

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021**

**1:36 P.M.**

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The House will come to order.

In the absence of clergy, let us pause for a moment of silence.

(Whereupon, a moment of silence was observed.)

Visitors are invited to join the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, Acting Speaker Aubry led visitors and members in the Pledge of Allegiance.)

A quorum being present, the Clerk will read the Journal of Tuesday, March the 2nd.

Mrs. Peoples-Stokes.

MRS. PEOPLES-STOKES: Mr. Speaker, I move to

dispense with the further reading of the Journal of Tuesday, March the 2nd and ask that the same stand approved.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Without objection, so ordered.

Mrs. Peoples-Stokes.

MRS. PEOPLES-STOKES: Mr. Speaker, just to share some information regarding the schedule for today, but prior to doing that if I could, I'd like to share a quote from Maya Angelou, who was an American poetist and a Civil Rights activist. She actually published seven autobiographies, three books of essays and several books of poetry. Maya is sharing with us today, *Each time a woman stands up for herself, she stands up for all women*. I want to thank Ms. Angelou posthumously for her quote that she has left us all to pay attention to.

So now the members have on their desks the main Calendar. We're going to take up some pieces of measures from that one, Mr. Speaker. We're going to start with Calendar No. 89 by Mr. Gottfried; we're going to go to Calendar No. 108 by Mr. Epstein; Calendar No. 109 by Ms. Cook; followed by Calendar No. 139 by Ms. Jean-Pierre. Immediately following that, Mr. Speaker, we are going to take up some of the measures from our nursing home package. There we're going to start with Mr. Bronson's Calendar No. 85; followed by Rules Report No. 25 by Ms. Cruz; and then Rules Report No. 30 by Mr. Kim; and Rules Report No. 32 by Ms. Wallace. We're going to go in that order, Mr. Speaker. And immediately following our work

here - not that some other things may not come up, but for right now that's where we are - there is going to be a need at the close of Session today for a Majority Conference and, obviously, as always, we will talk with our colleagues on the other side to determine what their needs are.

That's the general outline of where we're going, Mr. Speaker, and if there are any introductions and/or housekeeping, now would be an appropriate time.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: So first of all, we have an introduction from Assemblymember Fall.

MR. FALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to introduce a little superstar that we have here with us today. My little princess who is seven years old, Maimouna Lynn Fall. Her sister couldn't be with us today, she is at home, but she is joining us virtually, Naila Simone Fall. Maimouna is here in Albany not only learning virtually, but she will do a report at the end of the week on what she is learning in Albany, and that will be given to her teacher next week, right baby? Right. All right, so I'm very proud of her and all she has done as a big sister and I ask if you could welcome her and her sister, Naila, to the People's House, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Certainly. On behalf of Assemblymember Fall, your father, we welcome you here to the New York State Assembly and extend to you the privileges of the floor on behalf of the Speaker and all the members. We're so pleased that you could come join us here today, share this day with your

father, and we hope at some time your sister will be able to come up and have the same experience, and having seen you already sit at the chair up here in the Speaker's Rostrum, I know there are great things to come in your life. Thank you so very much, and you're welcome here.

(Applause)

And one other item of housekeeping. On a motion by Mr. Gottfried, page 13, Calendar No. 80, Bill No. A-00832, amendments are received and adopted.

Page 3, Assembly No. 73, the Clerk will read.

THE CLERK: Assembly Resolution No. 73, Ms. Lupardo.

Legislative resolution memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim March 2021 as American Red Cross Month in the State of New York.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On the resolution, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed, no. The resolution is adopted.

Calendar No. 89, the Clerk will read.

THE CLERK: Assembly No. A00228, Calendar No. 89, Gottfried, Abinanti, McDonough, Thiele, Gunther, McDonald, Sayegh, Barron, Quart, Anderson, Byrne, Steck, Jackson, Zebrowski. An act to amend the Public Health Law, in relation to source plasma donation centers.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Read the last section.

THE CLERK: This act shall take effect on the 180th day.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will record the vote on Assembly print A-228. This is a fast roll call. Any member who wishes to be recorded in the negative is reminded to contact the Majority or Minority Leader at the numbers previously provided.

(The Clerk recorded the vote.)

Are there any other votes? Announce the results.

(The Clerk announced the results.)

The bill is passed.

THE CLERK: Assembly No. A03078, Calendar No. 108, Epstein, Sayegh, Cruz, Lavine, Taylor, Simon, Gottfried, L. Rosenthal, Reyes, Cook, Barron, Quart, Seawright, Weprin, Colton. An act to amend the Correction Law, in relation to including credits earned from a higher education institution as a condition on which the Merit Board may grant merit time.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Read the last section.

THE CLERK: This act shall take effect immediately.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will record the vote on Assembly print A-3078. This is a fast roll call. Any member who wishes to be recorded in the negative is reminded to contact the Majority or Minority Leader at the numbers previously provided.

(The Clerk recorded the vote.)

Mr. Epstein to explain his vote.

MR. EPSTEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise to explain my vote. This is such an important piece of legislation. Right now when people want to go to school while they're incarcerated, they're not eligible for merit time or early release time for taking those college classes. We see people dropping out of college to go to other schools, the technical schools, the beautician school. This just puts college on the even playing field. It encourages and incentivizes people to go to college to advance their lives and to get merit time for it. I want to thank the Speaker for allowing us to move this forward. I would encourage all my colleagues to vote in the affirmative to support students who are incarcerated with merit time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Epstein in the affirmative.

Are there any other votes? Announce the results.

(The Clerk announced the results.)

The bill is passed.

THE CLERK: Assembly Bill No. A03173, Calendar No. 109, Cook, Zebrowski. An act to amend the General Business Law, in relation to requiring persons offering weight loss services to provide notice of certain risks.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Read the last section.

THE CLERK: This act shall take effect on the 180th day.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will record the vote on Assembly print A-3173. This is a fast roll call. Any member who wishes to be recorded in the negative is reminded to contact the Majority or Minority Leader at the numbers previously provided.

(The Clerk recorded the vote.)

Ms. Kelles to explain her vote.

MS. KELLES: Yeah. I wanted to thank Assemblymember Cook for bringing this forward. I think that it's very easy to overlook why this is so incredibly important. With a culture that is obsessed about physical appearance, it is so critical that people do understand that weight loss is not synonymous necessarily and -- and automatically with health. We know in the scientific literature that -- that weight loss if not coordinated with strength -- muscle strengthening, can cause significant muscle loss which can be a high risk for certain other morbidities and issues, particularly in aging. Something called "yo-yo dieting" where someone will lose weight which actually can reset or trigger other issues that will cause weight gain, and it's called yo-yo -- yo-yo condition which actually is highly correlated with some of the increased risks for cardiovascular disease and heart issues. I think it's extremely important that we all understand that there are many other measures of health rather than simply appearance and body size, so thank you so much. I think it's really important that we are pushing this forward and we are more comprehensive about what we understand as health for humanity. So

thank you so much, and I am voting in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Kelles in the affirmative.

Are there --

Mr. Goodell.

MR. GOODELL: Thank you, sir. Please record the following Republicans in the negative: Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Walczyk, and Ms. Walsh. Thank you, sir.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you, sir. So noted.

Are there any other votes? Announce the results.

(The Clerk announced the results.)

The bill is passed.

THE CLERK: Assembly Bill No. A05456, Calendar No. 134, Jean-Pierre, Otis, Stern, Zebrowski, Gunther, Sayegh, Jackson, Jacobson, Dickens, Galef, Sillitti, Lavine. An act to amend the Education Law, in relation to library and school district petitioning; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On a motion by Ms. Jean-Pierre, the Senate bill is before the House. The Senate bill is advanced. Read the last section.

THE CLERK: This act shall take effect immediately.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will record the vote on Senate print S-4430. This is a fast roll call. Any member



who wishes to be recorded in the negative is reminded to contact the Majority or Minority Leader at the numbers previously provided.

(The Clerk recorded the vote.)

Are there any other votes? Announce the results.

(The Clerk announced the results.)

(Pause)

The bill is passed.

THE CLERK: Assembly No. A01052-B, Calendar No. 85, Bronson, Gottfried, Weinstein, Lupardo, Seawright, Stern, Fahy, Clark, McMahon, Nolan, Jacobson, Simon, Meeks, Woerner, Jones, Englebright, Griffin, Lunsford, Santabarbara, Wallace, Barrett, Steck, Barron, Norris, Thiele, Gonzalez-Rojas, Buttenschon, Walsh, Glick, Vanel, Cahill, L. Rosenthal, Pichardo, Richardson, Zebrowski, Williams, Bichotte Hermelyn, Anderson, Conrad, Stirpe, Dinowitz, J. D. Rivera, Abbate, Otis, Smith, Aubry, Cook, Carroll, Rozic, Abinanti, Gallagher, Forrest. An act to amend the Public Health Law and the Social Services Law, in relation to personal and compassionate caregiving visitors for residents of nursing homes.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On a motion by Mr. Bronson, the Senate bill is before the House. The Senate bill is advanced.

