

CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE

Wednesday, July 14, 2021

The Senate was called to order at 10:58 a.m., the President in the Chair.

THE CHAIR:

Good morning, everyone. Will the Senate please come to order? Members and guests, if you would please rise and direct your attention to our esteemed Assistant Clerk who will provide the prayer.

ACTING CHAPLAIN AMERICO CARCHIA:

Please grant our hearts grace as we come together for our deliberations. As we face many needs and challenges, give us the ability to be judicious. Amen.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much. And with that, I'd like to invite up Senator Dan Champagne to lead us in the Pledge. Senator.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH):

(All) I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, Senator. And good morning,  
Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Good morning, Madam President. Good to see you today  
and good to see my colleagues back up here in  
session. Madam President, with the -- is there any  
business on the Clerk's desk?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, I do believe you have some business items  
for us.

CLERK:

Good morning, everyone. The court is in possession  
of Senate Agendas No. 1 and No. 2, dated July 14th -  
- Wednesday, July 14th, 2021.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

**Senate Agenda  
No. 1  
JULY 2001 SPECIAL SESSION  
Wednesday, July 14, 2021**

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE GOVERNOR**

**A PROCLAMATION FROM HIS EXCELLENCY**

**THE GOVERNOR**

**WHEREAS**, I have declared public health and civil preparedness emergencies throughout the State of Connecticut because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak in the United States and Connecticut; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the emergency declarations, I have issued executive orders to protect public health, limit transmission of COVID-19, and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (the "COVID-19 Orders"); and

**WHEREAS**, a very small number of the COVID-19 Orders remain necessary to ensure a comprehensive, robust, and flexible response to and recovery from the pandemic, including the ongoing campaign to provide vaccinations to underserved communities or those who are not yet eligible, the need to provide adequate healthcare, testing, and other services in what remains a constantly changing healthcare environment, and the ability to provide emergency fiscal relief and housing to citizens affected by the public health and economic effects of the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result, I will need to extend this

very small number of the COVID-19 Orders; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Special Act 21-5, I have informed the leaders of the General Assembly, by letter, copying all members, that I intend to renew the declarations of public health and civil preparedness emergencies through September 30, 2021;

**NOW THEREFORE, I, NED LAMONT**, by the authority vested in me under Article III of the Amendments to the Constitution of Connecticut and Section 2-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, and to preserve orderly and decent government, do hereby:

Convene the General Assembly in Special Session in Hartford on July 14, 2021 to approve the renewal through September 30, 2021 of the declarations of public health and civil preparedness emergencies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given under my hand and Seal of the State at the City of Hartford, this 8th day of July in the year two thousand and twenty-one.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE GOVERNOR:**

July 13, 2021

The Honorable Denise Merrill  
Secretary of the State  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06106

Frederick J. Jortner  
Clerk of the State House of Representatives  
State Capitol

vs/rr  
Senate

5  
July 14, 2021

Hartford, CT 06016

Michael Jefferson  
Clerk of the State Senate  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06016

**RE: Renewal of Public Health and Civil Preparedness  
Emergencies Pursuant to Special Act 21-5**

Dear Secretary Merrill and Clerks of the General  
Assembly:

On March 10, 2020, I declared a public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency throughout the State, pursuant to Sections 19a-131a and 28-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The declarations were issued in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 disease associated with a novel coronavirus that was affecting multiple countries and states and had resulted in the spread of infections in Connecticut and surrounding states, as well as resulting shortages of personal protective equipment and other supplies that could jeopardize public safety and civil preparedness, and in order to provide me and other appropriate officials with all authorities necessary to limit the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus and protect public safety within the State of Connecticut.

Since that original declaration, and pursuant to the authority granted by Sections 19a-131a and 28-9, and more recently, special acts of the General Assembly, and in response to the continuing need to respond to this ongoing pandemic, I have renewed and declared new emergency declarations through July 20, 2021. Pursuant to those declarations, I have issued certain executive orders to protect the public

health and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (the "COVID-19 Orders"), while at the same time carefully and continuously evaluating all COVID-19 Orders, and consequently repealing or allowing to expire the vast majority of those orders.

My letter of July 8, 2021, attached hereto and made part of this declaration, explains in detail why it is necessary to declare and renew for a limited time the public health and civil preparedness emergencies, extend a very small subset of the COVID-19 Orders, and maintain the ability to respond provided by Sections 19a-131 and 28-9.

Therefore, for the reasons described in that letter, and for the same reasons I declared emergencies on March 10 and declared new and renewed emergencies on September 1, 2020 and January 26, April 19 and May 18, 2021, pursuant to Sections 19a-131a and 28-9 of the General Statutes, as well as Special Act 21-5, I am renewing the existing public health emergency and civil preparedness emergencies throughout the state.

These renewed states of emergency shall run concurrently and remain in effect through September 30, 2021, unless earlier terminated by me. The Department of Public Health, along with municipal and district health departments, as well as multiple other state agencies in supporting roles, are responding to these renewed public health and civil preparedness emergencies. As I did at the time I declared and renewed the public health and civil preparedness emergencies noted above, and in accordance with Section 19a-131a (f) of the Connecticut General Statutes, I hereby authorize and direct the Commissioner of Public Health to delegate the powers regarding isolation or quarantine to

municipal and district directors of public health,  
while concurrently retaining such authority.

Pursuant to Special Act 21-5, I have issued a call  
to convene the General Assembly on July 14 to  
consider and approve such renewal. Subject to the  
General Assembly's approval of the renewal, orders  
regarding additional measures to protect public  
health and safety and ensure the state's civil  
preparedness will follow as I determine to be  
necessary.

I am filing this declaration with you under my hand  
and seal on this 13th day of July, 2021.



Ned Lamont  
Governor



July 8, 2021

vs/rr  
Senate

8  
July 14, 2021

Sen. Martin M. Looney Senate President Pro Tempore

Rep. Matthew Ritter  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Sen. Bob Duff  
Senate Majority Leader

Sen. Kevin Kelly Senate Minority Leader

Rep. Jason Rojas House Majority Leader

Rep. Vincent J. Candelora House Minority Leader

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

RE: Renewal of Emergency Declarations Pursuant to  
Special Act No. 21-5

Dear Senator Looney, Representative Ritter, Senator  
Kelly, and Representative Candelora,

I write today to inform you, pursuant to Special Act No. 21-5, that I intend to renew through September 30, 2021 the declarations of public health and civil preparedness emergencies originally declared on March 10, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In accordance with the requirement in Special Act No. 21-5 for approval by the General Assembly of such renewal, I will be issuing today a call to the General Assembly to meet in special session on July 14, 2021. While our state is in a much better position with regard to the prevalence of COVID-19 and our ability to respond to it than we were at the outset of the pandemic, there remain several reasons why it is prudent and responsible to renew the emergency declarations.

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[Governor.Lamont@ct.gov](mailto:Governor.Lamont@ct.gov)

When I first issued the emergency declarations, it had become clear that Connecticut was facing an onslaught from a highly infectious disease about which little was known, for which there were no known effective treatments or vaccines, and which immediately imposed significant impacts on the economic, social, and emotional well-being of so many of our citizens.

Since then, the people of the United States and Connecticut have sacrificed greatly and endured great loss. More than 8,000 people have been taken by this disease - fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters, beloved grandparents, aunts, uncles, cherished friends and colleagues. We must not forget the human and emotional price we have paid.

But in the face of such great loss, we have also made enormous progress together.

Pursuant to the emergency declarations, I issued executive orders to help us engage the full resources of the state government and the private sector in the fight against this disease. Such orders made it possible to procure and distribute personal protective equipment, boosted financial and staffing resources to provide critically needed healthcare services, provided fiscal relief to people and businesses devastated by the economic impact of the pandemic, created flexibility in laws

and regulations to conduct government and private business safely, and instituted protective measures to keep the public, including children in schools and their teachers, safe.

The people of Connecticut responded heroically. Healthcare professionals, schoolteachers, grocery workers, restaurant employees and building cleaners and maintainers, among many others, kept our society going even during the darkest months at great personal risk to themselves. Business and academic leaders contributed their expertise and their resources to the fight against the coronavirus. Connecticut's residents sacrificed in ways large and small, adjusting and adapting to great disruption and often foregoing the interactions so essential to daily life.

And the legislature, under your leadership, has taken significant action in cooperation with my administration to provide the resources and flexibility needed to fight this disease, passing legislation to provide access to healthcare, telemedicine and social services, expediting fiscal relief to businesses, workers, and residents, and codifying or extending provisions that made it safer to conduct social, economic and government activities ranging from voting to outdoor dining to public meetings.

We are engaged in one of the most successful vaccination campaigns in the nation, one that must continue and must also evolve in order to remain successful. More than 67 percent of our population has received at least one dose of vaccine, and more than 61 percent are fully vaccinated. Fully 79.6 percent of adults in Connecticut have received at least one dose. As a result, our infection rate is

low, with an average of only 40 new cases per day and a test positivity rate that has hovered consistently below 1 percent for weeks. Most significantly, hospitalizations and deaths attributed to COVID-19 have plummeted and remain low.

Our success at reducing infections, increasing healthcare access, and providing both fiscal relief and operational flexibility have made it possible to reduce from a high of more than 300 active executive orders at the height of the pandemic to only about 11 that I propose to extend - a reduction of 96 percent.

These orders are still needed to protect the public and continue critical measures to provide healthcare access and economic relief and respond to evolving changes. They are also narrowly targeted to achieve specific goals that would otherwise be unachievable because of statutory or regulatory barriers that were not contemplated in the context of a highly transmissible and long-lasting disease outbreak when the statutes were passed.

For example, more than 30 percent of our population has not received even one vaccination dose, part of nearly 1.5 million Connecticut residents who are not yet fully vaccinated. This presents a serious public health risk, especially in light of new information showing that a full course of vaccination is necessary to protect against the newest variant. The increasing prevalence of a new COVID-19 strain, called the "Delta" variant and estimated to be about 60 percent more contagious than previous strains, puts those who are ineligible to receive the vaccine or who have conditions that make the vaccine less effective at greater risk of contracting COVID-19

from others who have not yet been vaccinated. Nearly 100 percent of those who have died or been hospitalized from COVID-19 were not vaccinated, adding to the urgency of continuing to make progress on increasing vaccination rates.

Our vaccination campaign must continue to reach those who have not yet been vaccinated. In support of that effort, the Department of Public Health (DPH) has identified several sites on state-owned commuter parking lots that are ideal for vaccination clinics because they are easier for residents to access. Using such lots, however, requires the continued modification, accomplished by a currently effective executive order, of a statute that prohibits use of these lots for anything but commuter parking.

Making vaccines convenient and easy to access and making them available in many different areas and locations is a core component of our strategy for reaching unvaccinated people. With commuters returning to work and increased traffic, these high-traffic lots have the potential to attract commuters. The sites will go live by July 30, 2021. To maximize effectiveness, DPH needs to have enough time for first and second doses at the sites. If the sites are successful, DPH needs the flexibility to extend the program through September. Every vaccination counts toward our combined health and safety.

In addition, DPH continues to adjust to the changing circumstances around vaccine distribution and federal resources. Even now, DPH and other state agencies are negotiating vaccine redistribution contracts with hospital systems. These new arrangements will make possible a more targeted

vaccine distribution network than currently exists in the state. Although any contract negotiations take time, procuring these types of goods and services through traditional statutory processes, even using certain emergency procurement authorities that already exist, does not provide the flexibility and efficiencies that are needed at this time. Two executive orders that have

waived these statutory processes specifically and only for critical COVID-19 response measures must be continued in order to make this possible.

The order that authorizes state agencies to provide temporary, non-congregate housing is being used in large part at this time as a wraparound service for those individuals who because of their existing housing or working environments, are at increased risk of exposure to, infection with, or transmission of COVID-19. In a 30-day period in May and June of 2021, 939 homeless households and approximately 200 domestic violence survivors used hotel rooms for non-congregant housing. This is a rolling system with rooms constantly in use. The declarations of emergency and attendant orders like this one ensure that the state addresses the health and safety of our residents. And, because of these necessary declarations of emergency, the state continues to receive FEMA funding to cover the costs of non-congregant housing as well as other items.

