirement that all of their interactions and reporting need to go through the Department of Insurance? And does the Partnership Plan 2.0 require that audit and transparency process? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President, for that question. If I understood, I've heard Senator Hwang refer to the Partnership Plan 2.0 several times. I assume he's referring not to 2.0 but to the Partnership Plan offered by the comptroller to municipalities. Is my understanding correct? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you for that point of clarification. Yes, the current plan is administered by the comptroller, the Partnership Plan. Does it have an audit and transparency process that is required, I presume, of fully insured and self-insured to report and audit financial records to the Department of Insurance? Does the Partnership Plan have that fiduciary and statutory requirement? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Madam President, I'm looking at the lines of the Bill before us, which is Senate Bill 1005 and I am not seeing any language in it pertaining to the comptroller's Partnership Plan. That being said, I believe there are audit requirements that do apply to that. But perhaps that's a discussion for, respectfully, another day.

I will just say with regard to the other part of his question, yes, fully insured plans are regulated by the Connecticut Department of Insurance and self-insured plans are not.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Through you, thank you, Madam President. And so what would the percentage breakdown between the fully insured and the self-insured marketplace be? Just give me an estimate. Through you, Madam President.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

I believe, through you, Madam President, the estimates I've seen suggest about one-third of the marketplace is fully insured.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you. And indeed, I believe most of the proposals that we will evaluate and consider in the Circle, and consider throughout the General Assembly only accounts for one-third of the marketplace. Would that be correct? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, I am the Chair of the insurance and Real Estate Committee in Connecticut,

which regulates, oversees the Department of Insurance. We are limited by federal law to only regulate the plans that are regulated by the State of Connecticut. So plans that are not regulated by the State of Connecticut are beyond our scope. We also cannot regulate Medicare, we cannot regulate the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other health care programs sponsored or regulated by the federal government.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, and I appreciate that, very quick -- I was just trying to keep up with some of the quick, rapid-fire answers. So as you said, Let me repeat, that the fully insured marketplace is the marketplace regulated under the cognizance of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee. Is that correct? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

And secondly, the self-insured marketplace, as well as the Medicaid marketplace, is regulated by the federal statute of the Affordable Care Act. Would that be correct? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

The self-insured marketplace is regulated by the US Department of Labor. Through you, Madam President. The Medicaid marketplace, I'm not sure what that is. But Medicaid as you know, through you, Madam President, I hope the Senator understands is a joint state and federal program administered by the Center for Medicaid, Medicare and Medicaid Services, and also overseen by our friends over at the Human Services Committee and the Appropriations Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you, and I appreciate the good Chair's explanation. It's a very helpful process. Thank you. And so both of those, again, are required by statute to report their financial and operational data to the Department of Insurance. Through you, Madam President, is that correct? Yes or no?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

When the Senator from Fairfield refers to both of them, what is he referring to? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

I'm happy to repeat. The fully insured marketplace, which controls one-third of the marketplace, and the self-insured marketplace, which constitutes two-thirds of our marketplace, are both of those insurance markets and the carriers that represent them, are they required by statute to report an audit and transparency process to the Department of Insurance? Yes or no, through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Through you, Madam President, to the best of my knowledge, no.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

A point of clarification. Did the good Chair say no? That there are no statutory requirement that the fully insured marketplace and the self-insured marketplace and its carriers to such, are not statutorily required to report audit and data to the Department of Insurance? Just repeating, just for a point of clarification. Through you, Madam President.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

To the best of my knowledge, through you, Madam President, the Department of Insurance regulates the fully insured marketplace, not the self-insured marketplace.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

I guess we'll just have to double check on that data point. I believe any carrier in that marketplace, on a commercial marketplace, has to report an audit and transparency process.

But nevertheless, with that said, the self-insured marketplace which does have the reporting, according to the good Chair, does the Partnership Plan have an audit and transparency statutory requirement to report to the Department of Insurance?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Could the gentleman please refer to the line of the Bill, Senate Bill 1005, that that question pertains to? Through you, Madam President.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH):

Thank you. I appreciate the good Chair's reference to the germaneness of that question. But we're trying to better understand the relevant marketplace in which insurance products, and it is indeed a very complex and intertwined circle that we try to fully understand. You're absolutely right, through you, Madam Chair, that the Partnership Plan is not related to it.

But what we're looking at is the cost of health insurance, the cost of this important newborn mandate that we're about to vote on, one that I support, because I weighed the need for newborn health versus the cost of insurance. So for me to ask the question of health care insurance cost, analysis and data, and the justification for those type of policy decisions, it is important for us to understand that whatever plan we consider, whatever

insurance products, health insurance product that this legislative body undertakes, that we need to know that there is an audit, that there is a transparency process because ultimately, the costs will be borne by someone.