An explanation is requested, Mr. Bronson.

MR. BRONSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker. This bill would authorize families to designate up to two caregivers to visit loved ones and assist in their care. It would direct the respective Commissioner

to develop a process to allow for visitation of residents in nursing homes and adult care facilities by those designated caregivers and for compassionate care visitations. The bill will also expand the definition of "compassionate care" from strictly end-of-life situations to other cases where a decline in physical, mental, or emotional well-being requires needed attention from family. The personal caregiving visitor would be exempt from general prohibitions of visitation, although the bill would require safety procedures and protocols, at a minimum those required of staff, in order to protect the health and welfare of residents, their visitors, and staff members.

During COVID, visitation in these facilities was initially only allowed if there were no COVID cases for 28 consecutive days among residents and staff of the particular facility. Now that number is 14 consecutive days. During our nursing home hearings last fall, we heard from many people who testified this restriction effectively banned visitation in many facilities, and the resulting isolation led to a decline in the physical and mental health of residents in their -- in these facilities.

This bill addresses that issue through a safeguarding process to allow family members and caregivers to once again visit their loved ones. The bill is intended to reunite families that have long been separated from their loved ones in nursing homes and long-term care facilities. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.

Ms. Miller.

MS. MILLER: Can you hear me?

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Yes, we can, Ms. Miller.

MS. MILLER: I apologize, my dog is barking. The love of Zoom at home.

I just have a couple of questions if the sponsor would yield?

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Please.

MR. BRONSON: Yes, I will.

MS. MILLER: Thank you. The first is that I see that this bill goes through the Commissioner of Health. Is that just for the -- to set up the process of authorizing essential persons to individuals, or do they need to go to the -- through the Commissioner each time they're trying to -- a nursing home or, you know, a family is trying to set up an essential person?

MR. BRONSON: Yes, that's a very good question. No. The Commissioner would be charged with setting up the protocol for the designation of the caregivers, when there would be replacement of caregivers, what that process would be, along with the -- the standards that would have to be followed in order for the family to come in. There would not be a need for each family to get special permission through the Department of Health.

MS. MILLER: Or the home, to have to --

MR. BRONSON: Or the home to get special permission, either.

MS. MILLER: Okay. That's a very good distinction. Thank you. The other is I see that it's 45 days. Is that 45 days before it becomes effective to give them the time because, quite honestly, we need our, you know, they need their family member, they need their caregiver in there yesterday so another 45 days, honestly somebody could die in that period of time from the neglect and the failure to thrive and everything that they're experiencing.

MR. BRONSON: I fully agree with you. I wish we could do this yesterday, actually, and I wish we could set it up for it to happen tomorrow, but the 45 days is to give the agencies an opportunity to set the rules and to move a process forward. But I, too, wish that we could do it quicker.

MS. MILLER: Well, and that being said, if there's any way to try and, you know, amend it or ask for any consideration to speed that up, because I think that it's, you know, it's another month-and-a-half. It's quite a, you know, a long time when you're kept apart from your family member and you're terribly worried. So thank you, and thank you for this bill. I had a very similar bill. Mine didn't have the Commissioner of Health, but I do thank you for this legislation.

MR. BRONSON: Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.

Mr. Jensen.

MR. JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On the bill.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On the bill, sir.

MR. JENSEN: I first wanted to thank the sponsor, the esteemed Dean of the Delegation from Monroe County, for putting this -- this bill forward. I wish, much like my colleague who spoke before me, that this bill wasn't necessary. I believe it's positively shameful that the Department of Health had not worked on a mechanism to get families and loved ones back into nursing homes at some point earlier in this process. The fact that we have loved ones, elders, dying in isolation is shameful. I appreciate the bill coming forward, that we're going to get our loved ones, our caregivers back in the nursing homes, but there should have been plans by the Department of Health to have this in place before. And to say that these questions were raised in August and they didn't do anything in response is extremely disappointing. So I thank my colleague for bringing this bill to the floor. I sincerely hope that the Department of Health does not wait the 45 days that are in the legislative language and that they immediately institute the policies and procedures in place to allow our loved ones to see their loved ones as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.

Read the last section.

THE CLERK: This act shall take effect in 45 days.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will record the vote on Senate print S-614-B. This is a fast roll call. Any member who wishes to be recorded in the negative is reminded to contact the

Majority or Minority Leader at the numbers previously provided.

(The Clerk recorded the vote.)

Mr. Barron to explain his vote.

MR. BARRON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the sponsor for this bill. My mother-in-law is in a nursing home and we noticed that when we couldn't go to see her that her condition was deteriorating. So what we did, I thought in a very interesting, creative way, some of you may have done it, too, but you might want to consider it, we had them bring my mother-in-law down in the lobby and we stayed outside so we could see her, you know, from the window outside. And so she was -- she was right there and we were able to see her and even in that distance, it still wasn't as good as actually being inside and my wife doing her hair and touching, you know, and all of that, but that little bit there she started to rebound and feel better because she could at least see us. And we had to break the ice because when we first started seeing her through the glass, she wasn't responding because she was feeling like maybe we abandoned her. She didn't understand, you know, the situation.

So, this is a very, very important bill and I agree, if they can do something to expedite the 45 days or make it shorter, that would definitely -- but I'm definitely voting in the affirmative and I appreciate the sponsor for bringing this bill forward. I think a lot of families will be very, very grateful in this State for this bill.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Barron in the affirmative.

Ms. Walsh.

MS. WALSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to thank the sponsor for bringing this bill forward. This is such an important bill. I think that no matter where we're from, we all have stories like the one that Mr. Barron just told. My mom, we had to celebrate her 94th birthday in a senior apartment situation by standing outside and waving a banner which she could not see because of her macular degeneration, but we tried to shout loud enough so she could at least hear us.

We need to recognize that not only does -- do our seniors need visits for their own mental health but, in many instances, caregivers, family caregivers, that are coming in are providing so much essential care to these elderly residents, and residents of group homes and residential homes. And, you know, at least my mother understood why we couldn't come by. Assemblywoman Miller and I did a Zoom earlier last year where we were talking -- it was heartbreaking, talking to parents of young adults with developmental disabilities who did not understand why their family couldn't come by and see them. And so, this is sorely needed. I -- I thank the sponsor and I will enthusiastically cast my vote in the affirmative. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Walsh in the affirmative.

Ms. Lunsford.

MS. LUNSFORD: Thank you very much. I also would like to thank the sponsor of this bill. I know how hard my

colleague has been working on this and for how long, so this is well overdue and I'm very excited that it's passing today. My father-in-law is in a long-term care facility. Neither me nor my four-year-old have seen him since February, and my four-year-old does not remember what his grandfather looks like. I have heard from constituents, I've heard from family friends, I've heard from relatives about how their family member, their loved one doesn't eat if they're not there, that they don't take their medicine if they're not there. So the enormous impact this is going to have on families across the State cannot be understated. So thank you so much. I vote in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Lunsford in the affirmative.

Mr. Santabarbara.

MR. SANTABARBARA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, in explaining my vote, while COVID-19 has certainly impacted all of us, our loved ones in nursing homes across the State have been isolated from their families for far too long. With all that's happened, nursing home residents still continue to experience physical and emotional pain due to isolation. As vaccine distribution continues, we must move forward with safe visitation solutions, and that's what this bill does to address the damage that prolonged isolation has caused for nursing home residents and their families, including loneliness, a lack of motivation, neglect of physical needs, and a general failure to thrive.

This bill will allow caregivers to once again be able



to provide the physical and emotional support that loved ones need to thrive. It takes important steps towards restoring the emotional health of families, friends, and neighbors that are struggling with loved ones isolated in nursing homes. I'm a cosponsor on this bill and I encourage my colleagues to support it. I thank the sponsor for bringing it forward and I encourage everyone to support it. People have been without the physical support of their families for far too long. These individuals need to see their families again, and I cast my vote in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Santabarbara in the affirmative.

Ms. Seawright.

Ms. Seawright, you have to unmute yourself, or have her unmuted. There we go.

MS. SEAWRIGHT: Sorry about that, Mr. Speaker. I was just having difficulty. Just to explain my vote. Again, I want to echo what so many of my colleagues have said today. This important piece of legislation is much needed. I have heard from numerous residents at Coler Hospital Long-Term Care Facility on Roosevelt Island, as well as Mary Manning Walsh, and I have one constituent that regularly comes to my office, and we try to let her Facetime her adult daughter who is in a home. And so, this piece of legislation is critically important so that those in nursing -- (unintelligible/mic cut out)

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: We have a technical

problem.

MS. SEAWRIGHT: -- nursing homes. So, I'm pleased to be a cosponsor. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Seawright in the affirmative.

Mr. Kim on -- to explain his vote.