While I have lifted requirements that masks be worn in most settings and locations, there remain several settings where transmission risks must be reduced because of the higher numbers of people in enclosed spaces, the vulnerability of certain people to infection even if vaccinated, and the difficulty of determining who is vaccinated. For this reason, the order requiring masks in certain settings and

providing for the Commissioner of Public Health to issue modifications to the mask requirements, remains necessary.

Similarly, because children under 12 are not yet eligible for vaccination, the increased risk to the unvaccinated from new variants, and the uncertainties about the course of the disease when classes resume in just a few weeks, the order authorizing the Commissioners of Education and Early Childhood to issue operational and safety rules for school and childcare settings also remains necessary.

Another transition measure will ensure that both tenants facing eviction and landlords will have more time to access the resources they need. While I have ended the state's eviction moratorium, I recently issued an executive order to provide tenants some additional time to repay all back rent or for tenants and landlords to access federal relief funds through the UniteCT program. Extending this order for a short time will mean more landlords are likely to receive unpaid rent and more tenants will stay in their homes. Doing so is critically important not only as an economic relief measure, but also because those at the lowest end of the economic spectrum are the least likely to have already been vaccinated, increasing the risk of infection that is already exacerbated by the rising prevalence of the Delta variant.

Renewing the emergency declarations is necessary to extend these orders and to respond to any unanticipated changes to the risks presented by the pandemic. In addition, several federal funding sources are contingent on the continuance of certain orders issued pursuant to the emergency declarations

or on the continuance of the emergency declarations themselves.

FEMA will continue to cover 100 percent of the non-congregate housing costs if the declarations are continued beyond July 20, 2021. To date, the Department of Housing has received \$7.7 million in FEMA reimbursements. There is currently an additional \$8.4 million in the pipeline for non-congregate housing and an additional \$2.26 million projected for July 20 to September 30, 2021. In addition, the USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) has granted waivers to the states, including Connecticut, allowing for the issuance of emergency allotments (supplements) based on

a public health emergency declaration by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act related to an outbreak of COVID-19 when a state also issued an emergency or disaster declaration. Connecticut has applied for and received this waiver since April 2020. The total amount of additional benefits received through June 25, 2021 is \$339,339,554; the additional amount received in June 2021 alone is \$32,588,367; and the average issuance or additional amount to a family in need is \$155.45.

For these reasons, it is necessary to renew the emergency declarations, and I recommend strongly that the General Assembly approve such renewal for this limited time. I will continue to exercise the authorities attendant to these declarations in a judicious fashion and in a spirit of consultation and cooperation. I appreciate your cooperation and collective effort in responding to this generational challenge to our state.

Sincerely,



Governor

**EMERGENCY CERTIFICATIONS**

**SENATE RESOLUTIONS**

**SR NO. 51** RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE RULES OF THE SENATE FOR THE JULY SPECIAL SESSION, 2021.

**SR NO. 52** RESOLUTION APPROVING THE GOVERNOR'S RENEWED DECLARATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND CIVIL PREPAREDNESS EMERGENCIES FILED WITH THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE ON JULY 13, 2021.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, would the Clerk of please call Senate Resolution No. 51?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 51. Resolution concerning the rules of the Senate for the July Special Session 2021.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

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

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. These are standard rules for the -- for our special sessions.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, let me try your minds. All in favor, please signify by saying aye.

(MEMBERS):

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Aye. Opposed. Opposed? Okay, we don't have any opposed, so therefore, the ayes, and they -- the rules are adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Will the Clerk please call House Joint Resolution No. 501?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution No. 501. Resolution concerning the joint rules of the July special session 2021.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, these are concerning our joint rules and I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

And the motion -- the question is on adoption. Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Again, these are concerning our joint rules for the House and Senate of our special session.

THE CHAIR:

And thank you. Will you remark further on the Resolution before us? Will you remark further? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor please signify by saying aye.

(MEMBERS):

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed. The ayes have it and the Resolution is adopted. (Gavel) Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Would the Clerk please call House Joint Resolution No. 502?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution No. 502. Resolution concerning the expenses of the July special session 2021.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

And question is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. These are standard Resolution regarding expenses of our special session.

THE CHAIR:

And will you remark further on the Resolution before us? Will you remark further? If not, let me try your minds. All in favor please signify by saying aye.

(MEMBERS):

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed. The ayes have it, and the Resolution is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Would the Clerk please call House Joint Resolution No. 503?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

House Joint Resolution No. 503. Resolution concerning the printing of the Journals of the Senate and House of Representatives for the July special session 2021.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

And the question is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. These are Resolution concerning printing of the Journal standard for our special session.

THE CHAIR:

Very good. Will you remark further on the Resolution before us? Will you remark further? If not, let me try your minds. All in favor please signify by saying aye.

(MEMBERS):

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed. And the ayes have it. The Resolution is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, would the Clerk please call the following Resolution from Senator Agenda No. 1, Senate Resolution No. 52.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 52. Resolution approving the

Governor's renew declaration of public health and civil preparedness emergencies filed with the Secretary of the State on July 13th, 2021. There are Amendments.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. And good morning, Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Good morning, Madam President. Very good to see you this morning. Madam President, I move adoption of the Resolution called by the Clerk.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. And the question is indeed on adoption. Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, this Resolution extends the Governor's emergency powers and it -- his request is that they be extended to September 30th.

As everyone may recall, during the regular session we had adopted legislation that authorized an extension when the General Assembly was not in regular session of up to six months, so the Governor could have requested an extension to January 20th of 2022. I believe, six months after the expiration of the current order, which is in place until July 20th, but he's asked for only a 70 day extension at this time, which I think is certainly prudent and reasonable and does indicate that his use of his

emergency powers has been judicious and has not engaged in overreaching.

One of the things I think to keep in mind is that during the regular session we also did pass a statute that actually provides for more legislative oversight than it ever been the case before in terms of reviewing the Governor's emergency orders is -- his executive orders pursuant in emergency declaration. And that is the provision that allows the six leaders to convene the Speaker, the President Pro Tem, the two Minority Leaders and the two Majority Leaders to convene to consider a particular executive order. And a majority of that group could in fact revoke that Executive Order as long as they meet within 36 hours of the issuance of that order. That provides for prompt an immediate opportunity for legislative review that had not existed prior to the adoption of that statute. That statute was adopted on a bipartisan basis.

So I think that with that procedural safety what the Governor is asking, pursuant to the new declaration and request for an extension of powers is highly reasonable given what we're experiencing now with the surge of the new Delta variant, which is becoming problematic all over the country and has reached critical proportions in some parts of the country. We see that, I believe, that our positive testing rate today will go over 1%, again, having been as low as half that a week or two ago. And I think we need to be prudent and recognize that this pandemic is still ongoing. That while Connecticut has a higher percentage of people vaccinated than many other parts of the country, that is not in and of itself a guarantee or a shield of protection.

In fact there are thousands and thousands of people

in our state who are immunocompromised who will not get the full benefit of a vaccine even if they have both vaccines and they're following all of those directives because of the fact that either underlying medical condition or medication that they are treating -- taking for an underlying medical condition causes a suppression of the immune system.

In addition, at this point we know that children below the age of 12 are not authorized yet for vaccination. So there great deal -- great significant number of vulnerabilities throughout the state and a great deal of risk that's still before us, so the Governor's order I think is quite prudent. He laid out in his earlier message about a dozen areas that he thinks he would need to take action on right away but and again as I said, this was an extension for less than half of the time for which he could have requested an extension. And I think what he has asked for is prudent, and I think it's also important to note that the Legislature is not a body that can respond immediately to an emergency.

The Legislature has a process that has to be gone through, a Bill has to be created. There has to be a concurrence of opinion in the House and Senate to come into Session. There has to be legal process of vetting the Bill and then the problem in scheduling of -- for 36 Senators and 151 Representatives. So at maximum efficiency, that takes a matter of several days.

Emergencies don't often allow for waiting of several days. There are some things that have to be dealt with in hours rather than in multiple days. And for that reason, only the executive has the flexibility to take action in a true emergency. So we are being

merely prudent in authorizing this extension. It is in no way an abrogation of legislative authority because as I said, the statute that we passed during the regular session, Public Act 21-5, is a response to those concerns and has been addressed in that legislation.

So I would urge approval of the Resolution. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Looney. Will you remark further? Good morning, Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON (16TH):

Good morning, Madam President, delighted to see you up there. I have great respect for my colleague Senator Looney and his contribution to this Chamber, but I have to disagree with his comments a moment ago.

Over the last several days, I've been speaking with, you know, friends and neighbors mentioning that this vote was coming and that we would be here today to debate the Resolution that would extend the Governor's executive authority under the declarations of public health and civil preparedness emergency. And I've been met with almost a complete and universal reaction with, "Wait, what?" Followed almost every time by, "Wait a second. There is no emergency," and I always say, "Yeah, no kidding."

We don't have to get into the daily statistics that have been released by the Governor's own administration to be aware that there is no current emergency, not an actual or true emergency in any

case. And it is true we have come a long way on since the beginning of the COVID pandemic. I'm sure people listening will recall the phrase 15 days to slow the spread. And along the way we've had many, many contentious debates about the role of government, and essentially the argument is between the government's responsibility as far as public safety and public health, versus the individual liberty of free American citizens. And of course this is an important debate to have and it's much needed clearly in the state our society finds itself in today. And it's definitely important when there is indeed a true emergency.

I want to just read something very briefly from the Governor's own letter that he provided the Legislature indicating he wanted to extend these -- his powers, and therefore the executive orders that accompany them. He says quote-unquote, "We are engaged in one of the most successful vaccination campaigns in the nation. One that must continue and must also evolve in order to remain successful. More than 67% of our population has received at least one dose of the vaccine and more than 61% are fully vaccinated. Fully 79% -- 79.6% of adults in Connecticut have received at least one dose. As a result, our infection rate is low with an average of only 40 new cases per day and a test positivity rate that has hovered consistently below 1% for weeks. Most significantly, hospitalizations and deaths attributed to COVID-19 have plummeted and remain low."

So by the Governor's own admission there is no emergency. I don't think anyone could draft those words and put them in a letter without believing that they had been successful. The discussion about whether or not we need to have the Governor in power

in a way that allows him to react quickly, as was indicated by the Senate President, is a legitimate debate. There's no question about it, but that debate only matters when there's a real emergency at hand, and we do not have one. The most important part of this conversation is a recognition of whether or not we are in a state of emergency.

You know, people vary about what they believe the Governor's authority ought to be anyway. Whether or not the Governor ever had the authority to do many of the things that he has done even at the height of the COVID pandemic. I for one argued that he would - - shouldn't have had the right to determine which businesses and individuals are essential versus those that are nonessential. I argued that in a free society, it is people who make that decision about whether or not they want to open their business or they want to frequent that business. It is not some arbitrary government entity or the Governor himself imposing his belief system on them. The public realm has always been the area where people make their own determination about what is safe about what happens. And obviously the government has a role there, and that debate should, as I mentioned a moment ago, it should happen and we should continue to have it but now is different, there is no emergency at all.

We're here in this room right now and we could easily vote on each and every one of the executive orders that the Governor is talking about. He's even provided us with a list of 11 executive orders. We could do that all in one day quite easily. We could do it today quite easily. And that is our responsibility and we should.

I'll just point out that if you look at this document that shows the 11 executive orders that the

Governor intends to issue as a result of this extension. There is no mistaking what's on this list, and everyone should be aware that if a legislator, their Representative or their Senator votes in favor of this extension, they are voting in favor of these executive orders at the same time because essentially they are handing over their vote to the Governor to make that decision for them.

And among the items on here are Executive Order 9-1, which is essentially the order that is requiring schoolchildren from P -- pre-K through 12th grade to wear masks in schools. Simply put, if you vote yes for this extension you are voting yes to put masks on children in schools.