So if the good Chair is saying that it's not germane to this debate, I'll respectfully acknowledge that. But for me, as I evaluate health insurance cost and coverage, I'm going to vote for this Bill. But I would hope that as we consider any future health care insurance-related bills, that there is a need. In fact, there is a respect and a requirement to have transparency, to have an audit process for any such product moving forward. So thank you, Madam Chair -- Madam President, for your indulgence. And now I want to thank the good Chair for his patience with my questioning as well. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Bill that is before us? Will you remark further? If not, Mr. Clerk if you would kindly call the roll and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Senate Bill No. 1005. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Bill No. 1005. 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 locked. Mr. Clerk, would you kindly announce the tally, please?

CLERK:

Senate Bill 1005:

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	33
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

And the measure is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 6, Senate Bill No. 831, AN ACT CONCERNING  
COMMERCIAL MORTGAGE LOAN ORIGINATORS.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, Senator Kasser.

SENATOR KASSER (36TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I move acceptance  
of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and  
passage of the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is indeed on passage. Will you  
remark?

SENATOR KASSER (36TH):

Yes, Madam President. This is a Bill that simply  
seeks to correct a statute that was passed in 2011.  
And it seeks to exempt commercial mortgage loan  
originators from the requirement of being paid time-  
and-a-half overtime.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the legislation that is before us? Senator Berthel, good afternoon.

SENATOR BERTHEL (32ND):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Good to see you and my fellow Chair of the Banks Committee. I do have one question that I think just for clarification, Madam President, through you to the Chair. I just -- I believe that part of the intent with this, Senator, was that we were also going to be aligning state law with federal law in terms of the wage requirements and wage regulations with respect to highly compensated workers. And that that was really the legislative intent.

And if I'm also not mistaken, through you, Madam President, that this was a request from the industry to us. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Kasser.

SENATOR KASSER (36TH):

Thank you, Madam Chair, through you. Yes and yes, this is a request from the industry, from RCN Capital. They are a company located in South Windsor, Connecticut. They have commercial mortgage loan officers who issue mortgages nationwide, and they are unable to work more than 40 hours. They would like to be exempt from that requirement so that they can work as much as they choose to work and earn the commissions that they earn.

And to your first question, yes, this would align state law with federal law. Federal regulations already exempt highly paid employees, which is defined as someone with an annual compensation of at least \$107,432. And this would create parity between commercial mortgage loan originators and consumer

mortgage loan originators. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Berthel.

SENATOR BERTHEL (32ND):

Thank you, Madam President. I thank the good Chair for the clarification and the answers. And I think it's a good Bill. We're doing the right thing. The Banks Committee did a lot of a lot of good, good work kind of behind the scenes, if you will, this session so I urge adoption. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Bill that is before us? Will you remark further? If not, the machine -- Senator Duff? All right. Mr. Clerk, would you kindly call the vote? The machine will be opened.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Senate Bill No. 831. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Bill 831. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Senate Bill No. 831.

THE CHAIR:

All right, have all the Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? The machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk, kindly announced the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill 831:

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	33
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

And the measure is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 18, Calendar No. 176, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1021, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Would the Senate stand at ease for a moment?

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will stand at ease. And we're back in session. And Senator Hartley, the floor is yours, ma'am.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH):

Thank you, Madam President. It's a delight to see you this almost evening, and it also feels good to be back at my desk. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH):

Yes, indeed. Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, SB 1021 is the work of the Manufacturing Caucus and also the CMC. That is the Connecticut Manufacturing Coalition led by Eric Brown.

To date, the CMC has exponentially moved forward the Connecticut manufacturers agenda, first of all, by speaking unified in one voice, by focusing on regulatory reform, and most recently for proposing and advocating for the inclusion of a manufacturing expert on a Cabinet level in the administration. And of course, as we have borne witness over these last 12 months, that the Chief Manufacturing Officer, the advent of that position could not have been more timely and more fortuitous in helping the state as manufacturers had to pivot into the production of PPE, ventilators and the like, during the height of the pandemic. So hats off to the CMC, and to Eric Brown for a job very well done.

And so maybe just a word about our manufacturing sector in the state of Connecticut. It represents really 10% of our workforce; that's about 161,000 employees, covering about 4,000 companies. And the average salaries in this sector are about \$96,000.

But to put another dollar value on this sector, in 2018, the manufacturers contributed \$31 billion in Connecticut gross state product. It's a very, very important pillar to the Connecticut economy.

And in recognition now of what we find ourselves in, and that's the emergence of the fourth industrial revolution, which is essentially called Industry 4.0 or for short, I-4.0, the Industrial Revolution of the 21st Century, it simply probably is best described as the digitization of manufacturing.

And SB 1021 is simply to establish a manufacturing technology working group to put together a roadmap,

a clear process for our small and medium-sized manufacturers, so that they may be able to integrate an access the values and the technology of industry 4.0 into their production lines, so as to continue the state of Connecticut, our designation, how we are well recognized and known as manufacturers, as world class.