MR. KIM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, join my colleagues in thanking the main sponsor. As the previous Chair of the Committee on Aging, when we had our transitional meeting, this was at the top of Mr. Bronson's list of things that he wanted to get done as soon as possible. So I'm very proud to join him in passing this bill. I know that this is an issue that impacts everyone from all across the State, including members from the other side of the aisle. I know that -- I know for a fact that Ms. Miller also had worked very hard on getting this done. So, I'm very glad that we can have the full support of this legislative Body as we try to reunite families that have been separated for so many months. And as my colleagues already has said, this is not just about COVID anymore, this is about the mental health of older adults that have felt isolated and that feel like no one cares for them from their own families. So I'm glad that we can finally get this done and, again, thank you and I proudly support this and vote in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Kim in the affirmative.

Mrs. Griffin.

MRS. GRIFFIN: Thank you for allowing me to explain my vote, Mr. Speaker. I commend the sponsor for introducing this bill and I am proud to be one of the cosponsors. Over the past year, I spoke to countless constituents and friends that were cut off from visiting their loved ones in nursing homes, assisted living, and long-term care facilities. It was just a really challenging time for everyone, and it was really sad to hear, you know, how they felt and the emotions that they went through. This was hard, so difficult for both caregivers and their loved ones who were isolated, confused, and lonely.

So I'm really proud to support this. I'm glad it's put forth. Obviously I would love this to be sooner, that people could start visiting their loved ones, but I vote in the affirmative and I'm happy that in 45 days they can do so, and if it can be sooner, that would be wonderful, as well. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you. Mrs. Griffin in the affirmative.

Ms. Reyes.

MS. REYES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to commend the sponsor of this bill. And it's important for us to understand that when we care for our elderly and we care for patients, the emotional well-being is an important component of that, as well. And like so many of my colleagues mentioned, the family is oftentimes the provider of care of -- activities of daily living, especially in our nursing homes that are chronically understaffed.

And we've been allowing visitations for families in acute care settings for months now so this is long overdue and I am so happy to be voting for this legislation and hopefully we can make it sooner than the 45 days, because I think that our seniors have been waiting and yearning to feel and see their loved ones. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Reyes in the affirmative.

Ms. Clark.

MS. CLARK: I, too, join all my colleagues in thanking the sponsor of this bill. Having the opportunity to watch my colleague in action as he has met with families and heard their pain and really want to commend him for his commitment and perseverance to see this through to today. We know what COVID has done in terms of positivity rates. I don't think we'll ever be able to capture what it's done for the isolation and the mental and emotional health it has taken on our seniors in long-term care facilities and nursing homes. I have a 96-year-old grandma who I lost in January and the social isolation really led to a huge downturn for her this last year. So we know that this is important, that this is going to change lives. I'm really proud to be here today and want to, again, thank my colleague and the sponsor for his commitment to this issue. I vote in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Clark in the affirmative.

Mr. Meeks.

MR. MEEKS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the affirmative for this bill. I'm thankful to -- to the Dean of our Delegation for moving forward with this legislation, as well as the advocates that have continued to reach out to us on a regular basis. I find that this legislation is beneficial to not only residents, but also their family members, and it's also beneficial to the employees of the facilities. We find that employees are often overworked, underpaid, and understaffed. And when the family members found an opportunity to come in, they actually pitch in and assist where help is needed. So I'm grateful for this legislation and I stand in the affirmative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Meeks in the affirmative.

Ms. Buttenschon.

MS. BUTTENSCHON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the sponsor for bringing this bill forward, and I concur with my colleagues that have spoken before me today. Our residents in nursing homes deserve a safe and healthy living environment. That includes being able to spend time with loved ones. In addition, I find that so many family members have come forward to express their concerns during this challenging time as they wanted to spend time with their loved ones within these facilities. A special thanks to Karla Connolly from Utica that advocated for the essential compassionate caregiver. I vote in the affirmative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Buttenschon in

the affirmative.

Mr. Ra.

MR. RA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to commend the sponsor of this piece of legislation. This is an issue I think we've all dealt with, with constituents concerned about their loved ones and their inability to see them and, like several of my colleagues, who have stated that isolation and the impact it had on their loved ones, so this is a great step forward. I thank the sponsor and I especially want to give a shout-out to my colleague, Missy Miller, as well as Mr. Kim, who I know were working hard on pushing this issue, as well. Finally these individuals will have the opportunity to -- to have loved ones come and see them and, hopefully, it helps many of those residents, you know, be able to thrive again in those settings and move forward with -- with better health. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Ra in the affirmative.

Mr. Lawler.

MR. LAWLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much to the sponsor for putting this legislation forward. In September of 2019, my grandmother passed away and we had to put my grandfather in a long-term care facility. Six months later, we couldn't see him anymore because of the COVID pandemic. And anybody who knows when you're moving someone into a long-term care facility, it is a difficult adjustment. And it was. And

unfortunately, we weren't there, we couldn't be there and my grandfather ended up getting COVID in April, and we were told he would be deceased within 48 hours by the hospital. And somehow he fought and he survived it, and then he was moved to a rehab facility and, again, we couldn't see him. We couldn't be there. And he would tell us that he felt they weren't taking good care of him, or that they weren't being attentive to him, and it's awful when your -- when it's your family and you can't be there to fight for them and to make sure that they are, in fact, being taken care of and be able to communicate with the caregivers and those working in those facilities.

To not be able for a year for so many families to be able to -- to have that interaction with their loved ones, to be there, to show that they care, it's a horrible, horrible situation for so many residents across the State of New York, for so many members here in this Chamber. We've all experienced it, we all have somebody in our families who -- who are dealing with this situation. We all have somebody who are our constituents dealing with this situation. So I commend the Speaker -- the sponsor of this legislation for doing it, and I thank you very much. I vote in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Lawler in the affirmative.

Mr. Giglio.

Ms. Giglio -- I'm always mixing you two guys up.

MS. GIGLIO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would also like to thank the sponsor for putting this bill forward. It's a very

important bill. The people that are in nursing homes, the number one advocates for them are their families, their caregivers, and it's very important not only for morale, but also for the health of the people that are in the nursing homes. For the past 11 years, we have been working with the school district, or I have been, and delivering Veterans Day cards to the veterans that are in the nursing homes, and we weren't able to do that this year. They had to be sent there with the socks and little essential items that they need to show that we appreciate them. And I think that this is a great step going forward. I think that we also need to look at visitation for assisted living, but it's a good start and I will vote in the affirmative on the bill. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Giglio in the affirmative.

Mr. Conrad.

MR. CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to echo the sentiments of my colleagues. I think this is a step in the right direction for the lives of the residents. This Body needs to respect the work that has done to help these people and value these people in their lives, for the emotional, social and emotional relationship and the constant flow of caregivers. This is one step in the right direction to correct some of the wrongs that have gone in the past. And I hope to move beyond -- earlier than the 45 days given. I vote in the affirmative and I'm a proud cosponsor. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Conrad in the affirmative.



Mr. Sayegh.

Mr. Sayegh needs to be unmuted. There you go.

MR. SAYEGH: Am I okay?

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity. I wanted to commend the sponsor and to join my colleagues in stressing the importance of this legislation. Many of us over the last year have witnessed a deterioration in many loved ones that were in long-term assisted living and nursing homes, and largely due to the lack of participation of family members and caregivers. And many of us that come from ethnic and cultural backgrounds where respect for seniors and taking care of our seniors was one of the most important family functions, and it took us many decades to respect the fact that we can have our loved ones in these long-term facilities.

The last year has been a tremendous setback for many of us that really lost trust in the process, but I wanted to say also that part of the process of allowing visitations involves making sure that these facilities have safe staffing, that they're given the proper reimbursement. This has been a major issue, that we've held many of these facilities to unfunded mandates. So I really stress the importance moving forward that we legislate whatever legislation and initiatives to make it safer and more convenient for our seniors, and to also make it allowable that they receive the necessary funding to assure us that they have safe staff and services. So I commend the sponsor and would be voting in favor. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Sayegh in the affirmative.

Mr. DiPietro.

MR. DIPIETRO: Okay. Can you hear me?

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Yes, sir, Mr. DiPietro.

MR. DIPIETRO: Thank you, sir. I'm going to be voting in the affirmative on this. It's -- it's -- it's about time. But I don't want us to take our eye off the ball. For months, nursing homes and facilities have had plans in action to allow visitors, and I've talked to many of them, as I'm sure you have. And for us now as a Legislature to have to put this through and force this action, I think it's beyond -- beyond control here. I'm upset that Howard Zucker should have resigned months ago. He should have had this plan in action. In Erie County where I'm from, Gale Burstein, who is our Health Commissioner, she should have resigned months ago, and for a lot of other reasons also, but this should have been done a while ago, months ago; this was all in order.