There's also Executive Order 12-D, which continues the eviction moratorium, which is putting untold amount of stress on a great part of the business community in our state. I got landlords that have their properties being foreclosed who cannot afford to support their families because they have been put aside in favor of this legislation, which is unconstitutional on its face because the United States Constitution prohibits the Governor or even the Legislature from interfering in a private contract like a lease.

Make no mistake, anyone who votes to extend these executive orders is voting to keep these policies in place. And I'll remind everyone, it is utter irony that we are in this room today to say it's too scary or too dangerous to come to this room to vote. Then what are we doing here exactly? It's absurd on its face.

If an emergency occurs tomorrow, a week from now, three months from now if the Delta variant, as was

mentioned, becomes a thing in Connecticut, the Governor of the State of Connecticut can issue an executive order or issue his emergency declaration at that moment and it is enforced at that moment. We have a process for that. Basically, the Governor would issue his emergency declaration and then the six -- I'm sorry, it's not six. It is the leadership of the four caucuses and the leadership of the Public Health Committee. I don't know how many people that makes up but they will be the ones, as have in the past, to vote to determine whether or not they can veto essentially that Governor's emergency declaration.

The point is we don't need to be here. We do not need to be renewing this declaration. We don't need to be doing any of this. If an actual emergency occurs, there is a mechanism. The same exact mechanism that was used in March of last year when this first began, but I suppose the Governor figures it's a lot easier to do whatever you want than to let the Legislature vote on things. But he should know that that's how we do things in a free country.

Being referred to daily as King Ned is not a term of endearment. It's a message that something is gravely wrong. History will remember how we vote in this Chamber today because our job as state Senators is to represent our constituents who are free citizens, who ask us to bring their values and their ideas and their wants and needs to this body to make decisions about the policy that will run the State of Connecticut. Voting yes today means you do not want to do that job.

I would question anyone of my colleagues even under an emergency whether or not they think it's okay to relinquish their responsibility and give it to the

Governor. But under these circumstances with no reason and no emergency, it's unforgivable. I'll be voting no today, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Sampson. Will you remark further on the Resolution before us? Good morning, Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL (7TH):

Good morning, Madam President. Great to see you this morning. I also rise in opposition to this Resolution. And I now try to be mercifully brief.

First of all, I'd like it very clear on the record that I haven't met the Governor many times but I have on several occasions, and I find Governor Lamont to be personable, farsighted and an extremely intelligent individual and with a good sense of humor, and he truly, to my mind, cares about the health, safety and welfare of individuals in the State of Connecticut. We may differ as to the policies he signed into law, clearly many Bills I voted against I felt stridently in opposition to, and he signed those Bills that passed by majority vote into law. Especially a lot of the criminal justice reforms but that's a debate for another day.

What we have before us is a very simple Resolution whereby the Governor under current law could've asked for an extension of his executive authority for up to six months. This Resolution before us does less than that to my recollection spout to the end of September. And there's a number of concerns that have been raised regarding the pandemic and other rationales as to why the Governor should have this

essential unilateral authority.

I'd like to commend at the outset my leader Senator Kelly and those who worked on the graph that was brought out for the media quite recently, and there was a map. Now over mine, and I've been blessed to be able to represent the people of the seventh district for the last 29 years, knock on wood. They continue to support me and I love them and support them and this is the best job any human being could ever have in my opinion. But over the years in debating different Bill proposals, one of the things that's brought out is well, surrounding states or the majority of states are doing this.

Indeed, most recently in the marijuana debate it was brought to our attention that surrounding states were legalizing the recreational use of marijuana and we are forgoing revenues and social equity policies by not proceeding along this path. I disagreed with much of that, do not disparage the motivations of those that were proponents. In fact, I know that my friend and colleague Senator Winfield worked really, really hard on the legislation and making it balanced and has argued that it's as much about social equity as it is about revenue. And again, that's another debate for another day or one that we actually had three times in the last month or so.

So that's been debated quite a bit recently but the point I want to stress is that the argument was made time and time again that look at our surrounding states, why don't we -- we are compelled almost to follow their lead. Well, in the math was brought for the media recently, and I would urge individuals to seek that out, I'm sure that folks in my caucus could provide it but the map would show that --

let's just start with New England, Maine, no longer following a path of executive authority, executive orders. Vermont no longer following a path of executive orders. New Hampshire, live free or die, no longer following a path of executive orders. The largest state or Commonwealth in New England, Massachusetts no longer following a path of executive orders.

Only two states remain; Connecticut and Rhode Island. I would posit that in just within New England they are the outliers, we are the outliers. Where was it told was the epicenter of the pandemic in the northeast? New York City, the Big Apple. Oh, I felt bad for them over the months because, man, that was horrible. The rates in that metropolis were sky-high. Imagine living in one of those high-rises and only one or two people could get in an elevator at time. How do they even function? People were dying left and right. It was a crisis in New York City and other parts throughout the Empire State, New York.

New York, look at the map. New York is no longer following a path of executive orders. They have taken the power and given it back to the people in their Legislature as it was supposed to be.

If you don't like the small states of New England, let's look at another giant state in the Northeast, Pennsylvania. I used to play this game called landslide where you try to gather up electoral votes and try to become President of the United States. That was like in 1970, 72. Even back then, Pennsylvania had like 27 electoral votes. I don't know if they're more or less but it's a huge state compared to Connecticut by way of population and landmass. Go look at the map. No longer executive

orders. No longer disproportionate power in the executive branch. They have seen fit to turn the corner and restore power to the way it was supposed to be in Pennsylvania.

How about another giant state? Population, geography, Ohio. Yes, they've gone back to the natural state of governmental affairs. How about another state? Virginia. Virginia has gone back to the way it was supposed to be, to the way their founders designed it.

Now, is Representative democracy cumbersome? Yes, it is. It's designed to be that way. Checks and balances, balance of power, judicial branch, executive branch, legislative branch, and even within the legislative branch, House of Representatives, Senate. I think there's only one state in the union that just has one Chamber, and it's out in the Midwest. I'm struggling with that one. It may be Kansas, it may be Nebraska. It's one of those out there. They have just one Legislative Chamber but pretty much everybody else has a House and a Senate.

And so that in and of itself means that for a Bill to become law, it's got to get bounced around a least a little bit. That's been designed on purpose. You don't want to race into anything that's going to affect everybody or certain segments of your society without having a lot of thought, without well attended public hearings open to the public so that people on both sides of an issue or all sides of an issue, many issues don't have just one or two sides, can chime in and offer their sense. That's how we get better laws. The reason that we have authority within the executive branch, the Governor can veto Bills that pass both Chambers.

I worked on a Bill years ago. It was really hard. Took like two or three years to get it past and, bam, Governor Rell vetoed it. Can't even say it was like Republican vetoed or Republican Bill. I was working on it with Representative, then Representative Ruth Fahrbach in the House. Can't even say it was like a political decision. Republican Governor vetoed essentially what was a Republican Bill. It happens. That's okay. That's the way it's set up. That's the way it's supposed to work.

My good friend and the leader of our Chamber Senator Looney who has been either in the Senate or in the House, when you put them together, probably as long if not longer than anybody else representing people here in the State of Connecticut and the legislature said there are potentialities for more danger. Yes, there is. There is potentialities for danger each and every day. There is not one insurance company out there that can write a policy that will guarantee that anybody in this building that will wake up and see tomorrow's sunrise. We do not know what life holds. All we can do is make decisions and quite often those decisions are determined by an analysis of risks.

Was it too risky for me to get in my car and drive to the Legislature? No. But could I have been in a head-on collision and died? Yes. You pick up and read the paper or hear on the radio or television or cable news stories all the time, yes. Can things just happen out of the blue that one could never possibly predict? Yes. Do we look back upon history and see things that, "Oh my God, I could never even have imagined that."

I mean, I remember I was outside signing letters on a -- I think it was Friday evening on my deck. And all of sudden like my wife came out and said, "Do you see what's going on, on tv?" This is years and years ago, but for those of you I said, "No, what's going on?" "There's this like car chase at slow motion out in California."

Yeah. Yeah, that was O.J. trying to get away on a highway out in California. O.J. Simpson? Well, you know, now we look back and it doesn't seem so unusual. Back then, hey, O.J. Simpson was a full football superhero. He was extraordinarily popular. He was on commercials. He was in movies. And the fact that all of a sudden California highway police are like in a slow-motion chase as he is in this like white SUV going down a highway, I shook my head, I said I couldn't even imagine that.

And as you pay attention to those little things you realize life is filled with those kind of crazy things. Well, yeah, you can walk around in a bubble with a motorcycle helmet on and just try to live without any threats to your safety or health or sanctity or safety or sanity at all but that's no way to live, so there's a balance. You have to weigh the good and the bad, the ability to get on with life. And there's something even more important than that as well. There's an element of confidence. There's an element I wouldn't necessarily say pride in the sense that one is very prideful or the notion of pride go with before fall but a feeling of wellbeing in having accomplished something when you eventually say I can do this. And let me use two different examples.

When you're teaching a young child, a boy or girl to ride a bike, quite often there will be training

wheels. And you get them used to being on a two-wheeler with the training wheels because while there still balance involved, it's not quite as much. And so you do that and you do that and you do that, and you build up the confidence in that young boy or young girl until eventually the big day comes where the training wheels come off. And if there's been enough practice and there's enough balance that has now been gained and a feeling that one can do this, then that young boy or young girl will start riding that two-wheeler that may not otherwise have been able to do it with the -- had it not been for the training.

And that's a scary day for a mom or dad or whoever is teaching that young child because you don't want to see them crash but that day has to come, right. That day always has to come. And when that child can ride that two-wheeler, voilà. Oh, you haven't seen a smile until you've seen that smile, right. Then the world is their oyster.

Growing up, I'll raise my hand, haven't done this in years but long ago I used to work in a summer camp up in the Berkshires camp called YMCA Camp Hi-Rock in a little town in the southwest corner called Mount Washington near another town called Egremont that's near another called Great Barrington and there's a beautiful freshwater pond up there called Plantain Pond large enough for two ski boats. And I was lucky enough to make friends with the folks that were teaching waterskiing. Hey, I was happy to know how to swim, felt pretty good about that but I never gone waterskiing until I worked at that summer camp, and of course my buddy said, "Hey, John, give it a try."

Let me tell you, there's a couple words, face plant.

A face plant is when you're sitting on the edge of the deck, you got that rope and they go hit it. And all of a sudden it takes off and the first time unless you are so much better than I ever was, you don't know it's coming. That rope gets tossed and then unless you got a spine as strong as iron and you're ready for what's coming, you get pulled forward and it's top part not the bottom part, and bam, face plant like. And you get pulled for a while, you're just eating the water and you gotta do that a few times until you finally get the hang of it. And if you're lucky, like I was, not like I was like doing it all the time but eventually you figure out how your body's gotta be contorted. You know it's coming when they say hit it, and that rope gets tossed and suddenly you keep your spine just strong enough so you may be bending your knees so you can ride those first couple of waves and just get out there to the middle of the pond and now all of a sudden, voilà, you're waterskiing, you're on water. Doesn't happen overnight unless you're really athletic or really extraordinarily skilled but for most people it takes practice but eventually you get the hang of it and boom, you're doing something you never thought you could do before.

I don't want to minimize what we're talking about today but what I'm saying is Connecticut is ready to take off the training wheels, Connecticut's ready to have the boat say hit it, and Connecticut's ready to go waterskiing. Connecticut's ready to get back to normal.

We're probably suffering from more problems from like the hangover or the residual effects of all the shutdowns that we've had. You go out there and you talk to your friends and neighbors and other businesses big or small and they're having a hard

time getting people back to work because it's sort of been inured in people, you know, with beneficial -- benefits and things like that, as cumbersome as that was and a headache. No offense to the Department of Labor but that was difficult for many, many months but they can't even get parts. If you want to go rent a car, the Rent-A-Car agencies sold off their cars because of the pandemics so they don't have enough stock.

I mean, I've heard crazy stories people going on vacation they can't find a Rent-A-Car they get a U-Haul. So there's all these other sort of like things hanging around out there we gotta shake them off and sort of figure out what's the new normal but I'm hoping it's pretty darn close to the old normal. It's gonna get up to masks, whether people want to have masks, not have masks, schools, local boards of education, all of that stuff. But I've always been of the belief that that government is best that governs least and that leaves power as locally as possible.