And with that, Madam President, I urge adoption.  
Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Hartley. Will you remark further?  
Good evening, late afternoon, Senator Martin.

SENATOR MARTIN (31ST):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Yes, and it's almost that time of the hour to complete our work here. Madam President, I rise to support this piece of legislation. I think this is a fascinating era that the manufacturing industry is upon. You know, they've led the charge in the division of labor, going back into the 1700s where they used water and steam power in order to produce textile processes and the likes of cutting up . They used sawmills and used water in order to produce the increase of the lumber industry, and then also the grain.

And, you know, the good Senator talked about this being the industry 4.0, that was industry 1.0, so to speak. And from there, it went on to electricity, sort of increased our ability to increase production and the use of the assembly line. And the third component, or industry 3.0, was actually the computer industry. And here we are, still kind of new to the industry, maybe 10 or 15 or 20 years old, into this maybe a little bit longer. But I can still remember getting that very first desktop computer at our construction family business and thinking, holy cow, what it could do.

And fast forward, here we are today with robots, the use of data in order to make our production more efficient. What this Bill does is grabs the connection of various computers and data and enables to exchange data back and forth between not only intercompany, but also within industries. And this is what this group is looking to accomplish, to see, gee, what obstacles do we have? How can we make production better using this 4.0 industry?

And truly hats off to the manufacturing industry that come to us and to ask us, hey, could we do this? So that we could stay ahead of the curve, as well as for us legislatively with a report that we hope to have -- well, we plan to have in March of next, in '22, or May, is to tell us what we need to do legislatively.

So I look forward to reading that report, knowing that we're going to be in the forefront and ahead of the curve, so to speak, within this Bill. So thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Martin. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Bill before the Chamber? If not, Mr. Clerk, please if you would kindly call the roll, the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Substitute for Senate Bill No 1021. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Substitute for Senate Bill No 1021, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? The machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk, would you please announce the tally?

CLERK:

Senate Bill 1021:

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	33
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

And the legislation is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I'd like to mark the next item as a PT.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

And then the Senate will stand at ease while we wait for the proponent to come in for the next Bill. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I think the Clerk has already called the Bill, so I'd like to yield to -- The Clerk has not called the Bill. Mr. Clerk, please call the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

PAGE 11, Calendar No. 129, Senate Bill No. 909 AN  
ACT CONCERNING CHANGES TO THE HUSKY B PROGRAM.

THE CHAIR:

Good evening, Senator Moore.

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

Good evening. It is getting toward that hour, isn't  
it?

THE CHAIR:

Indeed.

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

All right. Madam President, I rise to move  
acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report  
and passage of the Bill, Senate Bill 909.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is indeed on passage. Will you  
remark?

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

Yes. This Bill, AN ACT CONCERNING CHANGES TO THE  
HUSKY B PROGRAM, it'll change the copayments under  
Husky B. Right now, instead of matching the  
copayment levels under the state employee point of  
enrollment health care plan, the Bill specifies that  
it not be more that it exceeds the amount that state  
employees pay. This Bill also eliminates Husky Plus

Program, which provides certain supplemental services to members who have medical needs that exceed HUSKY B covered benefits.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Bill that is before the Chamber? Senator Berthel.

SENATOR BERTHEL (32ND):

Good afternoon again, Madam President, and good afternoon, Senator Moore. Good to see you today. I don't have a question. I just want to make a statement. I think this is a good Bill. I rise in support of it.

It's important for the reasons that you stated, Senator, regarding some adjustments and updates to the Husky B program. And I think that the other part of this Bill that's important for us to highlight is that it actually has a very small savings of about \$14,000 a year, which may not seem like a lot of money when we talk about hundreds of millions of dollars and billions of dollars in our budget every year, but it is a savings. And I think that it's important that we highlight that.

So, again, no question to the proponent. I just wanted to bring out a couple of additional comments about the Bill. And I, again, urge adoption. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Berthel. Will you remark further on the Bill? Will you remark further on the Bill that is before us? Senator Moore.

SENATOR MOORE (22ND):

Madam President, if there's no objections, I would ask to put this on the Consent Calendar. It passed unanimously out of Human Services.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objections, it will be moved to the Consent Calendar. Mr. Clerk -- Senator Duff, pardon me. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, can we go back to the item that was just previously marked PT and mark that item as go?

THE CHAIR:

Yes, and indeed we will put that back on the go list. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

PAGE 16, Calendar No. 165, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 927, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE SEWAGE SPILL RIGHT TO KNOW STATUTE.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Cohen, good evening.

SENATOR COHEN (12TH):

Good evening, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR COHEN (12TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. The purpose of this Bill before us today is to amend our sewage right to know legislation, statutes rather, to provide more timely public notification.

If you'll recall, back in July of last year, there was a spill into the Mill River, a sewage spill when in excess of 2 million gallons of raw sewage was released. Unfortunately, information was not disseminated in a timely manner. This Bill would really make changes to that, to requiring reports out of not only the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection within two hours, but reporting to our municipalities and out of our municipalities to the general public, also within two hours of any spills that are determined to be of a public health threat or an environmental impact to our general public.