And I commend our Body for having to force this issue, but this should have been done months ago. The plans should have been there from the State Health Department. This is a fault of Zucker and all his minions as we go down on each county level. They -- they forcefully made these things happen to the nursing homes, kept these initiatives on them that wouldn't allow visitors even though they all said they could safely bring people in. If ten staff members a day

are wearing PPE and going in to see our loved ones, why can't we do the same? There was so many ways we could have done this and, in the end of the day, this was reprehensible. Zucker should have been fired and should resign, and I'm calling on that, along with in my area, Gale Burstein, they both should have been resigned. But I'm happy that this Body has taken the helm to do something that we shouldn't have had to do. I want to make that very clear.

So I will be voting in the affirmative and I thank everyone who put this together, but I'm very disappointed that a lot of people higher up that had the ability to help our seniors failed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. DiPietro in the affirmative.

Ms. Woerner.

MS. WOERNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to rise today to explain my vote. In a year where we heard stories from many people of how this pandemic has impacted their lives, there were perhaps none that were more impactful than the stories of the residents of nursing homes and of their caregiver families and their inability to spend any time together and the decline of those residents of nursing homes. Those are the stories that will live with me for the rest of my life, as I'm sure it's true of all of us.

So I want to commend the Speaker and -- for his actions here, and the sponsor for his persistence in bringing this bill forward, and I am proud to vote in the affirmative. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Woerner in the affirmative.

Ms. González-Rojas.

MS. GONZÁLEZ-ROJAS: I rise in favor of this bill and thank the bill sponsor for advocating for this important piece of legislation and I'm very, very proud to cosponsor. During the worst global health pandemic in decades, we lost 15,000 New Yorkers in nursing homes. These were not just numbers, these were our elders, these were our families, heroes and sheroes, these were New Yorker's loved ones. It is only right to allow for compassionate care visits at this point in the pandemic.

This pandemic is also a mental health crisis, and the isolation of people in nursing homes only contribute to the decline of their emotional and physical health and well-being. And as we know, many family members have acted as aides to their loved ones, so we need them to be able to see their family members. I also appreciate the safeguards that have been included in this legislation, such as the need to undergo COVID-19 testing, temperature checks, and health screenings. I'm very proud to cast my vote in the affirmative and look forward to other legislation that addresses this very necessary reform. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you. Ms. Rojas in the affirmative.

Mr. Goodell.

MR. GOODELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join

with all my colleagues who have spoken and all those who haven't spoken in grieving for the thousands of our seniors who passed away this last year without their family at their side, without someone holding their hand, without someone telling them how much they love them. It's horrific. I only pray to God that when my time comes, my family is there. It's almost unspeakable, the grief that we've experienced when we allow loved ones to pass without the love and comfort of their family. I look forward to the day when this Legislature does not have to pass legislation calling on our Health Department to be compassionate. We should never view that as a legislative function. It should go without saying, and it grieves me that today, we have to tell our own Health Department to be compassionate to our senior citizens and to allow their loved ones and their family to be with them.

My father-in-law, who's in an assisted living facility, compared his stay to solitary confinement. Imagine that. Our loved ones comparing their stay to the way we treat the worst criminals in our system. I support this law and I pray to God we don't have to repeat this process in other areas. Thank you, sir.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Goodell in the affirmative.

Mr. Bronson.

MR. BRONSON: In explaining my vote, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank Chair Gottfried for helping in the drafting of this legislation. I want to thank Senator May for partnering with us on

this on this legislation and, certainly, Chair McDonald in connection with the hearings we held last fall which resulted in this piece of legislation. You know, I was there when my mom died. I was with her. I cannot imagine what these families went through finding out that their loved one passed away and they weren't able to be with them.

This bill will allow compassionate care visitations. This bill will allow caregiving visitations so that loved ones can go in and see their family members and help with their care and merely hold their hand. Many people came to me during this pandemic, family members, in particular Families Together, a group of advocates who insisted we get this done. Numerous calls to DOH. Numerous Zoom meetings to DOH. Emails to DOH and nothing. Promises, but no results. And then February 22nd, they come out with guidelines that were woefully inadequate. This bill will correct some of that. This bill will allow loved ones to see their family members under certain conditions. Our families have been separated for far too long. The isolation of loved ones in nursing homes must stop. I'm happy to be part of moving us in the right direction to bring families together. I withdraw my request, Mr. Speaker, and vote in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Bronson in the affirmative.

Mr. McDonald.

MR. MCDONALD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And first of all, I want to thank the sponsor of this bill and our Health Chair

for their leadership, and also, Mr. Speaker, to you. You gave the direction to the Committees to have the hearings. These hearings were held for several days and several hours during those days, and we heard painstakingly the loss and sorrow that many families endured, and it didn't stop there. It continued on for weeks, if not months, of constituents that we all heard from of the loss that they suffered.

And I think we all can recognize the fact, the ability that somebody is dying without their loved ones nearby, it's painful for everybody involved. This legislation has been responsibly put together to ensure that there's a safe, effective, meaningful process in place where family members can tend to their loved ones, which will only help improve the overall atmosphere in these facilities. Far too often we get caught up about the physical health of the individuals, and rightfully so, but we can't be losing the feeling of the fact that emotional and mental health play a very large role in people's overall health. This bill addresses it and, therefore, I am supportive and appreciative of all the support this bill is seeing today. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. McDonald in the affirmative.

Mr. Burdick.

MR. BURDICK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to explain my vote in supporting this critically needed measure. One of the most painful ordeals throughout this pandemic has been the separation of those in nursing homes who are sick or in their final

hours of life separated from their loved ones. It has been one of the cruel consequences of the pandemic. I wish to commend the sponsor for his perseverance, his modesty in his last words about this, and for his thoughtful and responsible development of this legislation, which includes critical safeguard provisions. As previous colleagues mentioned, it is also critically important that we take action on safe staffing in nursing homes and also in hospitals. I join my colleagues in voting in the affirmative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Burdick in the affirmative.

Ms. Hermelyn -- Ms. Bichotte Hermelyn.

MS. BICHOTTE HERMELYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the sponsor of this bill and join my colleagues in the Assembly in expressing my support, of which I am a cosponsor. This legislation which provides for the authorization and regulation of visitation in nursing homes and compassionate care homes and health care facilities is long overdue. I received many calls from my constituents during the height of the pandemic who were rightfully frustrated by policies that prevented them from seeing their loved ones. We are all familiar with the photos of relatives who sat at the windows, doors of nursing homes, waving to their spouses, parents, siblings, and friends who were inside. Many of us lived it personally, like me. I remember when my aunt who is 92 years old who was left in a nursing home almost ready to die. And I must say that we did not accept it, we did not accept those regulations. They



didn't want to tell us anything, so we literally went over there and pretty much got her out. She's living today and she's much better. It is a shock for any family member to hear the stories of inadequate care going on in nursing homes, but to be unable to intervene -- as my colleagues have said, family members are often the biggest advocates for seniors and residents of these nursing homes.

So again, I want to thank the sponsor for this much-needed bill and I will be voting in the affirmative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.

Mr. Manktelow.

MR. MANKTELOW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To explain my vote. Again, I'd like to thank the sponsor for this bill. As we sat through the investigation and all the hearings last year listening to all the loved ones that had family members in the nursing homes, senior living facilities that had passed away, I'm just so thankful that we, as legislators, could get this bill to come forward and to pass it here today. I'm in full support of this, but this is why we, as New Yorkers, we as the elected officials need to work together, having all three parts of government working together making sure that we should not have to wait this long. This could have been acted on months and months ago by the Administration. We've asked for that, the loved ones have asked for that, the family members have asked for that. So again, I'm in full support of this. I'm just sad that we couldn't have done something sooner and that some of these loved ones could

have saw their family members before they passed. So, thank you, Mr. Sponsor on this, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm voting in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Manktelow in the affirmative.

Are there any other votes? Announce the results.

(The Clerk announced the results.)

The bill is passed.

THE CLERK: Assembly No. A03922-A, Rules Report No. 25, Cruz, Gottfried, Weinstein, Dinowitz, Wallace, Jacobson, Otis, Conrad, Sayegh, Glick, Vanel, Lunsford, Cahill, Barron, L. Rosenthal, Pichardo, Richardson, Bronson, Zebrowski, Thiele, Williams, Bichotte Hermelyn, Stern, Sillitti, Simon, J. D. Rivera, Abbate, Stirpe, Carroll, Lupardo, McMahon, Abinanti, Gallagher, Forrest. An act in relation to enacting the "Reimagining Long-Term Care Task Force" to create a task force to study the state of long-term care services in this State.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: An explanation is requested, Ms. Cruz, but first, on a motion by Ms. Cruz, the Senate bill is before the House. The Senate bill is advanced.

Ms. Cruz for an explanation.