So on a lot of these decisions regarding education, municipal government, town halls, things like that, hey, I think it's up to the towns to make that decision. On other matters it's up to us. Can we do it? I don't know. I think probably Senator Looney is right, might be difficult to get us all to come in within a few hours but the Governor issued his order last week and where are we? Here on a Wednesday less than a week later. We're here in the Legislature. We can do it.

We've had lots of emergencies over the years prior to the pandemic, the legislature is able to act and act in concert with the executive branch and act in concert with the judicial branch. We're all in this

together. It's not like we're all packing up our cars and going in 15 states away. We all live, breathe, eat here in Connecticut. So we can do it.

Yeah, there's gonna be dangerous out there. There's gonna be a learning curve. We're not quite out of the woods yet, but boy oh boy we're 16 months down the road and I can see the end of the tunnel. I think we're pretty much out of the woods. God forbid someone gets ill and something bad happens to them. I would never want to see that ever, but as far as turning the state upside down and continuing to give the Governor executive authority to make these executive decisions without our approval or with only the ability to override in a construct that while I understand and it was appropriately passed but it really takes the majority party to buy-in. If they don't if it's just the minority party, it's never gonna vetoed over, right.

It's one-party rule, I think there's a downside to one-party rule. I think there's a downside. I'm not saying anything disparaging regarding the leadership of the Senator or the House, right or the executive branch. I personally like Governor Lamont. He's come up to Enfield, other towns in my communities that I represent. He's a good guy. That's not my concern but there are men and women that put their lives on the line that have died on the fields of battle for our freedoms, for the messiness that we have here in the State of Connecticut and throughout the United States. Is it perfect? Absolutely not. In my view is it the best government that we come up with in civilization? Yes, it is. Can we do better? Can we be more sympathetic? Can we be more understanding to our brothers and sisters? Yes, we can. But where should those issues be debated, they should be debated here in the Legislature.

We owe it to those men and women in uniform that came before us and that are out there now that want to protect our freedoms and democracy and our form of government as cumbersome and sometimes bickering as we are. As cumbersome as it is, bickering as we are, it's okay. That's the way it was designed.

I'm not fearful that we could not respond to a real emergency. If there was some variant of this pandemic or some new one that came out of some corner of the world, who knows, could be some laboratory here in Connecticut. We could respond and respond adroitly and effectively and protect the people of the State of Connecticut.

And it doesn't mean that Governor Lamont can make -- cannot make proposals. If he wanted, he could bring us into special session. That's all been done in the past. There's nothing new here. The only thing that's new is I'm looking at that map of the Northeast and I see Connecticut and Rhode Island as outliers now with no good reason other than it's convenient.

There's no public safety threat. There's no emergency. And it's like in Dr. Doolittle that push me pull you horse, two heads on both sides. I don't know. Are we asking tourists to come into Connecticut? Or are we asking people in Connecticut to be concerned? Is it push me or pull you? Are we back open for business or are we not back open for business? Is this building okay for the public or is this building not okay for the public?

What's the message? It's a two-prong message, and there's a disconnect. We need one voice, one message right now. Connecticut is back open for business.

We're getting back to normal. We're gonna learn from our mistakes. We're gonna do the best job possible to protect the health, safety and freedoms of the people of the State of Connecticut so we can go back to being a great place to live, work and raise a family.

Now is the time, now is the time to look at Massachusetts. Now is the time to look at New York, now is the time to look at Pennsylvania. Now is the time to look at Ohio. Now is the time to look at Virginia. Now is the time to look at Main. Let's learn from our sister states. We can do this. And for that reason, Madam President, I will be voting no on this Resolution. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Kissel. Will you remark further?  
Good morning, Senator Winfield.

SENATOR WINFIELD (10TH):

Good morning, Madam President. So, you know, the easy thing to do would just be to vote and move on, so one, I won't take forever to say what I have to say but some of my colleagues know that I've struggled with this vote. And I think some people would be like, "You're struggling with that vote?" but I have. And I will tell you that July is an interesting month for me because as I've talked probably excessively about, particularly when we get closer and closer to the month my mother passed, right. And in this month I think a lot about her.

I think people been here for a while know where I place my mother. And one thing she always was key about was making sure that I did the right thing. So

in getting to this moment I'm trying to figure out what the right thing is. And I was having trouble, right. Not that I don't believe in science. It's not that I don't, despite what Senator Kissel just said. It's not that I don't even believe that there's a public safety threat because I even heard this morning that 99.2% of the people who are vaccinated are not the ones getting COVID and dying, right. It's that .8% are those people -- the 99.2% are the people were not vaccinated. So largely the people who are vaccinated are -- if they experience this, it doesn't mean they're gonna have death but there are people who aren't vaccinated.

Those are children. As Senator Looney talked about, those are people with immunocompromised. And I'm trying to figure out, and in this space where I felt like, you know, we could do the things that the Governor is saying he wants to do. We as a Legislature could figure out how to do those things and not extend the power that the Governor is asking for. What is the right thing to do?

So you meet this moment as it is. And in this moment that's not on the table, what's on the table is what is actually before us. And what's before us feels like it's too much like right but not quite right, right. It feels like, you know, I know we use that term differently but it feels like it's really close to right but not quite right because we could do this a different way. But you meet the moment as it is.

So as I'm sitting here trying to wrap my head around what it is I should be doing, I'm also thinking about the message we hear. The message we hear is we need tools in case.

Some people think 'cause I've talked to some of my colleagues. Some people think I'm angry about the vetoed that happened recently. Sure, I'm angry about that. I think that's not the right policy. I think this Chamber passed a Bill that had votes on both sides of the aisle and it should of kept going forward, but water under the bridge. But there's something that connects to that population that didn't happen in his building as well 'cause see we were in the moment of COVID and when we were in a moment of COVID we were saying, hey, we got people in our congruent settings who are exposed to COVID and we can't do anything about that in some of our settings. The settings being the prisons but this Chamber passed a Bill to deal with that. This Chamber sent the Bill down to the House below us. And the administration said, "Hey, we don't want that," and that Bill didn't move forward.

And what we were saying there was not you have to let those people out. It's not what we were saying. We were saying here's the ability should you need to, to let those people out. Now that one I'm angry about and that one I feel in this moment because what I'm being told is we need this power in order to deal with possibilities and we took a possibility and said we don't need the power to deal with the possibility.

So I said it was easy just to vote, right, 'cause you don't say certain things and you don't upset people but the truth is important. And that same population that we just vetoed the ability to not experience the psychological impacts, we said during COVID we can't let you out because the compassionate and medical release statutes don't let you. There was a fix written in and we said we don't need that tool.

That matters. It matters a lot because what we do with that population says a lot about who we are. And I get it, the Governor has done a lot of the things we want but also let's be real that many of these executive orders didn't happen because we needed it right away. It happened through a process that wasn't immediate. It happened through a process that legislators weighed in on.

And with all of that said, people would think, well you must be saying you're going to vote against it but the important thing to understand is those young people are important. Those people who are immunocompromised are important. As much as I struggle with this and as much as it's too much like right, the other decision for me is not quite right. So I don't like how we got here. I don't like the way this played out but I think it's the right thing or at least close enough to the right thing to vote for this. But I would say this, there are conversations that are not happening that need to happen, they're conversations that we've always know it don't happen across the aisle but they're conversations up and down that aren't happening that need to happen.

We're gonna have the possibility of variants, that's what viruses do. If we're gonna protect the public safety, we don't need to be sitting here with people who should be saying yes out the gate struggling. Those conversations need to happen. So thank you, Madam President, for allowing me to speak. I will be voting in favor. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Winfield. Will you remark

further? Good morning, Senator Martin. Or good morning, Senator Lesser. Senator Lesser. Senator Lesser.

SENATOR LESSER (9TH):

Thank you, Madam President, and good morning. And I want to thank Senator Martin for yielding. I will gladly listen to him in a minute.

You know, I think we've heard of a lot of conversation today and I appreciate the comments of my friend and colleague Senator Winfield just a minute ago. I think this is a big issue but it's also a simple issue. And the question before this Chamber this morning, is the public health emergency over? Is the civil preparedness emergency over? And I believe, Madam President, that it's not.

And I remember a year ago I was invited as a Connecticut legislator onto a national TV program almost exactly a year ago today because the story at the time was that Connecticut had beaten the coronavirus because a year ago, believe it or not, our positivity rate was lower than it is today. Our positivity rate one year ago today was 0.9%. Today it's 1.28%.

And so yes, we are doing better than we were in January of this year and we're doing better than we were of April of last year but there is still community spread of COVID-19. It is still killing people in the State of Connecticut and it's still infecting people. And we do know looking around the world, as Senator Winfield mentioned, that there are new variants emerging, there are new variants proposing particular risk to unvaccinated populations. They're particularly concerning for

children in the state who are not yet able to get the vaccine.

We have not beaten this thing. We have more work to do. And I think when you survey the people of Connecticut you will find that the overwhelming majority of residents of this state, and that includes Democrats, Republicans and unaffiliated voters, think that Governor Lamont had used his powers judiciously to try to beat this thing.

We gone through a lot. We are much better off than we were at the beginning. We got a lot of people vaccinated, we are getting back to normal but we're not there yet. And I think we've seen from other states that had thought that in the summer of 2020 that they had beat this thing and they wanted to pretend that the virus had gone away, that they were premature, and we should not make that same mistake. We should not turn away federal funding that we're eligible for. We should not prematurely declare victory when we're within sight of that goal.

All of us want to make sure kids don't have to wear masks in school, all of us want to get back to normal, but before we can do that we have to make sure that this deadly virus that has killed so many of our friends, our families, our neighbors is done for.

Now there is no secret there are things that I agree with the Governor, other things that I disagreed with him on. There are some of the executive orders he's issued that I thought were great and some that needed tweaking and some that were ill-advised. And working with the Governor we have imposed new checks and balances over the issuance of executive orders that I think will make sure that going forward we

have a say in making sure that the best policy is issued for the State of Connecticut.

In addition, we have been able to make changes. I will give an example. I spent a lot of time working on the issue of telehealth, and a lot of Governor's early executive orders were related to telehealth. Well, last summer and then again this year we made changes to many of executive orders. We codified some, we made changes to others, we rejected other changes, and so that the new telehealth law that is in effect represents the will of the Legislature.

Similarly, the Governor issued fast and expansive immunity provisions to nursing homes. I didn't personally agree with that, and working with the Governor he was able to withdraw that executive order, thus showing that the Legislature stays at the table. We have -- we are able to provide adequate oversight, we were able to ask questions of the executive branch. But at the end of the day, there's a simple question, is COVID-19 still spreading across the world? Are we sure beyond any doubt that we are no longer in danger of this dread pandemic? And if the answer to that is a shrug or I don't know or any doubt at all, I think it's important that we do what we should do, the right thing to do, which is air on the side of caution. To give the Governor the tools to respond to a dread public health emergency, a civil preparedness emergency that none of us wanted, that none of us brought on ourselves but that has affected our state just like it has every other community all across the state of the world.

So I stand in support. I thank the Chamber for the time.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Lesser. Will you remark further?  
Good morning, Senator Martin.

SENATOR MARTIN (31ST):

Good morning, Madam President. Thank you for allowing me to say a few words. I am going to vote no today on this Resolution to further extend the Governor's emergency powers. And straightforwardly, you know, it's a pretty much straightforward vote I'll say, which my colleagues from the other side of the aisle are trying to cloud in with threats of losing federal funding and slow moving government.

Plain and simple, this is a power grab based on the science and even based on the actions of surrounding states. The emergency has waned, Madam President, and it's time to start returning all three branches of government to their normal checks and balances, and also to give the people back their normal lives. The Governor always has that ability to call us back in should he need some executive powers for public health reasons. We have that option. We're not taking that away from him at all.