That the public has a right to know about these things and make determinations whether or not it's appropriate for them to swim or to engage in recreational activities. We did have this spill in July. It impacted many communities that were downstream of the Mill River, including many of those that I represent.

And I'm pleased to say that this legislation passed unanimously out of Committee, and I would urge my colleagues to vote yes today.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Cohen. Will you remark further on the Bill? Good evening, Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I rise to make a couple of comments on the Bill, if I might.

First is that one of the most significant changes in the legislation from the sewage spill right to know statute as it currently exists is that this Bill, for the first time, considers permitted sewage bypasses, as spill events.

So what the public may not know is that for years DEP has granted authority to large sewer plant operators during large flow events, like rain events, to actually bypass the system. And so what also occurred in the last year is that sewage out of the New Haven sewer system, I believe, impacted Long Island Sound, certainly the New Haven Harbor, and so on.

And the implications of that is that we have a very, very significant shellfish industry in the state of Connecticut. And so people that were advocates for notification said, "Well, wait a minute. We're requiring people to notify if there's a sewage spill, what about this?" And so there are various points throughout the Bill, that make it very clear that even those permitted sewage bypasses fall under the obligation of the right to know.

Additionally, the Bill talks about numerous ways that we now want area health agencies to notify the public municipal officials, to notify the public municipal officials to notify other municipal officials that may be downstream. And all this really started with the City of Waterbury some years ago when they had a sewage event.

So I join my colleague in recommending to Members that we support this Bill. There are some dates in here that talk about the DEP reaching certain benchmarks with regard to real-time public notification. I'm hopeful that the administration will take this seriously. All too often we as the Legislature established dates and make recommendations through statute to do certain things, and agencies, for one reason or another, choose not to do it.

But in this case, given the fact that it's December 1st, 2021, I would imagine the Environment Committee could revisit this issue if the DEP chose to slow walk this issue. So thank you, Madam President, and I rise in support of the Bill. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Miner. Will you remark further on the Bill that is before us? Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Speaking in support of the Bill, I certainly wanted to commend the Environment Committee, I wanted to commend Senator Cohen and Senator Miner, for their comments on the Bill.

One of the precipitating incidents for it did occur last summer when there was a spill that occurred in Hamden due to a broken sewer pipe. But most of the damage actually occurred downstream in New Haven and other communities, as the sewage flowed. And only apparently, under the regulations, only Hamden actually needed to be officially notified because that's where it actually occurred.

Mayor Elicker, in fact, said that he wasn't informed until he got calls from constituents who were out doing some recreational boating on the Mill River, and all of a sudden they saw sewage floating past them and called the City. The City had no knowledge about what was going on at that point. So this will remedy that.

And as Senator Miner and Senator Cohen said, other additional elements to it as well, but it is a simple matter of communities who are likely to be damaged need to be notified, because in fact, the community where the original spill occurs may not

turn out to be the one who suffers the most damage.  
So thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Bill that is before us. Will you remark further? If not, Mr. Clerk, would you kindly call a roll call vote and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Senate Bill 927. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Senate Bill 927. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate 927. 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 locked. Mr. Clerk, if you would please announce the tally for the Chamber.

CLERK:

Senate Bill 927:

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	33
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

And the legislation is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 18, Calendar No. 178, Substitute for Senate Bill 9149, AN ACT CONCERNING HMONG LAOTIAN SPECIAL GUERRILLA UNITS WHICH SERVED IN THE KINGDOM OF LAOS.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, good evening. Senator Cabrera.

SENATOR CABRERA (17TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill and seek leave to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR CABRERA (17TH):

Thank you, Madam President. This Bill is simply to acknowledge the role that Hmong Laotian Special Guerrilla Forces played during a secret war in Vietnam. These are soldiers that fought alongside many of our US troops. They performed very important functions. They rescued pilots, they disrupted supply lines, they protected secret radar installations, and an estimated 35,000 lost their lives in Vietnam.

Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment, LCO 6594. I ask that the desk call the Amendment and I be given leave to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

LCO No.6594, Senate Schedule "A".

THE CHAIR:

Senator Cabrera.

SENATOR CABRERA (17TH):

Thank you, Madam President. This Amendment fixes an honest mistake that occurred during drafting of the Bill. The Amendment simply fixes that and outlined in Section 5, the new section that's being introduced here, to make sure that it's appropriate.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Amendment that is before the Chamber? Senator Cabrera.

SENATOR CABRERA (17TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I urge adoption of the Amendment.

THE CHAIR:

And thank you for moving adoption. Will you remark further on the Amendment that is before the Chamber? Will you remark further on the Amendment before the Chamber? If not, let me try your minds. All in favor of the Amendment, please signify by saying aye.