MS. CRUZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill establishes the Reimaging Long-Term Care Task Force Act which would examine the state of the long-term care services including, but not limited to, community-based services, consumer directed services,

culturally and linguistically relevant health care, independent living, assisted living and skilled nursing facility care, and consider potential models for improvement. The task force would also examine both the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on residents and staff of skilled nursing and other adult care facilities. The task force would be required to report its findings to the Governor and the Legislature on the coronavirus pandemic by December 1st, 2021, and its overall findings by May 1st, 2022.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Walsh.

MS. WALSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the sponsor yield for a few questions?

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Cruz, will you yield?

MS. CRUZ: I will.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Cruz yields.

MS. WALSH: Thank you. Could you speak a little bit about the genesis for the creation of this legislation and this task force?

MS. CRUZ: Thank you for the question. The state of health care for our seniors and the kinds of services that were given to them around the State, even prior to the pandemic, had many issues from access to, as I mentioned during the explanation, whether they were culturally-sensitive, were they really addressing the needs of our senior population. So given what has happened over the last year, we deemed it even more important to really take a look at what are the

needs, what are we offering, and how do we change so that we can reimagine a future where we're truly meeting the needs of our senior population. And the bill itself will include a task force that has everything from private sector, non-profit, and the government sector that takes care of our senior population now so that they can come to the table and really look at where are we and where can we, as the title says, reimagine the future of our senior care.

MS. WALSH: Thank you. So will this task force be looking at seniors along the whole continuum of care from those seniors who are living independently all the way through to perhaps assisted living and then the nursing home settings?

MS. CRUZ: Yes.

MS. WALSH: Very good. And will this task force have any subpoena power?

MS. CRUZ: No.

MS. WALSH: Okay. Will the task force examine the needs not only of the elderly, but of staff or support staff who would be involved in the care of those individuals?

MS. CRUZ: So as it stands right now, yes.

MS. WALSH: Okay, so both. So would this task force specifically examine issues such as the March 25th, 2020 directive regarding the admission or the readmission of nursing home patients to nursing homes from hospital settings?

MS. CRUZ: If the -- the way that the language is set up is to look at what are the needs and what are the services, and what

-- and how those have been affected by COVID over the last year.

The directive that you are describing I would argue would fit into the different issues that the task force should be looking at.

MS. WALSH: Okay, very good. And I was asking because I know that it definitely -- I read -- when I read the bill, it looks like there was a fairly, you know, broad mission that was being described, so I was just trying to get a sense of the scope of the legislation so that I had a better understanding of it.

Madam Sponsor, will the bill consider issues such as the nursing home deaths that have occurred during COVID and a correct reporting of the number, these issues that we've been discussing over the past few months?

MS. CRUZ: If the members -- the directive that we're giving to the members of the task force is you are to look at the services provided, the needs of the senior population, and how, if at all, those needs are being met by the services provided. If it is determined by the task force that this is something they need to look at, they will. I plan to advocate that they do, but one of the reasons we wanted to give them expansive power, or expansive purview, if you will, was so that they could look at things like this and we wouldn't limit it, because we never know what else can unfortunately happen with our senior population. We want them to look at anything and everything so that what happened to our seniors over the last year doesn't happen again.

MS. WALSH: Okay. So would it be fair to say that

the task force is not specifically charged with looking at things such as nursing home death statistics or the March 25th, 2020 order, but they could choose to do so if they felt that that was part of their mission through the task force?

MS. CRUZ: Yes, and one of the things I plan to do is work very closely with the task force, because I want them to be looking at these issues. Again, we left it expansive because we want them to have that ability to look at everything and anything that actually deals with the services for our seniors.

MS. WALSH: Okay. So you mentioned a couple times that you plan on being very closely involved with the task force. How does that work? I just -- I haven't had that experience before where I've initiated a task force and then continued on to -- continue to remain involved with the task force. What do you see as your involvement?

MS. CRUZ: I would argue it's a member-by-member choice, you know, when we pass a bill you can choose to keep in contact with the task force as it develops. I myself, having managed several task forces for City and State government, would like to continue to work with them every couple of months, checking in and making sure that they -- that they're doing what they need to be doing. They do have a report that is due by a certain date and I plan to make sure that that date is met. We cannot afford to have a delay in the information of the services that our seniors need.

MS. WALSH: Well I absolutely agree, especially the

-- the -- it's seem as though the report is broken into two pieces. So the part having to do with coronavirus and specific recommendations regarding coronavirus would be due December 1st of this year, and then the remaining findings of the task force would be due next year by May 1st. So I like the fact that the coronavirus portion is expedited, if you will, that that's going to be delivered or deliverable, you know, first. So I appreciate that.

Madam Sponsor, the Commission itself -- the task force, rather, the long-term care task force contains 26 members and I see that one member is to be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Assembly and then it goes on, it talks about all of these members; this is a rather large Reimagining Long-Term Care Task Force. But anyway, I think at this point - let me just double-check my notes here - I think that those were really all the questions I have, so I thank you for answering my questions and, Mr. Speaker, on the bill.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On the bill, Ms. Walsh.

MS. WALSH: So I think that this is a fine idea to have the Reimagining Long-Term Care Task Force created, and I plan to support this -- this bill. The only thing I would say is that, you know, I have, and many members of the Assembly have called over the last year or so for a complete investigation into the death toll, the underreporting of death, et cetera, in our nursing homes, and this task force -- I just want my colleagues to recognize what I believe is true which is that this bill is not that. It's not that type of investigation with

subpoena power into those things. And with all due respect and admiration for the sponsor of this bill and her desire, perhaps, to go there, the bill itself does not specifically task the task force with looking at those things.

So, I will support this bill. I just -- I personally think that it is not enough to address the devastating loss of life in our nursing homes over the past year due to COVID and what I believe are some grave mistakes that were made by the Department of Health and the Executive in the way that this was -- this pandemic has been handled, or mishandled, as it were, over the past year. But I will support this bill and I thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Manktelow.

MR. MANKTELOW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Would the sponsor yield for a question, please?

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Cruz, will you yield?

MS. CRUZ: I will.

MR. MANKTELOW: Thank you, madam. Just one quick question. I was looking through the bill, and I applaud you for putting this together, just one consideration I was wondering. Was there ever a thought given that possibly putting in a few of the seniors that actually live in these facilities on this task force to be part of the -- part of the task force itself?

MS. CRUZ: Actually, no one raised that to us. We worked with AARP and other folks to kind of think through this. I



actually think that's a wonderful idea and it's something we can talk to the task force members once the task force is set up to make sure that they are reaching out to seniors to hear their voices.

MR. MANKTELOW: Yeah, the ones that actually live in the facilities and that's their home, I think it would be so great to see some of them on this task force.

MS. CRUZ: Thank you for that, Mr. Manktelow.

MR. MANKTELOW: That was it, so thank you so much.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Read the last section.

THE CLERK: This act shall take effect immediately.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will record the vote on Senate print S-598-B. This is a fast roll call. Any member who wishes to be recorded in the negative is reminded to contact the Majority or Minority Leader at the numbers previously provided.

(The Clerk recorded the vote.)

Mr. Kim to explain his vote.

MR. KIM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to take a moment to thank the sponsor. I know that she's been pushing this bill since last year and like she said, a number of organizations, including the AARP, has supported this measure. And I know that we do a lot of commissions and task forces, but I know that with her overseeing and -- and making sure that the task force does their job, this will be a positive thing to make sure that people, the stakeholders, do have an opportunity to be a part of the process, part of the solution.

So I do support this and I encourage my colleagues to vote in the affirmative. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Kim in the affirmative.

Mr. Byrne.

MR. BYRNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to thank the sponsor for her work on this legislation. I know it's been in the works for quite some time. I also just want to make a particular -- a special mention that I noticed it was amended to add some additional task force members. It was some of the concerns that was raised to me earlier in the year, particularly they wanted representation from geriatricians and the New York Medical Director's Association, and that was added to this bill so I wanted to thank the sponsor for doing that. And I always take a particular note, and I appreciate it when our Minority Leader gets an appointment to these task forces, and that was included, as well, so I wanted to thank the sponsor and I will be voting in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Byrne in the affirmative.

Ms. Wallace.

MS. WALLACE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to join my colleagues in thanking the sponsor for this really important piece of legislation. Like so many things, this pandemic has revealed the fractures and problems in our society, and one of those was the revelation of showing just how fragile our long-term care and

nursing home industry is and where it is failing. This bill will allow us to take a thoughtful, thorough, deep look at the entire industry and -- so that our policy decisions after the report can be informed. I do encourage the task force to examine what happened as a result of the March 25th order so that we don't repeat the mistakes of the past. So again, I want to thank the sponsor and I vote in the affirmative.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Wallace in the affirmative.

Ms. Cruz to explain her vote.

MS. CRUZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our seniors deserve to live in dignity and I'm honored to carry this bill, and I thank my Senate colleague for her work to help us pass it. One of my favorite things to do before the pandemic was to visit our public and private senior centers and living facilities. I would stop by at least twice a month to dance, play Bingo, or simply say hello to Donarita (phonetic) at Raices Senior Center, Marcos (phonetic) at Alberta Housing, and Elsa (phonetic) at Comfort.