I'm joining or I'm joined by my state Republican colleagues today in taking a unified stand for Representative government. I was elected to say -- to serve 100,000 people of the 31st district, and it's unacceptable that the majority continues to avoid their responsibilities and allow the Governor to make blanket decisions. It's our responsibility. I encourage all the legislators today to stay focused on the science and not the politics. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Martin. Will you remark further on the Resolution before us? Senator Haskell. Good morning.

SENATOR HASKELL (26TH):

Good morning, Madam President. It's good to see you and good to see so many of my colleagues today. I appreciate the thoughtful words of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and I stand in support of this extension today. Largely because I believe that we passed legislation. In fact, I remember very clearly standing with my friend and colleague Senator Formica and discussing and ultimately approving on a bipartisan basis legislation that adds checks and balances to the Governor's power to ensure that the Legislature will continue to play a role in overseeing that executive authority, which the Governor may exercise. But I did want to rise just to make sure we're all crystal clear on what we're talking about on the choice that we're making as it relates to federal funding.

We know that a failure to extend the emergency declaration here in Connecticut would result in our state losing over \$2 million dollars in housing assistance for those who are suffering and don't currently have a roof over their head. Making sure that they can be housed in a place that is safe and also scientifically responsible, right. We know how critically important it is even if we're not all feeling the effects of the pandemic in our daily lives, there are so many families across the state who are still very much feeling the economic repercussions of this pandemic. And making sure that we can continue to provide emergency housing

assistance is so critically important.

And perhaps even more important than that, Madam President, is the more than \$30 million dollars that's at stake from the federal government for SNAP benefits. In other words, supplemental nutrition assistance. It's so important that we help to feed families who are hungry, families who are once again still struggling from the economic repercussions of this pandemic. This is money that's currently coming to Connecticut from the federal government, and to put this in crystal-clear terms, a no vote today means that we don't want that money, that we're gonna turn it away.

Look you may be asking should our decision today really be based on financials, on money. Well, I think that a not so secret, secret about this building is that everything is based in fiscal realities. Talk to any legislature, Republican or Democrat and you will hear from them that they have a tax credit or a program that was scaled back or scrapped altogether because of fiscal realities. That is the world in which we work in, and sometimes we really don't like those realities. I personally am very often frustrated by the difficult fiscal choices we face, but here's a fiscal reality that I hear about a lot when I go door to door in my district, Connecticut is a donor state. For every dollar that we send to Washington DC, we get \$.74 cents back. Some other states in this country get more than two dollars for every dollar that they send to DC.

My constituents want their money back. And what I don't hear from my colleagues today who are opposing this measure is a willingness, is a dedication, is a commitment to making up the gap in the federal funds

that we're gonna lose. Where are the rallies and where are the signs, Madam President, for the kids who might go hungry without the \$30 million dollars in SNAP benefits this month? Where are the rallies and where are the signs for the people who might lose their housing because we're no longer gonna get the assistance from FEMA to make sure that they have a roof over their head? Are we gonna step up and fund those programs? I'm not hearing that from my colleagues today. Instead I'm only hearing that we're gonna say no to the federal dollars, and that has me gravely concerned for the families that are most vulnerable in this state.

So there are many reasons to vote yes, there are public health reasons. We're not out of the woods yet. Unfortunately, I'm very concerned about the Delta variant, and I know my colleagues will be speaking to those but I want to say just a few words about the fiscal reality of what this decision means because even if we're frustrated by that decision, even if we feel that we're between a rock and a hard place, I've yet to hear a willingness from folks in this Chamber that they -- we're gonna step up and make sure that those families don't go hungry. That we're gonna make sure that these families don't suffer from homelessness. So I'll be voting yes today, Madam President. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Haskell. Will you remark further?  
Senator Osten. Good almost afternoon.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

It is afternoon according to that clock right behind you, Madam President. Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

My computer is a little slow but -- [laughter]

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH):

Very good. So I stand here today to talk about the issue of whether or not to give the Governor broad executive powers again akin to what happened at the very beginning of the pandemic. And I've heard many people talk about the fact that he is only trying to look at ten, 11, 12 executive orders. Quite frankly he could've put that Bill in front of us with those shortened executive powers and I believe that that would've been a very, very easy vote to make. But I do want to correct the record on a few things.

One, I disagree with people saying that this is a Republican or Democratic issue. I firmly don't believe that. This is not one party giving someone broad powers because they don't know how to make independent decisions. That's a false statement in my opinion. And the facts are that the Governor's done great job during the pandemic handling the issues relative to that particular issue.

That all being said, there are many issues that are going on today that I would disagree with the executive branch on but they are not for this moment. They are not what we are talking about. We are not even talking about the 11 or 12 executive orders. We are talking about simply giving the Governor the same powers that he had at the beginning of the pandemic as if we were in the same situation, and we are not.

Other states still get the federal aid without the

broad powers of the executive branch. That's a fact. It's just a simple fact. And the \$33 million dollars in SNAP and the \$2 million dollars in housing are still available to this administration should we put forward a Bill relative to that narrowed vision of executive powers, and we would be all set.

So that's not even up for debate today either. The question before us is do we think that the executive branch needs the broad powers? Not whether or not we're gonna win -- lose federal dollars. We will not. We just won't because over 20 states have narrowed the executives responsibilities on executive powers and are getting the increased SNAP and the increased housing. That's just a fact.

Another fact. So here we are today debating whether or not this administration needs to have this broadened executive power for another two, three, four months, I think right now it's up until September. And I'm not certain that I'm there, and I have been listening to everybody speak about it. I can't tell you how disappointing it is to hear people say that this is a political issue, much akin to the rally that happened the other day where we are talking about who's running for Governor in a year and a half. It's not necessary. We're talking about what's best for the people here in the State of Connecticut. And we are essentially saying local boards of Ed can't make decisions, municipalities can't make decisions, and that if we vote no then we are essentially putting children at risk. I disagree with that.

Again, that does not commit my vote either way but we have to talk about what is in front of us. Do we believe that the Governor should have broadened executive powers? That's what this is about. It's

not about whether you're Republican or Democrat, whether children should wear masks or not. That's not what this discussion is about. It's about these broadened executive powers being extended yet again for a couple of more months.

And I just am stuck on that one issue because when people tell me we are putting children at risk I take offense at that. We are not if we vote no. We are not if we both for this. This is not about that. It is not about that issue. This is about giving the Governor broadened executive powers.

And when we talk about this and we start taking political hits on a policy, then none of us are making a decision based on the policy itself. What we are making is a decision based on our party affiliation and I can't say how disappointed I am that the people around this circle are saying this. I find it offensive. I find it very offensive on both sides of the aisle 'cause I find myself to be squarely in the middle on this issue. Squarely in the middle.

And I just think that when we say if you vote against the Governor having executive powers, his broadened executive powers again, that means that you don't like children, you're putting them at risk and you're putting federal dollars at risk 'cause that's not true. And if I vote yes it's because I lay down to the leaders in the Democratic Party. And I know my reputation as a middle-of-the-road person who has voted against and for policies on both sides of the issue, I take offense at that too.

So I'm not saying how I'm voting today, I'm watching this, but I can tell you we do not lose federal dollars either in SNAP or in housing because we

could get them. There is no reason for us not to have a narrowed version of this in front of us today. And I don't understand why that's not in front of us.

That is my quandary. Why did not we sit down and say this is what we need, this is where we are because if we had the pandemic research in front of us today, we would be here on a bipartisan basis to extend and broaden those executive powers. We've done it.

Are we saying that the Legislature is not to be trusted to do that? It's a question. I don't know. I don't know what the answer is to that. It's very difficult to hear though people defaming people here today on both sides of the aisle and not looking at this on the one question that we have in front of us. It is not those 12 or 11 or ten executive orders that may or may not continue. This is about giving broad executive powers to the executive no matter who they are, no matter what that person is doing.

We can commend this Governor for the work that he has done. The people of this state commend this Governor for the work he has done but we are not putting children at risk and we are not losing federal dollars and we are not voting yes or no based on our party affiliation because if that's the reason you're voting that way, then you shouldn't be here. Thank you very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you Senator Osten. Will you remark further?  
Good afternoon, Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Madam President, I thought about this day and since having received the information about being here today. And one of the thoughts that came to mind was the Wizard of Oz and the song Optimistic Voices. And I don't know about you folks, but when I go out in the district most of the community that I live in are concerned about getting back to normal and how we want to define normal. Is that gonna be something that we can live with, the new normal, or is it gonna be something that continues to resemble kind of the restrictions that have been put on society either by executive order, by choice, you name it.

Madam President, most of the people that have communicated with me talk about, if they're in business, their inability to find labor. Recently there were some changes within the Department of Labor. I think that's a good thing but the bottom line is if the message out here today is that we are still in a state where we need to be bound to an executive order, that will be interpreted. I believe it'll be interpreted. My constituents have told me they believe that will be interpreted. It would be a reason perhaps not to go back to work. It'll be a reason not to let your children do the things that they have historically been able to do.

Madam President, one of the stances of Optimistic Voices says, "You're out of the woods, you're out of the dark." If we're not at that point here in Connecticut, what is the standard going to be for us to define that? Is it gonna be the presence of a variant? I would argue that I think the variants of COVID are going to exist longer than my life. Perhaps longer than most of your lives. That's what they do. Will we have the wherewithal to deal with

it? I would say we are there, with very few exceptions I would say we are there. We don't need an executive order to determine how we're going to play this out from here on out.

I don't know about you but I've taken my vaccine for a ride this summer. I have not restricted where I've gone. We been careful. We've talked about the risk but to be quite honest with you, if it ain't gonna work I don't wanna be here. I've lived too long not to live my life, and I don't want to be bound to the porch of my house. Most of the people I've spoken with in my district don't want to be bound to theirs either. They are afraid about the prospects of their children going to school and being bound by a mask.

I probably don't need to remind the people of this Chamber, but over the last month and a half there have been infants in this building in this Chamber shared amongst adults and no one knows whether we were vaccinated or not. That's the reality of life. On those occasions, it was perfectly acceptable to be unmasked and in the company of children but now we have to worry about whether the states gonna have the authority to do it. I'm not sure we need to. In fact, I'm quite certain we don't.

I heard Representative Sampson talk about tenants and landlords. Nobody wants to see anyone get evicted but the reality is there are a lot of landlords that have been hanging onto a lot of real estate for lot of months patiently, and they don't trust government. I don't know when that's going to end.

Another couple lines there, "You're out of the night, step into the sun." I think we're there. I don't think we need to be reckless. I don't think

statutory and executive branch operation of government is reckless. It's never been reckless before. I heard someone say earlier we could've done a lot of this by statute. If we want the local Board of Education to talk about masks before they go back to school in September we could very well have passed that Bill. Could've been done. You don't see kids walking into science class without a shirt on, why? Oh my God, somebody made a decision you have to have a shirt on to go to science. They may make the same decision within certain parameters for a mask.

I don't think we know what's best all the time. I heard people talk about the positivity rate. When you start to talk about numbers, now you want to know more numbers. How many did we test? What's the spectrum of those that we tested. I'm not surprised that it's gonna go up and down. I'm also not surprised that there are few people in the hospital. We have done a great job in getting people vaccinated and we've done a great job of messaging for those that aren't.

So my message today is if we want the state to move forward, let's join the rest of the blue states. Let's join the rest of the blue states and take that step. Let's have an optimistic voice. Let's lead people to believe that we are headed to a place of normalcy, and so businesses will hire more, more workers will go to work, people will begin to go to dinner, you might even be able to find a 2x4 for regular price pretty soon. But I am fearful, very fearful that the message coming out of this building today is that we are still in some form of lockdown.

And the last thing, the mental health situation in this state is not good. We talked about it here, we talked about it with Bills, we talked about it with

money but the reality is I don't think any of us know how to read a human being with a mask on. And I think the vast majority of young people in the state define themselves in a situation of serious mental health trouble, are in that condition because we've not been able to really read them. Statistically, I am quite certain that far more young people have passed not from COVID but from suicide. And so the sooner we get out of this mask situation, except for those that feel that there's an absolute need, and that's their personal choice, or a small business that believes that. For whatever reason they may be, immunocompromised, and if you want to do business there that's going to be one of the rules. I just think it's better offer society that we get -- we just get on with it.