MEMBERS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The Amendment passes. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER(9TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I rise in support of the Bill as Amended and want to

thank the good Senator from Hamden for his remarks. You know, this is an important issue and I was not aware of the Hmong Laotian Special Guerrilla Units until a few years ago, when they became active as part of the Greater Middletown veterans community. And since then, Madam President, as you know, we have worked with them and provided the ability for a Huey helicopter to be displayed at Veterans Park in Middletown, in honor of their work alongside Americans during the war in Southeast Asia.

So I think this is an altogether important Bill and I urge colleagues to support the Bill as amended.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Bill before the Chamber? Senator Cicarella.

SENATOR CICARELLA (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And I also would like to rise in support of this Bill. While working on Veterans, it came to my attention of the sacrifice that the Laos residents made to support our troops. And it's my understanding that we worked together before to give them burial rights, and this just continues that good faith effort for the sacrifices that they made.

And it's my understanding that a lot of them came and gathered in Connecticut to continue their lives. So I also rise in support. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Bill that is before us. Senator Anwar? And we'll let you put up your plate so that everyone knows who you are.

SENATOR ANWAR (3RD):

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you so much and I rise in support of this Bill SB 914. I wanted to thank my colleague and my friend, Senator Cabrera, and all the members of the Veterans Committee. And, of course, above all the SGU Unit.

I wanted to share with you a couple of stories. And I came to know about these stories through a friend of mine who lives in my district in East Windsor, Bob Light. And Bob introduced me to two individuals, one of them, we refer to him as General Czar. And General Czar is one of the SGU unit members who actually helped our military, helped us and put himself in danger. And his story has been written by a Commander, Colonel Trattora, and it shared about the challenges that the SGU unit has had in this Laotian war.

So this, Madam President has been individuals who showed an extreme amount of courage and also had significant pain in the process, because after the war was over, many of them were prosecuted and were actually jailed in prison and became prisoners of war.

One individual I want to mention is a lady who actually is also a Connecticut resident, she is Ms. Kinney. She was a nursing assistant and because of this war, she actually ended up staying in prison as a prisoner of war for some nine years, four months and 10 days. And, again, a story for her, a book is going to be written and we will hopefully be able to read that, but understand the challenges that the people had to go through to protect us.

The sad thing is that they were never recognized. They were never recognized and honored the way they need to be. And the federal government is going to work on that, but at least the State of Connecticut can do our share and this Bill just does that. And I'm honored to be part of this effort. And I'm honored to join many Members of the Veterans Committee who actually stood unanimously in support

of this Bill, to honor the individuals who gave so much.

And again today, I had a chance to talk to General Czar on the phone just now, and I spoke with him and I said, I'm going to come and speak about this. And he could not obviously be here because of the pandemic, but there's so many people who are thankful and appreciative of all the Legislators and especially you, Senator Cabrera, for taking the leadership and your effort and other Members who have taken such an important leadership effort at this time. Thank you again, Madam Chair -- Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Cabrera.

SENATOR CABRERA (17TH):

Madam President, if there is no objection I ask that this item be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, no objection. I think there were some other Senators who were going to speak on this, Senator Formica, did you want to, Senator Formica? You're not speaking. Okay. So we'll maybe do the Consent Calendar but we'll just hold off for a moment.

Madam President, I just want to rise in support of the legislation and thank both sides of the aisle for bringing this out. I particularly want to thank the Chair and the Ranking Member who both have brought out their first Bill, and maybe speaking in

support of legislation for the first time. So I just want to again, and also thank Senator Cabrera for his work on this legislation as well.

And in tradition, Veterans Committee does work in a bipartisan way, which is why I think we have all of our leaders here who were looking to maybe say a few words. And so, again, I just wanted to thank all the folks on the Veterans Committee for bringing out this important legislation and those who have spoken for it as well. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

And Senator Kelly, would you like to speak, sir?

SENATOR KELLY (21ST):

Thank you, Madam President. And I likewise rise in support of this initiative, long overdue. And I'd like to thank the leadership of the Veterans Committee for bringing this initiative forward to recognize individuals who helped the effort, and did fantastic work and assistance for the United States in a war in Southeast Asia.

The real purpose for me rising, however, takes me back to the days when I worked in the Department of Social Services and did home visits in the city of Bridgeport in the early 80s. And there was a sizable and significant population of Southeast Asian, whether it was Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos. And I got to meet many of these families with whom I would track over the years, just check in to see what these individuals were doing.

One family made an impression on me because he was an individual who was a general from the Laotian army. And although he didn't live at the highest echelon of America at that time, he was just happy and blessed to be here, and to live in a country of opportunity and hope. And for that, he was willing to sacrifice so that his kids would have a bright

future. America was the land of opportunity for him, it remains a land of opportunity for others to this day, that are looking for that same hope and dream.