Seniors have different needs. They live in different types of housing, their health needs vary and their support systems are vastly unique. They all deserve to age with dignity and it is our duty as lawmakers to deliver that for them. Many of them have dedicated their lives to the betterment of our communities, and this is the least that we can do. When public and private senior centers shut down and senior living facilities began restricting our ability to visit, many seniors became fully isolated and lost contact with key services

providers and, worse, became sick and even died. We as a State watched it happen, and while finding who is at fault is key, ensuring it never happens again is even more important.

This task force will take a look at the state of long-term care services, looking at the needs of the senior population, what services are out there and how their needs are being met or not met, how COVID has impacted all of this and what we need to do better. It will ensure that the voices of those who understand and who know the issue are at the table, from the public/private sector and government. This bill will look at community-based services, consumer directed services and culturally and linguistically relevant health care. The task force is also going to examine both the impact of the coronavirus on residents and staff in skilled nursing and other adult care facilities. My commitment will be to ensure that the report, which is due on the first of December of this year is not delayed or incomplete.

Now, more than ever, this task force is needed. We can't advocate in (unintelligible) and expect to truly protect our community. If we want change, we need to truly look at the depth of the issue from its root causes and propose solutions. I will be voting in favor and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Cruz in the affirmative.

Are there -- Mr. Goodell.

MR. GOODELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please

record Assemblyman -- Mr. DiPietro in the negative. Thank you, sir.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: So noted.

Are there any other votes? Announce the results.

(The Clerk announced the results.)

The bill is passed.

THE CLERK: Assembly No. A05846, Rules Report No. 30, Kim, Gottfried, Weinstein, Anderson, Otis, Sayegh, Stirpe, Dinowitz, Sillitti, Simon, Glick, Vanel, Lunsford, Cahill, Barron, L. Rosenthal, Pichardo, Richardson, Bronson, Zebrowski, Thiele, Williams, Bichotte Hermelyn, Carroll, Lupardo, Abinanti, Gallagher, Stern, Abbate, Forrest. An act to amend the Social Services Law, in relation to requiring adult care facilities to include quality improvement committees and include a focus on infection control in such facilities' quality assurance plans.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On a motion by Mr. Kim, the Senate bill is before the House. The Senate bill is advanced.

Mr. Goodell.

MR. GOODELL: An explanation, please.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: An explanation is requested, Mr. Kim.

MR. KIM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill would accomplish two things: The bill would clarify that existing quality assurance initiatives for adult care facilities should include infection control; and secondly, the bill would require each adult care facility to create a quality improvement committee that involves residents, staff,

and operators. The purpose of this bill is to improve the quality of care delivered by adult care facilities.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Goodell.

MR. GOODELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the sponsor yield?

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Kim, will you yield?

MR. KIM: Yes; yes, sir.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Kim yields.

MR. GOODELL: Thank you, Mr. Kim. Don't most facilities already have comprehensive infectious control plans in place?

MR. KIM: The adult care facilities are required to be inspected at least once a year through an unannounced inspection. Facilities receiving the highest rating shall be inspected at least once every 18 months on an unannounced basis. But this will clarify for sure that it includes an infection -- infection control in their performance standards.

MR. GOODELL: The question I had related to -- and I was hoping you could give us some clarification, how does a facility react if they receive a Department of Health directive that conflicts with their infectious control standards? For example, how would a facility react if they were directed to take COVID-active patients and their own internal infectious control policy prohibit that? Would -- would you share some perspective on how that would play out?

MR. KIM: Mr. Goodell, I'm hearing a lot of noise from another speaker. Can you repeat that, and if we can mute whoever who is speaking. Thank you. That's better. Can you repeat the question, Mr. Goodell?

MR. GOODELL: Certainly. And I apologize for the background noise. The question I have is if a facility develops its infectious control standards and then is directed by the New York State Health Department to take patients that would violate their internal standards, how should a facility respond? I was interested in your -- your thoughts on that issue.

MR. KIM: Mr. Goodell, this bill doesn't speak to how we would enforce it. I think we are looking at other possible solutions to hold the facilities accountable if they do not comply with the standards that they should be upholding. We are, I think, actively discussing possible fines and other elements, but I don't think we have consensus at this point. But if you have any suggestions with that, Mr. Goodell, I'm open to your ideas as well.

MR. GOODELL: Well, I can appreciate that during the COVID pandemic and the emergency orders that were issued, these types of facilities were given broad immunity presumably if they didn't have that immunity and they accepted patients that were inconsistent with their quality assurance plan or their infectious control plan they would be facing potential civil liability for violating their own standards. My question is, what -- what happens if a facility is ordered by the Health Department to take patients that violate the

facility's own infectious control plan? How should a facility operate? I mean, are we creating a situation where they may be facing civil liability or facing fines if they don't follow their own guidelines, and might be facing license suspension or revocation if they don't follow the conflicting Department of Health directives? Can you help shed some light on how a facility in a real world, on the ground, should respond when they're being ordered to do something that conflicts with all of their own standards.

MR. KIM: So, the -- the facilities would have to follow the Department of Health's direction if their standards are not sufficient. But in the quality assurance plans are a requirement from Department -- from the Department of Health. But as far as your questions about the last ten months surrounding the legal immunity and how it impacts their ability if they -- that's something that we can circle back and address separately. It might have to be settled in court at this point. We can discuss that at -- at a later time when we discuss that bill, which is a separate issue, Mr. Goodell.

MR. GOODELL: Would this legislation enable a long-term health facility to have infectious control standards that are higher than those of the New York State Department of Health?

MR. KIM: It doesn't -- the bill doesn't speak to that. I think we're just clarifying that infection control must be included. But I think this bill really is also -- the second component, which is more -- which is the more important part, or equally more important, which is involving the residents and staff and the frontline employees



who have not had a chance to be a part of the process in determining the quality assurance, but creating a committee to give them a voice I think is also very critical -- a critical component that this bill does.

MR. GOODELL: I -- I absolutely agree and I -- I think we both share the perspective that we want the highest quality of care provided to our seniors, including the highest quality on a plan that includes infectious control. I mean, that is our objective, presumably. And so, my question is we're looking for the best quality control standards, presumably, and not the minimum; wouldn't you agree?

MR. KIM: I agree. I agree with you, Mr. Goodell, and if that is not clear, that is the intent that I would like to put forward in this legislation.

MR. GOODELL: And as you can appreciate, often we look to our Health Department to establish the minimum plan, the minimum requirements, and we hope and expect that all of our facilities will exceed the minimum standards. The concern I have is that during the last year it looked like the Health Department was focusing less on the minimum standards and actually ordering facilities to do something that they would not normally do, like take COVID-active patients. How does a facility -- how do you envision that a facility under this law would deal with a situation where the Health Department is ordering them to go in a lower level of care, or safety or infectious control?

MR. KIM: If I'm -- if -- if an ACF has higher

standards, Mr. Goodell, than DOH, there wouldn't been an issue. But going back to your other point, I do believe that during this pandemic there was a disconnect in some of the Executive Orders that were not aligned with the quality of -- of reviews and standard, and that's -- there were clear mistakes that were made and we're trying to rectify that now through various legislations. And we're hoping this piece of legislation, along with many others that we'll be putting forward, can address some of your larger concerns as we move forward.

MR. GOODELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Kim.

On the bill, sir.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On the bill, Mr. Goodell.

MR. GOODELL: I -- I want to commend Mr. Kim for his -- his deep and sincere efforts to improve the quality of care as the Chairman of the Aging Committee, and I applaud his efforts to do so. And I agree with the bill's sponsor that having high quality plans in place to deal with infection control is important. It's important to the facilities and the staff, it's important to the residents certainly, and it's extraordinarily important as well to all the family members who entrust their loved ones to the care of others, particularly when their loved ones are going through a difficult time from a personal or physical perspective.

I find it troubling that this is now one of several bills that we have been asked to enact that seems to conflict with the actual policy and practice of our own State Health Department. In the past, I

always looked to the State Health Department as encouraging an increase in safety and facilitating thoughtful, compassionate, safe care. And now we find ourselves in a situation where the operators of these facilities are being caught between a rock and a hard place because they're being directed by this legislation to review their safety plans, and I will you assure you the overwhelming majority, if not all of them, already have safety plans in place and quality control plans in place and infectious control plans in place, they already have that in place and we step forward and say make sure you're talking about infectious control at the same time that our own Health Department ordered thousands of COVID-active patients into these nursing homes, many of which would have violated the standards of the nursing home itself.

And so just for a moment, place yourself as an administrator in a nursing home where on one hand you have your own health standards that you want to maintain because you want to preserve the reputation of your facility and you want to help your patients every conceivable way you can, and at the other hand you've got a State regulatory agency threatening your license if you don't violate your own standards. It is absolutely unimaginable and untenable.