Let's have an optimistic voice today and vote against this Resolution. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Miner. Will you remark further? And good afternoon, Senator Abrams.

SENATOR DAUGHERTY ABRAMS (13TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I rise in strong support of this Resolution. As the Senate Chair of public health I thought that I should stand up and specifically talk to my colleagues who might be on the fence today as to whether or not to support this Resolution.

I've been amazed many times at issues that have become political. Not being from a political background myself and new to this, I've often found myself shaking my head as to how a certain issue has

become so politicized, but this one has particularly affected me.

I will be voting yes today because we are still in a pandemic. So to say that we have a public health emergency seems perfectly acceptable to me, rational, and the thing that we should be doing. The parameters of the Resolution are reasonable both in their scope and their duration. We are talking about two month extension. And in fact we're putting in place legislative oversight that did not exist before and will offer better checks and balances and more of a voice for this legislative body.

Although I too, as some of my colleagues have expressed, have found that the Governor has been very open to input throughout this entire pandemic. Has he always agreed with what I had brought to him? Absolutely not. Have I always agreed with him? Absolutely not, but we are in a crisis and I commend him for the way that he has led us through this crisis.

We are in a global pandemic so we cannot just stay focused on what is happening within our state. You have to look at what's happening in our country and in the world. One of my colleagues previously got up and said that we're pretty much out of the woods. I hope that's true. I really do. I hope that we're pretty much out of the woods. And I am optimistic, and I do think that you can vote for this Resolution and we can move forward. In fact, I think it's the best way to move forward because we would do so safely and with the public health concerns in mind.

This is not about what other states are doing, this is about the health and safety of the people of our state and the way our government functions. This is

the best way for our government to move forward. It was designed that way. It's not about whether or not you trust one branch of government over another. This was put into place within our government to deal with just these kind of situations. And I think to ignore that would be to ignore the fact that we are in a pandemic.

I hope that we are at the end of this. I really am optimistic that that is the case. And I don't think that when you are at the end of the crisis is the time to change course and to go to another path. I think that we have done a very good job in our state of managing this. I am so proud of the people of our state and the responsibility that they have shown in stepping up and keeping their neighbors and their families and themselves safe. And I think that we need to continue with that. The Governor's proven that he can lead us. I think that we owe him the fact that we will continue to trust him to do so in the safest way, and sometimes the most crucial time is when you're coming out of the crisis which is where I hope we are now.

So I would encourage my colleagues to please, please stay focused on what is in front of us today and that is this Resolution says that we are still in a public health emergency. I believe that is the truth, and it also allows the Governor to have the ability under this Resolution to continue to lead us out of this pandemic and also give the Legislature the right and power to oversee and to provide some checks and balances in that. So I ask my colleagues to please vote yes for this. I think it is in the best interest of the people of our state and that is what is important today. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Abrams. Will you remark further?  
Senator Champagne.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH):

Thank you, Madam President. And I rise after looking at all the data myself and making my own decision in this. And one of the things I want to point out is just this -- the people sitting in this room today. Those that don't feel safe are wearing a mask and that's the right of everybody. In fact, I carry a mask with me everywhere I go because if I go into a location that I feel is too crowded sometimes I'll put it on. That is a decision I make.

I have another role and in -- I role -- and I run a local government. In fact, we have a nationally recognized vaccination program that we opened up to area communities. We never closed our state government but we took precautions. We didn't allow businesses to take precautions, we picked and chose which ones would stay open. So on one level, the government -- the Governor did an excellent job getting the vaccine out. On the other hand, I do have an issue with what happened with our businesses.

If we are not at the end of this issue, why have we opened the state up completely? Why do I walk into the grocery store, there's no more arrows on the floor? Why do I walk into the restroom at all? Everything's open, no individual, there's spacing. This building isn't completely open, yet everybody can come into the bottom floor. You know, if the emergency isn't at the end, then why did we lift all these.

We talked about a variant, and those that are vaccinated that chose to be vaccinated, again, it's their personal decision. Those that chose to be vaccinated are showing that these vaccinations are effective, 97.8% effective against the Delta variant. That's what the numbers are showing.

How much vaccine do we still have sitting in the shelves in Connecticut? We get more and more every week, and this doesn't include the pharmacies who get theirs right from Washington but according to the numbers we still have 3000 -- 300,000 doses available. If people want the vaccine, it is available, it is out there. There's no cost. It's their choice if they want to go get it.

We live in America and it should be your choice. We live in America, you should be able to go where you want. We live in America, and the government shouldn't be interfering with your businesses.

One of the issues that was brought up is that we'll lose federal money. We brought in billions of dollars. And to date, I don't think I got a full listing as a legislator, somebody's who's in charge of deciding where money goes, I have not gotten a complete listing of where all that federal money went. Why is that? Isn't there checks and balances? If we received billions of dollars in federal money, this Legislature should've gotten on a pretty regular basis where that money is being spent. Where there no-bid contracts being handed out? We should be notified of that.

This is the -- this is what we're talking about when you give the power into one person's hands. The checks and balances, billions of dollars, we've said that somebody can spend. And then we changed the law

now and we say we have six people from the Legislature who could evaluate that, but I have 100,000 people in my district who want me to keep an eye on where this money goes.

I certainly make the decision as to how I'm going to vote today as an individual. And if I didn't think we're at the end of this, I would say continue but when I hear throughout this process that we want to blame just about everything on COVID, including the violence on our streets right now it really brings it back to me questioning other things.

You know, COVID is real, it's out there, it's in our community. Like I said, we did a great job of getting the vaccine out and we're still doing a great job getting it out there for those who want it. You know, we look at the fact that some people have gotten the first dose and they have not gotten a second dose that's because they got really sick the first time. A lot people have told me that and I understand that, but again, it comes down to personal choice.

So I am going to be voting no today for the extension of the powers. I'm voting no because this body should be notified of where the money is going, especially when it accounts for billions of dollars. We should be -- we should know essentially if there are no-bid contracts, which this government does a lot, a lot more than I realized and we're spending a lot more money for products than we should be. And the fact that I'm hearing that some of this federal money has gone to friends and business associates. I want to know if somebody's handing out money to friends and business associates because to me that's an ethics violation if not more.

We are the stewards of finances, the legislature. And to be honest with you, we should be told right along wherever money comes in 'cause this is taxpayer money. I don't care if it's federal taxpayer money or its local taxpayer money. It's being spent by the government, we should know where it goes.

To anybody listening if you want that vaccine, it is available and it is free. Make sure you get it. It is an individual choice. Thank you, Madam President. That will end my statement.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Champagne. Will you remark further? Good afternoon, Senator Cicarella.

SENATOR CICARELLA (34TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I want to stand in opposition of renewing the powers, and that's my personal opinion and I have my reasons why and I may talk about that after, but my opinions don't matter. The opinions that matter are my constituents. I hear this when I'm walking in district, the hundreds of emails that I been receiving as well as phone calls. And I'm sure we're all hearing from our constituents. And I'm pretty sure we're all hearing the same thing on both sides because I know in my district I'm hearing from all parties and they don't want to extend these powers, 95% hard no's, do not want to extend.

I can't remember specifics but if I've heard a question of why not extend it, it was about we're gonna be losing money. It was about we're not gonna be able to help people. That's not true. People are

paying attention outside of these Chambers now more than ever on a lot issues, especially this one, and it's not true. We heard that from our good Chair of the Appropriations who knows the finances of this town, of its town -- state very well. And the constituents are saying do not extend these powers. That's why we're here. We were elected by our constituents, and they know what is best for them. I'm not gonna decide what is, they know what is best for them and I'm gonna be their voice.

Speaking of constituents, again, that's why we're here is to represent them. And if we're not listening to them, we're not being able to be their voice. Speaking of being their voice, if we don't have the seat in the Governor's office to listen to what is going on and why decisions are made, when I am asked questions in district, on the phone or in an email and I can't give them those answers, again, I'm not doing my job. We're not doing our job.

There a lot of things that go on in the office that a lot of us don't know about. And people hear the conversations we have, they may not watch them all the time on CTN. I encourage them to but at least we're here listening and we can go back to our constituents and tell them why a decision was made and who was behind making that decision. And that's the purpose of having the government set up the way it is. Not a political science major but it's not intended to be ran by one person. We have a system and we need to put into place.

You know, if the state was designed to be ran by one person, we wouldn't need to be here. And I keep saying that because it's so relevant. If we are not gonna be able to have input into these decisions, which is input from our constituents, what's the

point of being here?

You know, we need to get back to normal. We cannot continue to live in fear. We need to make sure we're doing what's best for everyone, our children. We talked about the masks, we talked about going back to school, graduation, getting back to a sense of normalcy. The kids' mental health, their progression with education and developmental issues, being able to get those fundamental first years of education and a sense of normalcy is imperative.

There's a book *Outliers*, it's about hockey but someone born a little late in the year cannot make it to the pros or likelihood of making it to the pros in the NHL is less. Other states are getting back to normal. If we don't, our children, the future of Connecticut are going to be those hockey players that want to go pro but were born later on in the year. We have to think about getting back to normal and not living in fear.

We talk about jobs. People need to get back to work. If they're afraid to go back to work, there's not gonna be businesses for them to go to, for patrons to go to, for us to get back to normal. And businesses, we talked about the risk of losing some federal money, which I do not think it's true and I agree with our Appropriations Chair, but businesses are losing money, daily. We need to take care of that.

And public safety, you know, speaking of public safety we're saying is this a public health emergency or a public safety emergency? Four children passed away in Connecticut from COVID, 18 and under, and that's too many and that's horrible, horrible but I look at a number just so I'm

accurate. From car accidents, 342 people passed in 2020. These statistics are from 2020. From a drug overdose, 1300 people in the 2020. Homicide, speaking of public safety, over 350. I'm sorry, 400.

Those numbers are real problems. We have to be paying attention to those numbers. You know, we're talking about are we in a public health emergency right now. I believe there are 30 people hospitalized currently for COVID in the State of Connecticut and this is from the last report that came to us from the Governor's office, and that's where I get majority of my communication is those reports and emails for my government -- from the Governor's office.

You know, there are more people in the hospital from car accidents. Are we gonna stop driving? Are we gonna stop we stop going to work every day? We have to live our lives, we have to get back to a sense of normalcy. And again, those are some statistics. My opinion of the situation and all of the details that were said by both sides are relevant and are important but I'm here to do one thing and it's to be the voice of my constituents and my constituents are telling me they do not want this, and for that reason, I will not be supporting this and voting no. Thank you for your time.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Cicarella. Will you remark further? Good afternoon, Senator Needleman.

SENATOR NEEDLEMAN (33RD):

Thank you, Madam President. And it's very nice to see you today, middle of July, not a day we're

normally here.

I rise to speak on this issue and this is not an easy decision for me. I certainly got my share of emails although I look at those emails and most of them have been directed to the entire body here. And I have to speak to some of those emails because in my years in public service, which goes back now to 2003 I have never read a more convoluted, conflated set of issues being sent to me from election fraud to anti-vaccination to the Governor is a dictator to we're paying and you're not doing your job. Some of this, not wanting to use inappropriate language here, is bat you know what crazy. We are living through a very strange time.

The issue at hand is a limited extension of a state of emergency because contrary to what anyone has said who is opposed to this, there is still a state of emergency. The numbers that came through today showed for the first time in weeks a positivity rate of about 1.3%, and it's very hard for people to wrap their head around what exponential growth is. The Delta variant has a growth rate of -- infection rate of about 1.7 to one whereas the original infection was about .8 to one. At one-to-one, exponential growth, take a penny and in 30 days it's \$5 million dollars. If you look at something that's at a higher rate than one-to-one, it's even faster than that.

And yes, I think that Connecticut has done a great job with this pandemic. We certainly had a lot of bad cases early on before anybody knew what was going on because of our proximity to New York, which was really ground zero but we reacted. I have a great deal of faith in Governor Lamont's ability to react appropriately and not overreact to the situation.