We must never forget that America remains and always will be as long as we are committed to it, to that shining city on a hill. We are blessed. And we must make sure that those promises not only exist, but those promises that were written in our Constitution remain vigilant every day. And this is an initiative that recognizes that sacrifice for that promise.

And I just want to thank the Veterans Committee leadership to for the fact that they brought this forward in urge its support. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Kelly. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Just speaking in support of the Bill, I think it is entirely appropriate that this piece of legislation comes as a consensus bipartisan initiative of the Veterans Affairs Committee. I want to thank Senator Cabrera, who his advocacy bringing this forward as Chair of the Committee, I believe it's his first Bill to bring out and I think if that's a model of bipartisanship, we ought to assign him the hot potatoes to handle because he has done such a good job with this one.

But, as was said, one of the continuing legacies of the Vietnam War is in many cases, the late recognition of allies that were very important to the United States during that period, but may not ever have been properly recognized and have suffered a great deal. Many of them were displaced in their homelands and are now here, as was mentioned about several individuals in particular. And this is a matter of justice and equity, to recognize the heroism of those allies who protect who participated

so much by the side of and in furtherance of the efforts of American troops at the time. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Looney, and for a point of clarification for the Chamber, Senator Cabrera did request that this be put on the Consent Calendar and I think the Chamber was distracted. So I will ask again, if there was any objection to putting this item on the Consent. Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I ask that we vote by roll.

THE CHAIR:

And since the request is to vote by roll, then Mr. Clerk, if you would kindly announce the roll call vote and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Bill 914. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Bill 914. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Senate Bill 914.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? The machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk, would you please announce the tally?

CLERK:

Senate Bill 914:

Total Number Voting	32
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	32
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	4

THE CHAIR:

And the measure is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 10, Calendar No. 125, Substitute Senate Bill No. 608, AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN WHEN BUYING ICE CREAM FROM A FROZEN DESSERT TRUCK.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, good evening, Senator Haskell.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

Good evening, Madam President. It's good to see you. I thank the Chamber for its patience today. It's obviously been a long day and I think this is one of the final votes. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. In addition, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment LCO No. 6763. I would ask that the Clerk please call the Amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

LCO No. 6763, Senate Schedule "A".

THE CHAIR:

Senator Haskell.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, I move adoption of the Amendment and also asked to waive the reading. I would seek leave of the Chamber to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

And please proceed, sir. And we do have an Amendment, and the question is on adoption.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

Thank you very much, Madam President. Let me start by saying that I believe I speak for every Member of the Transportation Committee when I say that we were all so tremendously moved by the public hearing on this very important Bill to protect the health and safety of children across the state of Connecticut.

I want to thank Representative Linehan, Senator Anwar, Representative Roland, Representative Somers, Representative Carney and Senator Cicarella and so many others who have worked on this Bill in a bipartisan manner.

The Bill establishes safety equipment requirements and operating rules for ice cream trucks, which of course are motor vehicles that sell frozen desserts, especially in the summertime, which speaks to the timeliness of accomplishing this Bill before the weather gets even warmer and we start to hear that

familiar sound of an ice cream truck coming around the corner.

Importantly, the Bill also allow us a grace period whereby ice cream truck vendors will have a little bit of time before they need to comply with the equipment requirements. These equipment requirements Madam President, includes signal stopping arms, crossing arm signal lights.

Additionally, there are traffic operation requirements that come into effect a little bit sooner. It requires the drivers when approaching or overtaking an ice cream truck display flashing lights and extend that stop signal arm and crossing arm. They need to stop the vehicle at least 10 feet from the -- I'm sorry, drivers that encounter an ice cream truck need to stop their vehicle 10 feet in the front or back of the truck. They can only proceed past that truck at a reasonable speed up to five miles an hour if it's safe to do so. And of course they need to yield right of way to any pedestrians.

There is an Amendment that the Clerk called, of course, LCO No. 6763. This makes a few technical changes. It requires the DMV post information about the equipment requirements and operating rules on its website. It also requires that the Department of Consumer Protection and local health departments include a link to this information when ice cream truck vendors apply for certain permits.

Finally, it eliminates the provision that prohibits DMV from registering ice cream trucks if they are not equipped as the Bill requires. That really isn't a function of DMV, and we think it's more appropriate to instead empower local law enforcement to provide a warning until September 30th. And after that time, issue infractions and potential fines for vendors who fail to comply with the legislation.

Finally, let me just thank Christy and Tyler Barhorst, the unbelievably brave and unbelievably compassionate parents of Tyler, a young man who lost his life in June of 2020 in a tragic accident in Cheshire, Connecticut. They've channeled their grief into activism and advocacy to make sure that other families do not have to experience that loss.

This Bill is coming too late for people like Tyler, but hopefully we can prevent further loss and I look forward to discussing this Bill. I believe Senator Somers may have an Amendment as well, but I will conclude my comments at this time.