I will be supporting this bill. I urge my colleagues to do the same, because I am hopeful based on the thoughtful comments of my colleague, Mr. Kim, that we'll establish a legislative history to provide some protection to our long-term care facilities who have and

want to maintain higher standards of care than our own New York State Health Department. Thank you, sir.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.

Mrs. Gunther.

MRS. GUNTHER: Good afternoon. And, you know, I support this bill and I think it's very, very important. But I also think that each facility, long-term facility, one of the most important things they can do is have policies and procedures that address all of these issues. And we know now that we have COVID, a new pathogen that has come to our -- to our facilities. I also think that it's important that there is designated isolation rooms. When people have infectious disease they should be isolated. Sometimes it's important to have a negative pressure room in that situation. And also, one of the most important things that we can do to prevent transmission of disease is education of the staff. And it has to be a thorough education to make sure that they know how to protect themselves and protect their patient against transmission.

And I think that sometimes we give our -- our CNAs or nurses a piece of paper to read, but it really has to be interactive and it has to be thorough. And we've done that with methicillin-resistant staph aureus, we've done that with airborne disease like tuberculosis, and if we have the infection control mechanisms in place, we can prevent transmission. So policies are important and these -- these -- these laws are important, but more importantly is that we educate the staff to follow these policies and to

be able to have Personal Protective Equipment on hand when need be.

So thank you very much.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.

Mr. Manktelow.

MR. MANKTELOW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Would the sponsor yield for a question?

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Kim, will you yield?

MR. KIM: Yes.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Kim yields, sir.

MR. MANKTELOW: Thank you, sir. Good afternoon, Mr. Kim. Thank you. A little earlier we were talking about oversightedness. I'm assuming that would be done with the Department of Health; is that correct?

MR. KIM: Yes.

MR. MANKTELOW: And I think you also said earlier that we were talking about possibly fines and stuff like that, that you would be looking at that in a later time?

MR. KIM: That's something that I think my colleagues and I are looking into, but we also -- we also have colleagues that do not want to be overly punitive as well.

MR. MANKTELOW: Yeah, that's -- that was one of the reasons why I was asking the question. I was talking with one of our local adult care facilities back in my district and they're all for help and everything and getting help from DOH but, you know, there's

rumors out there and it looks like there -- there could be increases in fines if they don't follow something. And this one adult daycare center that I just talked to said they had missed a -- a report by five minutes and they were -- they were looking to be fined \$1,000. And there's talk that that could go to \$10,000. So I guess what I'm asking is, you know, as you work forward with this and looking at new legislation as far as fines, we -- we need to be considerate because some of our -- our centers around my district in the rural areas, they're not that big, they cannot withstand a -- a huge fine and I think that we need to be cognizant of that and making sure -- it's not just about a fine, it's helping, as the former Assemblywoman just said, it's about education, helping these facilities do the right things. And before we start talking about fines, I -- I really think we need to talk about education and having DOH help these facilities with education.

So I'm just asking for consideration as you move forward down the road and stop -- or start talking about fines, please be considerate of our smaller facilities and our rural facilities because some of them just cannot stand huge fines.

MR. KIM: Thank you. So there's no mentioning of that in this particular bill, and I'm sure we can find the right balance to make sure that some of the bad operators who should be investing more to do whatever they can to control the infection rate and they're not doing enough could be held accountable moving forward while giving the proper support and education to those who are acting in good faith and doing whatever they can to support our residents.

MR. MANKTELOW: Yeah. I -- I absolutely agree with you, Assemblyman, that the bad actors definitely need to be held accountable. But at the same time, when a good actor makes one mistake, you know, we can't have a huge fine because they made a mistake. So, thank you for the consideration and I will be supporting your bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you, certainly.

Read the last section.

THE CLERK: This act shall -- this act shall take effect on the 90th day.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will record the vote on Senate print S-1784-A. This is a fast roll call. Any member who wishes to be recorded in the negative is reminded to contact the Majority or Minority Leader at the numbers previously provided.

(The Clerk recorded the vote.)

Mr. Kim to explain his vote.

MR. KIM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill is really trying to protect our nursing homes and long-term facilities moving forward to make sure that they're better prepared. Conflating the mistakes that had happened, including sending over 9,000 COVID patients at the peak of the pandemic and leaning on nursing homes and facilities to do more is an unfair, I think, comparison because that is a mistake that I believe we'll never make again in this State. But

moving forward, I believe that having something like this to make sure that, you know, when we do our performance standard review we include infection rate studies to -- to be reported to the Department of Health and have an inclusive approach to make sure that employees, the frontline workers, the operators are part of discussing what it is to have quality control in these facilities is an important aspect of this bill.

So, I -- I look forward to passing this bill and I vote in the affirmative. I hope that my colleagues can support this. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you. Mr. Kim in the affirmative.

Are there any other votes? Announce the results.

(The Clerk announced the results.)

The bill is passed.

THE CLERK: Assembly No. A05848, Rules Report No. 32, Wallace, Gottfried, Weinstein, Barron, Abinanti, Richardson, Anderson, Otis, Sayegh, Stirpe, Woerner, Stern, Dinowitz, Sillitti, Simon, Abbate, Glick, Vanel, Lunsford, Cahill, L. Rosenthal, Pichardo, Bronson, Zebrowski, Thiele, Williams, Bichotte Hermelyn, Carroll, Gallagher, Fall, Zinerman, Forrest. An act to amend the Public Health Law, in relation to providing information on where a list of violations and other actions taken against the facility can be found.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On a motion by Ms.



Wallace, the bill is before the House. The Senate bill is advanced.

Read the last section.

THE CLERK: This act shall take effect on the 60th day.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will record the vote on Senate print S-3185. This is a fast roll call. Any member who wishes to be recorded in the negative is reminded to contact the Majority or Minority Leader at the numbers previously provided.

(The Clerk recorded the vote.)

Are there any other votes? Announce the results.

(The Clerk announced the results.)

The bill is passed.

Mrs. Peoples-Stokes.

MRS. PEOPLES-STOKES: Thank you, Mr.

Speaker. Do you have housekeeping? We do have three privileged --

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Yes, we will.

MRS. PEOPLES-STOKES: -- three privileged resolutions.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Right. The Clerk will read --

(Pause)

MRS. PEOPLES-STOKES: So, Mr. Speaker, we do have three privileged resolutions, if we could take those up, please.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Certainly. We'll take up the three privileged resolutions. The Clerk will read.

THE CLERK: Assembly Resolution No. 74, Ms. Buttenschon.

Legislative Resolution commemorating the 29th anniversary of the Independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on March 1st, 2021.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Buttenschon on the resolution.

MS. BUTTENSCHON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the resolution. It is my distinct privilege to speak on this resolution that celebrates the rich culture and identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It's important that we honor this historic day that took place on Monday, as well as remember the hardships and loss that came in this wake. On March 1st, 1992, voters overwhelmingly approved a referendum to support of the Bosnian independence. This memorialized day incited a deadly war that led to the death of thousands and promoted dangerous acts of violence and hate speech against the Bosnian people, which was very unfortunate. As we mourn their lives lost, we also stand with those still fighting for justice and social change abroad, and we honor their unwavering commitment to Democracy.

Today, I also celebrate the large Bosnian community of Utica, who have contributed so much to the Mohawk Valley. Their hard work, perseverance, cultural enhancement to our community, as well as architectural changes that have provided many wonderful insights to our community and beyond. Utica's story of helping these

refugees integrate into our way of life by also learning and growing from their truly embodied is what America is all about. As we celebrate the progress this community has made locally and abroad, we also must work to persevere and promote the Bosnian culture now and for generations to come. Please join me as we continue to educate one another and serve as an example of unity for other communities to follow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you. On the resolution, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed, no. The resolution is adopted.

THE CLERK: Assembly Resolution No. 76, Mr. Pichardo.

Legislative Resolution mourning the death of Ramon Anibal Ramos, radio and television personality, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Pichardo on the resolution.

MR. PICHARDO: First of all, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to interrupt the proceedings and just take a moment to recognize the life of someone who has meant so much to the Dominican community both here in New York State and abroad. Mr. Ramon Anibal Ramos unfortunately fell ill recently and passed away this year on February 23rd, 2021. Mr. Anibal Ramos was not only a -- has been a major entertainer throughout the Dominican Republic, but he has shown and has reached the televisions of many

Dominicans across this State and across this nation.

He first started working back in 1958 and became a prominent voice in the Dominican Republic before coming -- coming here to the United States. He first came to New York in 1982, excuse me, through a program on a network called *Tele Antillas* known as *Fiesta*. On his hit show that ran all the way up to his unfortunate passing, a show that Ramon Anibal Ramos focused on the Dominican community and the issues that mattered to us. The issues were from politics to community, to local engagement, to the accomplishments of many Dominicans across the State and nation. These are the very few accomplishments that this gentleman has -- has made over the lifetime of service to our community and I just simply wanted to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, today that we pause for a moment, we recognize this great individual and human being who has meant so much to so many people and say to him, may he rest in peace. He fought the good fight and we will most certainly miss him dearly here in New York. Thank you so very much, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you, sir.