There were voices early on when people were saying shut everything in this state down and then there were voices that were saying don't shut anything down. I think the Governor and his team deserve great credit for making good decisions early on, keeping the economy safely humming along at whatever level it could while other people were being protected.

I have no doubt in my mind that that will continue. Conflating this to somebody being a dictator is not only wrong, it's insane. I mean, its people are saying things that make no sense. And when I get these emails looking back at the list of them, many of them are daily missives from the same people. And they seem to get nuttier and nuttier as the day goes on. So I want us to use common sense and good judgment here and do what we think is right.

This is not personal about the Governor but I will tell you that as an executive who has spent his life building a business, running a company that employs hundreds and hundreds of people and running a municipality, I will tell you that one cannot react to crisis situations on a Committee basis. Strong leadership matters, leadership matters. This state has demonstrated good leadership. I am confident that the interaction between the Governor and the leaders of the Legislature has been good and adequate and I think that that will continue.

We're talking about three months here. Two months, right. July to August, August September. We're not talking about a permanent state. We need to evaluate this come the fall and see what's going on. And if we need to pass laws to do things, we will but right now I'm confident that the right decision is to

extend this -- to vote yes on this Bill to extend this for another couple of months. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Needleman. Will you remark further on the Resolution? Good afternoon, Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. I rise to speak on the Resolution, and first let me thank you for joining us down in New London yesterday at the great Lyman Allyn Museum as that program begins to encourage people to come out and frequent the wonderful places that have been closed.

So, Madam President, we've heard quite a bit around the circle today about this particular situation of extending the emergency powers for Governor for, I think this will be the fifth time, one, two, three, four. September 20, January, March and May of 2021 as they expire next week.

Madam President, we sit here around the circle and have these wonderful debates. We talk in measured terms about what we believe in. And it wasn't that long ago when these nameplates in front of us were sporadically spaced six or eight feet apart. There were a limit to the number of people that we were asked to bring into this room. And today as we sit and stand and debate around the circle everyone's name is in its proper place, in its seat where we can represent those people that each and every one of us do our very best to represent when we're up here. So things are moving back to normal.

Madam President, as this has been in the news, as Senator Needleman has shared, I too have had many emails sent my way regarding this particular issue and I believe I've only had less than a handful that would agree with the extension. The overwhelming majority thinks that it's time that we move on and move back to our form of government.

Madam President, my opposition to this today is not about whether or not the Governor has done a good or bad job of managing this pandemic. There are things that I think he did extraordinarily well. There are things that I could take issue with, but I think together we decided that the nimbleness of this Legislature both the House and the Senate was not adequate enough to manage this pandemic a year and change ago. And having been a former first Selectman and a business owner I understand that quick decisions are necessary during regular times and times of crisis especially. So I don't have an opposition about that.

My opposition today is just this continuation of the delegation of authority not because the pandemic is over. The pandemic is not over but the pandemic is clearly waning and we're clearly in a situation, Madam President, where I believe that together we can around the circle and around that great institution on the second floor work with the administration to solve any problems that come up in a very timely and adequate way as has been brought out today.

We been brought in after the Governor declared a special session within three calendar business days. We're having a short debate today on the floor about this particular issue but, Madam President, to the

good Senator from the 19th if we had opportunities to discuss particular and specific issues, I think we could do that in the same amount of time that we're talking about extending the powers.

So the ten, 11, 12 issues that we're talking about here in the orders that may go forward is one thing but today's conversation is about the extension of the orders.

I believe that it's important to stay focused. I believe it's important to be mindful that there is - - the situation exists out there in spite of the fact that we are mostly vaccinated in this state. That's one of the things that we can all hold our head high on is the fact that people have embraced vaccination as a way to protect themselves and it's showing. Our businesses are opening, our families are going out to Little League and lacrosse and band and, you know, back to normal. Back to the things that we enjoy in groups. Different venues are opening that have people sitting closer together, Madam President, than we sit here around the circle.

And I think it's important to understand that those are positive steps, positive steps not only because we can manage them from a health perspective but positive steps because as people we need social interaction. We need to get out, and if it's been proven safe in certain situations or most situations, then, Madam President, people are taking advantage of that.

There are some places that still say please wear a mask. I think there are people that probably will wear a mask the rest of their lives but I think that's a personal choice and that's something, Madam President, that they certainly have every right to

do. Just as I believe our local governments have every right to communicate with their citizenry and make a decision based on what's best for the group conscience in that particular town, city or region with regard to any of the issues that may result from having a pandemic associated with daily life.

So, Madam President, we need to focus on some things that have been left to fester a little. And I think you've heard about the landlord-tenant relationship. Again, nobody wants tenants evicted but nobody wants landlords, especially small landlords of two family, three family, four family to lose their homes. And I think we need to do a better job in getting some of that money out that is within housing right now to make sure that that doesn't happen. And that has to be a huge focus. Small business and family relief, Madam President, need to be a huge focus on moving forward. And I think we can do that together around this circle in conjunction with the House, in conjunction with you Madam President and the Governor we can move forward and accomplish this. And that's the point that I hope to make today.

Senator Osten mentioned earlier about the fact that the opportunity for reimbursement or continuation of FEMA funding dollars will continue. We may have to act legislatively in which to do that but I don't think you would find many people opposing that. I don't think it would take too long, Madam President, for that decision to be made should it have to happen in the form of legislation being passed.

So, Madam President, we've heard a lot, we've been through a lot. It's time I think to not get back completely to normal as a people but I think we can get back to normal as a governing body here for the State of Connecticut working in conjunction with

people. We can act. The question is, Madam President, is should we and should we act now. And I believe that the answer to that would be yes and with respect to the Governor, look forward to working with him to move and continue the waning aspects of this pandemic so that we can get back to whatever the new normal is going to be. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Formica. Will you remark further?  
Good afternoon, Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. And Madam President, I rise in support of the Resolution before us. Madam President, as I've said, and a number of other speakers have said as well in the past and today, Connecticut has managed an unprecedented pandemic that we have all learned about over the last year very well.

When I speak to my constituents they say that they appreciate the work of the Governor, you Madam President, the Legislature, our state government in general for the work that they've done to keep people safe. That we have relied on science, we relied on health data, we have relied on making good decisions that are not political but in the best interests of the people that we serve. And because of that, the result of that, the -- what we have reaped from those decisions has become one of the states with the lowest infection rates, with the highest vaccination rates in the nation.

And so we see, Madam President, over the last few

months when the numbers have come down of our infection rates, when we've seen more people get vaccinated, and we can juxtapose that to other states across the nation where we've seen low vaccination rates and high infection rates, and as a result more death. And so we have -- I think the state has been very responsible with how we have treated and worked and acted on this unprecedented pandemic that we have faced that none of us, none of us could have managed or could have dreamed of just a few years ago.

And thanks to the work that has been done by all of us together we have, I believe, gotten ourselves back to normal in many ways. Whatever the new normal or old normal or 95% of normal because I go to my district or even anywhere in the state, and has anybody been on the highway and seen the traffic? I'm sure we've all been stuck in traffic the last two months, three months. It's almost like it's back to normal times two with the traffic.

Has anybody tried to get into a restaurant on a Saturday night or Friday night? It's almost impossible to get into a restaurant. Has anybody been to the -- any store or the beaches? They're packed. Some people are wearing masks, some aren't, but for me seeing the traffic, seeing businesses back open again, restaurants are open, stores are open, beaches are crowded, that to me is pretty much like we're back to normal. Though we're trying to still be safe and ensure that we're keeping the people of this state healthy and we're keeping that a priority.

So that leads me as to why are we here today with this Resolution and why is the Governor asking us for a continuation of emergency powers. This is not

the same as it was over a year ago where none of us knew anything about COVID-19 or we had no data. We've learned a lot over the last year or so, and we are here today because of the fact that we still want to make sure we're keeping people healthy and safe.

We seen over the last month or two where the Delta variant has crept into our state and has continued to grow around and increase our infection raise. In fact, our infection rate is now over 1%. I would say that there's probably other states in this nation who would trade our infection rate with theirs but we look at it as over 1% now, "Oh my gosh that is a big number." But for us that is because we have been so successful in keeping the infection rate down because of our high vaccination rate that we have to take pause at the fact that we now have an over 1% variant -- over 1% infection rate probably because of the Delta variant.

Secondly is we are putting federal funding in jeopardy if we do not do this Resolution today. Now, there could be other means in which we can still get that federal funding but what's in front of the House and the Senate today is this Resolution. There's nothing else. We're here for this Resolution, the House is there for their Resolution and that's it.

So, [clears throat] excuse me, if we don't do this Resolution and vote on it affirmatively we are losing \$32 million dollars a month for food for the people of this state. And we saw during the height of the pandemic where people were literally in line for hours to get food, and I don't think any of us want to say there we're going to leave \$32 million dollars a month on the table to not feed the people

of this state. We don't want to leave over \$2 million dollars a month for housing from FEMA 'cause we all care about that as well. These are basic staples in life on an unprecedented pandemic that we've all had to live through.

We also know that school is coming up and we want to protect our kids. We don't know if an emergency alteration is coming anytime soon, I hope it is, for vaccines. For Pfizer, from Moderna, J&J, who knows, for kids who are 11 or younger to get them vaccinated 'cause I'm sure they will be -- parents will have their kids in line to get their vaccination shots 'cause we know right now that a lot of kids are getting sick because they're the ones who were exposed to COVID if people around them are not vaccinated or if the variants are there.

So those are some of the reasons. Three good important reasons why we have this Resolution before us today. And I hear the arguments about the emergency orders and somehow that we are not a part of the process here. That we have a Governor run amok of the state. Well, the governor said to us in his message he's looking to do 11 executive orders which keeps the state running and gives him flexibility especially for food, housing, vaccinations. The things that we find very important as we continue to live in our society, as we continue to go to work, go to restaurants, shop, go to the beaches, travel on the highway. The governor still needs that ability to have some flexibility in order to manage this unprecedented pandemic. And we have all governed over the last year. In fact, when we first -- Governor Lamont put his first emergency powers out there for public health and civil preparedness the group of ten met to affirm it. We didn't have to but we did because we wanted to make

sure that we were a part of the process.

We then came back again right before Labor Day to do the same thing. We affirmed it that we thought this was a good idea. We met in two special sessions last year for various Bills; take back our grid, school construction, other pieces of legislation that were very important. We negotiated that with the Governor. That to me sounds like the Legislatures had a role in governing last year and had a role in governing this year as well.

We had our -- we just wrapped up our 2021 legislative session that went four or five months where we produced hundreds of Bills that we passed on -- that we passed, a budget, ARPA funding. Seems like we have been part of the process all along.

The giving the Governor emergency powers is not providing him some ability to lock us out of the capitol, to close roads down or highways down, though the former President did say he would do that potentially. Does not in any way inhibited what we're doing. Again, have you seen the traffic out there? Have you seen the restaurants? Have you been to the beaches? Have you gone -- people are going back to work.

The Governor is merely asking for flexibility to keep people healthy and safe in an unprecedented pandemic. And so in addition when we were in the 2021 Session we changed the rules again for this very moment. For when the executive orders were about to expire we said wait a minute we need to come -- when we come back we can extend it for six months, the Governor asked for a little less but six legislative leaders can meet if the Governor does executive order that we don't like we can veto that.

That's an extraordinary balance and give by all sides in order to make sure that the executive and the legislative branch are working together.

That to me doesn't sound like anybody is running amok but yet we're working in partnership during an unprecedented pandemic that we've all had to face. And so I reject the idea that somehow this Legislature has not been a full partner in dealing with this pandemic because that is not the case. We have been full partners in working together to keep people healthy and safe in this state. And I'm very proud of the numbers that we have but that doesn't mean that the -- it's over and it doesn't mean we have to -- we let our guard down.

Madam President, I see numbers around this country and statistics around this country that makes this even more important that we're here today. We see headlines that say virtually all new COVID deaths and hospitalizations are among unvaccinated people. That came from CNBC on July the 8th. We hear again from the same source that COVID vaccines currently being used are proving to be successful in preventing severe disease, hospitalization and death from the Delta variant. And now nearly all COVID deaths in the US are among the unvaccinated according to the Associated Press on June 29th. Another Associated Press analysis of available government data shows in May that breakthrough infections in fully vaccinated people count for far fewer than what we've seen for COVID-19 hospitalizations.