THE CHAIR:

Okay, so right now, we do have an Amendment that has been moved that is before the Chamber. So let us start with that Amendment before we move on to any others. So we have the Amendment that Senator Haskell just discussed. Are there any Senators who would like to speak on that Amendment that is currently before the Chamber? Senator Somers?

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH):

Yes. Good evening, Madam President. I rise in support of this Amendment. This Amendment incorporates many things that we have worked on with DMV and Consumer Protection. And this Amendment in its form that has been presented by Senator Haskell really provides an added measure of safety for all of our children who encounter that happy moment of going to the ice cream truck.

And unfortunately, this was a tragic situation, which did not turn out to be what the family had anticipated, so they are moving forward in a proactive way to prevent this from happening to any other family. And I just wanted to rise in support of it.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much. Is there any other Senator who would like to offer comments on the Amendment that is before the Chamber? If not, let me try your minds. All in favor of the Amendment that is before the Chamber, please signify by saying aye.

MEMBERS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The Amendment is adopted. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Senator Somers.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. The Clerk is in possession of LCO 6781. And I was hoping that he could call the Amendment and I would have permission to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, if you would kindly call the Amendment please. Could you give us that LCO number again, please?

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH):

Absolutely. It's 6781.

CLERK:

LCO No. 6781, Senate Schedule "B".

THE CHAIR:

Senator Somers.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I would like to ask permission to not have to read and to summarize. I'm hoping this Amendment will be considered a friendly Amendment. All it does is in the amendment that was presented by Senator Haskell, there is a speed limit limitation of 25 miles per hour. What this Amendment does is with the permission of your local traffic authority, it would allow for them to decide an ice cream truck could be suitable for roads 35 miles per hour and under.

There are some towns within the state of Connecticut in the rural part that their speed limit is 35 miles an hour. We want to make sure that they have an opportunity, of course with permission from the traffic authority, to maintain their businesses.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. And Senator, do you move passage and adoption of the Amendment?

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH):

I move adoption of the Amendment. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further on the Amendment that is before the Chamber? Senator Cicarella?

SENATOR CICARELLA (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I'd also like to stand in support for the Amendment 6781. I think it is important that we move the good Bills forward and this is a great bipartisan Bill. And I think this just makes it a little bit better and allows ice cream shop vendors and residents of the towns to enjoy the summer treats, where there may be speed limits that are listed just above that 25 miles per hour. So thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Senator Haskell.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I do consider this a friendly Amendment and would be perfectly amenable to a voice vote if it suits the Ranking Member.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Are there any other Senators who would like to comment on the Amendment that is before the Chamber? If not, let me try your mind. So all in favor of adopting the Amendment before us please signify by saying aye.

MEMBERS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

All those opposed? The Amendment is adopted. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Senator Anwar.

SENATOR ANWAR (3RD):

Thank you, Madam President. I stand in support of SB 608, as Amended. This Bill has gone through the Kids Committee as well, as well as the Transportation Committee. And I wanted to thank the Members of the Transportation Committee, especially Senator Haskell and Representative Roland for their leadership. And of course, this is a bipartisan effort to make sure that we are protecting our children in our community.

But I also wanted to recognize my Co-Chair on the Kids Committee, Representative Linehan, who has been

working very closely with the family to bring about the awareness and hoping to be able to protect children in the future.

And For Tristan's Law, I want to just say a couple of things if Members of the Transportation Committee as well as the Kids Committee, if they had the opportunity to listen to Tyler and Christy, their passion, their compassion, their understanding and their focus to save more children. Their concern about saving more lives was so palpable, and they were just saying, how can this Bill pass as soon as possible?

And that was the most important thing because their pain is something that they do not want anybody to feel in the entire state or in the world, if possible. But at least in the state of Connecticut, we have an opportunity to try and have a protection and prevention for them.

And as they describe Tristan as a perfect soul, I just want them to know this perfect soul is working through all the Senators and today hopefully that perfect soul will be able to help us do the right thing and make sure we save other perfect souls. So thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the Bill that's before us? Senator Haskell. Senator Cicarella.

SENATOR CICARELLA (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of Bill 608, Tristan's Law. I also want to thank all the colleagues on both sides of the aisle. When I first heard about this current situation, you know, it was not through Tristan's family, I was working on another case in my profession where another child was injured. A

traumatic brain injury in Hamden, Connecticut, and I came across this story while doing research on that specific case.

And while doing research, I was shocked to realize that there was nothing out there. So when I was approached by Christy Corrado, which is Tristan's mother, and, and she explained to me what was going on, I was fully aware of it and the lack of safety precautions for our children and our pedestrians.

And when I spoke to Senators and House Members on both sides, the support was overwhelming, and the quick response of the Transportation Committee and leadership to move this forward in such a bipartisan way and working so well together to honor Tristan was great to see, as this is my first year and this is only my second time speaking, it was great to see the process unfold, and see the good that it could do. Not only in Tristan's name, but possibly save other children in that process.