Ms. De La Rosa on the resolution.

MS. DE LA ROSA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank my colleague for bringing up this important resolution. Ramon Anibal Ramos is a distinguished member of the Dominican press. He started his career decades ago back in the Dominican Republic. And in my own district, the 72nd District, where his studio was located, we are experiencing a great sense of grief and loss. We

-- we mourn his loss because not only his trajectory was one that is distinguished by his character, a personality that would light up a room and a voice that was so unique that you knew without seeing his face when Ramon Anibal was on the television. I grew up listening to Ramon Anibal Ramos. My father was an avid fan of his, and we are sending our most sincere condolences to the Anibal Ramos family.

The Dominican community just last week celebrated our Independence Day, and we know that his voice and his spirit was missing in that dialogue. I had the privilege of being interviewed by -- by Ramon Anibal just two weeks before his untimely death. And we know that this year has been such a -- a hard year for so many of us, we've lost so many people, but the Dominican community today is truly mourning the loss of a great commentator, a great friend. He will be laid to rest this weekend and we join our family and our community in mourning his loss. He will be truly missed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.

Mr. Rivera.

MR. J. RIVERA: Good afternoon, everyone. I also want to join my two colleagues in expressing my loss along with them a tremendous person that we have lost. We have lost two icons in the Dominican Latino community. First, Johnny Pacheco, and then within -- that loss came immediately Ramon Anibal Ramos. I met Ramon Anibal Ramos about 2015 when we first became aware of a situation in the city -- the Town of Haina. Mothers were complaining

of the lack -- contamination taking place in that neighborhood. With George Holmes and Help First, and Ramon Anibal, we visited Haina. I videotaped it. And then it was a factory that was creating the contamination. We saw to it that that factory will be eliminated and we saw to it that instead it would be replaced by a -- by a park because there was a public school right next to the factory.

So this is a tremendous loss. This coming Sunday I and others from the Borough of the Bronx will be traveling to Riverdale Funeral Home right there on 214th Street and Broadway as I pay my respect to a great individual who made such a tremendous contribution. I used to call him (speaking foreign language). I used to call him the heart of the Internet/TV who kept us very well informed every day as to what was happening not only within inside the Dominican community, but the entire Latino community in the City and State of New York. It is a tremendous loss. My heart goes out to everyone, especially to the family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nice to see you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you, sir.

On the resolution, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed, no. The resolution is adopted.

THE CLERK: Assembly --

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Clerk will read.

THE CLERK: Assembly Resolution No. 80, Ms. Wallace.

Legislative Resolution celebrating the life and legacy

of The Honorable Hugh B. Scott, United States Magistrate Judge for Western New York, dedicated public servant and devoted member of his community.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Wallace on the resolution.

MS. WALLACE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me a few minutes to speak to honor the life and legacy of the Honorable Hugh B. Scott, who served as a Federal Magistrate Judge for many decades on -- in the courts in the Western District of New York. I had the honor of working with Judge Scott, both when I worked in the courts and then later when I went on to teach at the law school. I worked with him in helping to develop his pioneering Federal reentry program and Federal reentry court, which was one of the only courts in the country to recognize and address the barriers that individuals face when they are newly released from incarceration. Many people don't realize that, certainly the law students didn't understand it, and the purpose of the class and of the court was to help the students learn more about that, but then also help the individuals who were newly released navigate those barriers. Students who participated in this -- participated in this program worked with the court and with Judge Scott to address some of those barriers and to help them turn the page and become successful after their incarceration.

In addition to learning the legal issues surrounding the client's problems, the students gained a deeper understanding of

our criminal justice system, how it worked and how it often failed. They also gained a deeper understanding of our mass incarceration crisis, the crisis that we're still dealing with today. Judge Scott approached decision-making with empathy and compassion, and he helped students understand that, "Every person is more than the worst thing that they've ever done," to quote Bryan Stevenson.

His passing leaves a void in our legal community and in our hearts. With Judge Scott's passing, we have now lost the only person of color to have ever served on the Federal bench in the Western District of New York in a -- in its hundred year history. We must do better and -- to improve the diversity on that court. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to honor this wonderful mentor and amazing man.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: On the resolution --  
(Pause)

Ms. McMahon on the resolution.

MS. MCMAHON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to lend my voice in honoring the legacy of Judge Hugh B. Scott. I'd like to thank the sponsor for her resolution honoring Judge Scott's legacy. I also worked with Judge Scott in the United States District Court for the Western District of New York. He was kind, he was compassionate. He was a friend to lawyers and -- and other staff people in the courtroom alike. He was a trailblazer and he will be so missed by the legal community in Western New York. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.



Mrs. Peoples-Stokes on the resolution.

MRS. PEOPLES-STOKES: Thank you, Mr.

Speaker. I certainly want to rise to honor the life of Judge Hugh Scott, lifelong Buffaloean. Unbeknownst to me, he was a student at School 53 while I was a student at School 31, but we actually were in the same neighborhood a lot because he literally lived right next door to my Uncle John, who is the reason why my mother came to Buffalo, so we had to at some point at least see each other in the neighborhood.

But really understanding his career and what he provided to the great City of Buffalo, being a jurist, I -- I didn't really truly understand until I was full -- fully adult way past the time he had become a City Court Judge in 1984. Mr. Speaker, he literally had a stellar career. This would have been the 47th year that he and his beautiful wife, Trudy, had been married. His heart, his compassion, he was one of these judges who when he spoke to you, you knew he was talking to you no matter what the topic was because he actually was looking at you and you could see a twinkle in his eye. He was not that person who spoke to you from a distance as if he wasn't paying attention to what you were saying.

And as my colleague earlier mentioned, he started a really profound court in the U.S. court system where he engaged returning citizens in his courtroom to try and help them identify places where they could find work, where they could find housing, or where they could actually even register to vote. He invited myself and many other electeds in to speak to these returning citizens, to allow them to

know that you have support in the community to help you begin turning your life into being a productive citizen. He changed and impacted the life of thousands of people, not just through the court systems, but even through the University of Buffalo's Law School as a mentor, as a professor, and as a colleague. His life will forever be remembered. His legacy will be forever remembered. Wisdom and wit, wisdom and wit is what Judge Scott always brought to any engagement he had, whether it was in the courtroom or on the street corner. Mr. Speaker, I honor the life of Judge Hugh Scott.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you.

Ms. Joyner on the resolution.

MS. JOYNER: I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to commend the sponsor of this very important resolution. I am just very thankful that we're taking the minute -- the time here to honor a wonderful life of Judge Hugh Scott. I just wanted to speak up for him because I've had, you know, the pleasure and the honor to serve as a clerk under his leadership. You know, he was a trailblazer in Western New York. His court served veterans and he really dedicated his life to helping veterans rebuild their life after having experience with the criminal justice system. And just as a -- a young attorney as myself, he opened the doors to many people of color that, you know, had no connection to this legal profession, but he always opened his door to allow them to work for him and I'm just very truly honored to have had that experience. You know, his -- his personal advice to me was, you only have, you know, your -- your name, your reputation and your

legal degree and, you know, I'm just very grateful to the words and -- and the time that he spent, especially with students of color and I'm very grateful that the sponsor put forth this resolution. And I'm wishing his family and -- they're in my thoughts and prayers. So, thank you so much.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Thank you so much.

On the resolution, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed, no. The resolution is adopted.

We have numerous other fine resolutions, we'll take them up in one vote. On these resolutions, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed, no. The resolutions are adopted.

(Whereupon, Assembly Resolution Nos. 75, 77, 79, 81-85 were unanimously approved.)

Mrs. Peoples-Stokes.

MRS. PEOPLES-STOKES: Mr. Speaker, if you could please call on Ms. Hunter for an announcement.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Ms. Hunter for the purposes of an announcement.

MS. HUNTER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you. There will be an immediate Majority Conference at the conclusion of our Session.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Immediate Majority Conference at the conclusion of Session.

Mr. Goodell.

MR. GOODELL: Thank you, sir. Would you call on

Mr. Norris for an important announcement.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Mr. Norris for the purposes of an announcement.

MR. NORRIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There will be a Minority Conference to be held in ten minutes; in ten minutes, a Minority Conference. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: Minority Conference in ten minutes after the conclusion of Session.

Mrs. Peoples-Stokes.

MRS. PEOPLES-STOKES: Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Assembly stand adjourned until 10:00 a.m., Thursday, March the 4th, tomorrow being a Session day.

ACTING SPEAKER AUBRY: The Assembly stands adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 3:40 p.m., the Assembly stood adjourned until, Thursday, March 4th, Thursday being a Session day.)