So yes, there are some of that but if people are vaccinated the odds are that they will be safe and healthy and they will get through that breakthrough vaccination -- breakthrough infection because of

their vaccination. Doctor Fauci says according to the Guardian on July the 8th, that 99.2% of US COVID deaths in June were unvaccinated. And Marilyn reported this week that 100% of those who died from coronavirus there in June had not been vaccinated. On more than 93% of those with new cases or who were hospitalized were similarly protected. And in on July 7th, according to CNN and Marilyn every person who died of COVID in June was on vaccination -- was unvaccinated. In Marilyn every person who died of COVID 19 in June was unvaccinated.

So we see this all the time. I'm proud of Connecticut. We have low vaccinated --low infections, high vaccination rates but we still have to be careful because it is an unprecedented crisis. Two, three months ago I don't know if anybody would of been talking about the Delta variant the way we're talking about it now. We need to get people vaccinated, we need to provide the Governor with the flexibility. We need to continue to work together to keep people healthy and safe.

You know, Madam President, there was a rally or protest here on Monday about freedoms. And I would say great, we're all for freedom, we're all elected. We all believe in our system of government. You want to be free, get vaccinated. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. What we have before

us is a renewal. I'm gonna remind everybody to try to bring the Chamber and anyone listening back to what is before us today. It's a renewal of public health and civil preparedness emergencies.

This first appeared last year March when we were faced with an unprecedented pandemic. For anybody to say that this is not powerful is misrepresenting what this Bill and this Resolution and what these declarations mean. These declarations give the Governor the authority to shut down restaurants, to shut down gyms, to tell people to shelter in place, to tell businesses to close, to cancel schools, to stop high school and youth sports. That's what you're given the Governor the authority to do. Voting yes means he can do that under these authorities.

Let's be clear. Let's be abundantly clear. That's what he has asked for and that is what the majority is willing to do to give him that authority. That's what this can do and that's what he's done, make no mistake about it.

What we have heard this morning and afternoon has been nothing short of qualifications, confusions, let's try to divert the attention away from what's actually before us and why the people of Connecticut may have a problem giving their executive that authority because we are in a far different place today than we were in March of 2020. Far different.

In March of 2020 there was no traffic on 95. Today it's packed. Try and drive 95 on a Friday afternoon, hours, hours to go from Greenwich to New Haven. Restaurants are full, sporting events are on, concerts are being scheduled. The Governor is saying hop on airplanes, go out to dinner and yet he wants

the same authority that he got in March 2020, the same authority today.

The amazing part of this is that when you look and see the states in the Northeast United States. See that little red dot in New England we're the only ones that want to stay under executive authority, not New York, not New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine. You got to drive seven or more hours to get to a state that has this. And we're gonna say that's fine that's what we need to do. It is a blatant overreach of authority and power.

If we were back in a similar situation like we were in March of 2020, we can convene these legislative bodies in three business days just like we did now. The statute works to call us in immediately but we have a different circumstance and a different situation today than we did 16 months ago. Civil preparedness is calling people to action because we are confronted with a dangerous situation.

I am not gonna diminish the fact that COVID is not lethal. I understand as a member of the Aging Committee that it has killed individuals in nursing homes. Over 70% of the individuals who have passed have been seniors and 47% happened in nursing homes, far above the national average. So I get that there's something that's dangerous but in the 16 months since this occurred we have learned a lot. We have learned how to treat the virus and we have learned how to deal with the social distancing, masking and yes, vaccinations. And we are one of the highest vaccinated populations in the country but that doesn't matter to the Governor. That doesn't matter.

While New York City is not in an emergency situation, he's claiming the state of Connecticut is. In fact you could go to Citi Field right now and go to a ballgame, as if the Mets are home, which they are not actually 'cause it's the all-star break but fact is you could go to a sporting event.

Now we've heard about money. That there's money at issue here and we have to always be concerned about the money because there's so much at stake with the money. That there's people who are experienced food insecurity and I don't diminish that, but we do have \$240 million dollars of unallocated ARPA funds that could be used for that purpose but we're not gonna do that. We're waiting, we're holding, we're keeping that back.

And even as to the 32 million that we say is out there in SNAP funds, my understanding is that Kansas, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are getting those funds because they've worked it out with the Biden administration so that they could continue to receive those funds. But even if these monies are at risk, the fact of the matter that much of the time that we've operated under these executive authorities we had no-bid contracts. So while the majority is saying we need to stay in this so that we can bring these \$30 million dollars in the front door, out the back door go no-bid contracts to favorable contractors.

So how is that good for the middle-class taxpayer? How does that protect the middle-class wallet? I'll tell you it doesn't. It doesn't because it takes away the checks and balances, the whole foundation of our government, how this works. There's an executive, there's the people's House and there's the court system. The people's House doesn't have

that equal and rightful place in this process unless we can operate without this authority, and the majority is willing to just yield that to the Governor.

Then I hear that oh, we want to do this to leverage federal money. Well, if leveraging federal money is so important why isn't reinsurance to lower people's healthcare costs something that's front and center? Even the Governor agrees with us on this point but the majority doesn't. And that reinsurance program will leverage 65% of that program and reduce premiums for Connecticut families by up to \$500 dollars a month. That's real cash to real families right now. The answer no. No we're not gonna do that, we're not gonna leverage money for those purposes.

As to the Bills, you know, we could be a willing partner. We can deal with issues but the fact is that giving this authority to the Governor allows him to do exactly what I said. And the fact of the matter is many of the executive orders that had come up were dealt with by the Legislature. We did deal with them during a regular session. We passed numerous Bills and there's no reason we can't do that now. We don't have to sit and operate in an executive session, or not executive session, under executive authority. We don't have to give him authority for under public health and civil preparedness but that's what the majority wants to do and that's what they are doing.

Madam President, I just don't believe that this isn't -- we're in that emergency situation that's a call to action under civil preparedness. You've heard many folks talk about how the highways are packed, how beaches are packed, how restaurants are

full, t's hard to get a reservation, how businesses are open. People are getting back to normal and back on with their lives and so should the Legislature. That's the way this was meant to be. This is for emergent conditions when things are serious.

Today we are in a very different world than we were back then. Even the with regards to money, even the -- there are members of the Democrats agree with us that money is not really at risk. It just makes, from my perspective, a clear and blatant overreach of power. We heard in session and in June in special session that we had to pass a marijuana law because all the states around us were doing it so should Connecticut, but now that all the states around us are giving back their Legislature and giving back their people their rightful powers, Connecticut is gonna go its own way. The only state in the Northeast. The only state in the Northeast that is doing that. Plain and simple, Madam President, we can do better. The people expect better and I believe we need to do better.

I'm asking my colleagues to do just that. Do better, take the power back, and allow this Chamber in our House to have the People's voice in its rightful place. Please vote no. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

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

SENATOR LOONEY (11TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Speaking for the second time in support of the Resolution. Madam President, those speaking in opposition to this

Resolutions have used phrases today like the pandemic has waned, it is over, let's move on, we are at the end. Madam President, these are statements of hope and aspiration but not statements of fact, especially in the context where in the last two weeks we move from under .5% positive testing to now 1.28 today. That is a sign of alarm.

And the response that is demanded of us by our constituents is that we act prudently. And prudent says that we should be prepared for continuing emergency allowing for this modest extension of gubernatorial executive authority for another 70 days after it expires. The current orders expire on the 20th.

Now if we reach a point getting close to the end of September where it appears that the Delta variant has receded and not been replaced by something of similar danger, the decision can be revisited then and perhaps we would be willing to do then what we are unwilling to do today with greater confidence and with greater hope.

Our situation is somewhat analogous to the situation I think, Madam President, in the movie Jaws with the debate between the sheriff played by Roy Scheider and the mayor played by Murrey Hamilton. The Mayor was concerned about commerce and the chief insisted that there was a dangerous predatory shark in the waters. Now, of course, the thumb was on the scale of that movie on the side of the chief because the audience knew that there was in fact a dangerous shark there that the mayor wasn't willing to acknowledge. But the situation we have here is we do not know if there is still a predatory shark in the waters or that the original one has been replaced by another that's about to wreak havoc on us in some

way that we don't foresee yet.

And while we don't know, while we don't have the degree of certainty the people deposited today without evidence and without real -- without enough facts, the prudent thing to do is to maintain the capacity for emergency executive power for a while longer. And that while we're saying amounts to 70 days from the expiration of the current order. That is what our constituents expect us to do.

And, Madam President, some of the comments of those in opposition seem to suggest is that we the Legislature has been generally paralyzed and turned over authority to the executive. That's certainly not the case. We have had a highly productive regular session in 2021. And the reason it was productive I believe, Madam President, in large measure is because of the protective measures that we took. That we limited access, that we had public hearings and Committee meetings virtually, that we arrange things in the Chamber so that only a few people were in here at a time to vote and that made easier once the electronic voting system was updated to allow for people to vote from their offices.

We were operating throughout that session, Madam President, in danger of being shut down if there was an outbreak, if there needed to be quarantined. And of course, we were operating with a finite timeframe where we had to be finished by June 9th. And we could've lost the session or a significant part of the session and we did not. We were able to get our business done in a timely way, with a significant amount of very important legislation. The judgments we made in our rules at the start of the session were right because they were prudent, they were careful. And that is what we are arguing for now is

for some additional prudence for the next 70 days so that I think we'll know in a better sense of where we actually stand two months from now as to whether we are still in some danger with spiking numbers or whether we are not.

We think that the 11 orders that the Governor is talking about here are highly prudent, highly reasonable. Again, the extension that he's requested is a short one, and also again, we have to remember the provisions of 21 -- Public Act 21-5 that if there is some objectionable order the six leaders can in effect revoke that order within 36 hours of its issuance. So there are protections built into the process that did not exist before the passage of that act.

So, Madam President, as a matter of prudence I would urge the Members to vote for this Resolution for this Resolution today. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR\_

Thank you, Senator Looney. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, the machine will be opened. Mr. Clerk, if you would please announce the vote.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. This is Senate Resolution No. 52. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Resolution No. 52. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate, Resolution No. 52. Resolution approving the Governor's renewed declaration of public health and civil preparedness emergency filed with the Secretary of State on July 13th, 2021.

Immediate roll call vote in the Senate. This is on Senate Resolution No. 52. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on Senate Resolution No. 52. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate. Senate Resolution No. 52. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

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

CLERK:

Senate Resolution No. 52:

Total Number Voting	34
Those voting Yea	19
Those voting Nay	15
Those absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

(gavel) The Resolution is adopted. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I'd like to yield to any Members of points of personal privilege. Senator Champagne I know has one. I'd like to yield.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Champagne, do you accept the yield, sir?

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH):

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. I'd like to take a moment free, personal point of privilege to honor an officer from the South Windsor Police Department who passed away yesterday. On June 27th he was struck by a drunk driver and yesterday he succumbed to his injuries and passed away. And that moment --

THE CHAIR:

And Senator I'll just stop you there because this is a serious topic and I would just ask Members and guests to please give their attention to Senator Champagne. Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH):

Thank you. Doctor Anwar -- or I'm sorry, Senator Anwar also wanted to be present during this but this moment of silence I'd like to have for officer Ben Lovett, he also had a passenger on his motorcycle at the same time and she's still in the hospital. So I'd carry it over to her as well. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you so much, and if the Chamber would join in a moment of silence for Ben Lovett and the -- and also to send good thoughts to his passenger.

(gavel) Thank you.

Senator Formica.

SENATOR FORMICA (20TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I rise for a Journal notation that Senator Berthel regrets not being able to be present today but he's absent due to personal reasons. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, the Journal will so note. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. That concludes our business for today, and I move that we adjourn, Sine Die.

THE CHAIR:

And we are adjourned. Go forth and govern. (gavel)

(On the motion of Senator Duff of the 25th, the Senate at 1:31 p.m. adjourned Sine Die.)