You know, the story is very sad and the Corrados, Christy Corrado and her husband Tyler did a phenomenal job of advocating, and not only them, but their friends and families, whether it was speaking at the public hearings, or getting petitions to really raise the awareness of this situation and problem that we have. And it does not only affect this one family. As I said, there was another incident in Hamden In the same year, and there are many injuries every year, but we don't hear about them.

And Connecticut is one of the only surrounding states that didn't have any real regulations to protect the children. I believe there's only one ordinance in Hartford, so I thought it was great that we all came together and did something good for our children. It makes a lot of sense, and Tristan's story is very sad. And out of such a sad story, you know, when I was speaking to Mrs. Corrado today, she was very happy to realize that this was moving

forward and in Tristan's name, because of how sad that story was, the last day of school is supposed to be happy time, Tristan's father's birthday, and such a terrible accident occurred at such a joyous time. Not only just to go get ice cream, but the last day of school, father's birthday. Not only a day was wrecked, but lives, and so many lives.

And out of such a negative and terrible incident, good can come out of it. And it was great to be a part of that and work with our Ranking Members, Senator Somers, Senator Haskell, and really work hard to push this across the line for Tristan and any other possible kids that can be or may be affected by this. So it was a pleasure to work on this and I am in support of Tristan's Law. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the legislation before us? Senator Haskell.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I just want to close by once again thanking the Barhorst family. You know, this is one of those special days in the Legislature when we can I think be really proud that our government is responding efficiently, when it's responding compassionately, when it's responding in a bipartisan manner to a tragedy.

I can't help but think back to the public hearing when a family friend of Tristan's parents came and spoke to my colleagues and I. I want to read to the Chamber what she said.

She told us "As Members of the Legislature, you have the ability to change lives, and to protect the safety of Connecticut children." I think she's got that exactly right. The only thing that I would add is we don't just have the ability to do so. We've

got the responsibility to do so. And I think today, I'm proud that we're doing just that. So as my colleagues go and cast their vote, I hope that they, as Senator Anwar said so beautifully, think about Tristan and his memory and his loss, and also the other children, tragically, who haven't always made the headlines.

We know that we should be thinking about Ryan Collins, the seven-year-old boy in Glastonbury who in 2010 was hit by another motor vehicle after visiting an ice cream truck. He suffered a fractured skull and needed a skin graft on his leg. We should be thinking about Eric, who was struck by a motor vehicle right after getting a treat from an ice cream truck in 2010. We should think about Livia, who was struck in 2005, an eight-year-old girl who was seriously injured after crossing the street from behind an ice cream truck. We should think about the 12-year-old in 2003 in Hartford, who was hit by two cars after crossing into a busy road in search of an ice cream truck. We should think about the seven-year-old boy in South Windsor, who was struck in 2002 after crossing from behind an ice cream truck. We should think about Sarah, the teenager in 1999, in West Haven, who suffered a compound fracture and extensive head injuries after being hit while crossing the street for an ice cream truck.

I'll close by saying I'm thinking about Tristan and all of those young people as I cast my vote in favor of this legislation. I would encourage my colleagues to do the same. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? If not, Mr. Clerk if you would kindly call the roll and I will open the machine for a vote.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 608. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate, Substitute for Senate Bill 608. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

And I would encourage members to stay close to the Chamber because we will have a vote on the Consent Calendar next. So please stay close to the Chamber.

Have all the Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? The machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk, please announce the tally and Members please stay close by because we are going to be having a vote on the Consent Calendar. Mr. Clerk?

CLERK:

Senate Bill 608:

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	33
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

The measure is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, would the Clerk now please call the items on the Consent Calendar, followed by a vote of the Consent Calendar, please.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, please tell us the items on the Consent Calendar.

CLERK:

Consent Calendar No. 1, Page 1, Calendar 160, Senate Joint Resolution No. 43; Page 2, Calendar 180, Senate Resolution 8; Page 11, Calendar 129, Senate Bill 909. That is the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. If you would kindly call the vote and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

Consent Calendar No. 1, immediate roll call vote in the Senate on Consent Calendar No. 1. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate on Consent Calendar No. 1. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate on Consent Calendar No. 1. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Have all the Senators voted? Have all the Senators voted? The machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk if you would please announce the tally.

CLERK:

Consent Calendar No. 1:

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	33
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

And the consent calendar is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, that concludes our business for today, though I want to mention Senator Cassano missed votes today because of a family emergency, and Senator Bradley had business outside the Chamber. And I'll yield to any other points of personal privilege or announcements.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. For a point of personal privilege, just to note, Madam President, that the annual celebration of Ramadan began this week and we wanted to commend all of those who are celebrating for this entire month, the sacred month of the year for Senator Anwar, and members of the Muslim community throughout Connecticut, throughout the nation and throughout the world, during the sacred time. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Looney. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

Go forth and govern.

(On the motion of Senator Duff of the 25th, the Senate at 6:08 p.m. adjourned Sine Die.)