

Journal of the Senate

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2015

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Kim Kie of Barre.

Message from the House No. 2

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Melissa Kucserik, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolutions originating in the Senate of the following titles:

J.R.S. 1. Joint resolution relating to joint rules.

J.R.S. 2. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to receive the report of the committee appointed to canvass votes for state officers.

J.R.S. 3. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the inaugural message of the Governor.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The House has appointed as members of the Joint Canvassing Committee on the part of the House to canvass votes for state officers:

Canvassing Committee Elected

Addison District	Eastman of Orwell Sheldon of Middlebury Smith of New Haven
Bennington District	Berry of Manchester Miller of Shaftsbury Morrisey of Bennington
Caledonia District	Feltus of Lyndon Troiano of Stannard Toll of Danville

Chittenden District	Evans of Essex Gonzales of Winooski Dakin of Colchester
Essex-Orleans District	Lefebvre of Newark Shaw of Derby Young of Glover
Franklin District	Connor of Fairfield Murphy of Fairfax Pearce of Richford
Grand Isle District	Condon of Colchester Krebs of South Hero Purvis of Colchester
Lamoille District	Martin of Wolcott Scheuermann of Stowe Woodward of Johnson
Orange District	Conquest of Newbury Davis of Washington Ryerson of Randolph
Rutland District	Chestnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs Cupoli of Rutland City Potter of Clarendon
Washington District	Patt of Worcester Stevens of Waterbury Donahue of Northfield
Windham District	Hebert of Vernon Mrowicki of Putney Toleno of Brattleboro
Windsor District	Bartholomew of Hartland Haas of Rochester Zagar of Barnard

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

By Senators Baruth and Benning:

J.R.S. 6. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, January 9, 2015, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, January 13, 2015.

Recess

On motion of Senator Campbell the Senate recessed until the fall of the gavel.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Joint Assembly

At ten o'clock in the morning, the hour having arrived for the meeting of the two Houses in Joint Assembly pursuant to:

J.R.S. 2. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to receive the report of the committee appointed to canvass votes for state officers.

The Senate repaired to the hall of the House.

Having returned therefrom, at ten o'clock and forty-three minutes in the morning, the President *pro tempore* assumed the Chair.

Recess

On motion of Senator Baruth the Senate recessed until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore*.

Incoming President Takes Oath of Office

Senator Baruth moved that the President *pro tempore* appoint a Committee of two Senators to wait upon His Excellency, Philip B. Scott, Lieutenant Governor-elect, and escort him to the bar of the Senate.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the President *pro tempore* appointed as members of such Committee:

Senator Baruth
Senator Benning

The Committee appointed to wait upon His Excellency, Philip B. Scott, Lieutenant Governor-elect, performed the duties assigned to it and appeared at the bar of the Senate accompanied by His Excellency, Philip B. Scott, who took and subscribed the oath of office required by the Constitution from

Senator Richard T. Mazza, long-time friend and colleague of the Lieutenant Governor.

Remarks of Incoming Lieutenant Governor Philip B. Scott Journalized

Thereupon, the incoming President addressed the Senate, assuring his full cooperation and accommodation on a nonpartisan and objective basis, and, on motion of Senator Campbell, his remarks were ordered entered in the Journal, and are as follows:

“Good morning. I’m sure you’ve all had a pretty easy, relaxing day so far...

“First, I’d like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the people of Vermont for their confidence in me and electing me to a third term as Vermont’s Lieutenant Governor...and an eighth term serving in Montpelier.

“Fourteen years ago I was a new face in this building and this chamber. I sat right there (point to seat 28)...and I assure you, I had no idea when I first sat down in that seat that I would be standing before you today in this role.

“I’d now like to take a moment to officially welcome our four “freshman” Senators: Balint, Campion, Collamore, and Degree. Some of you aren’t exactly “new” faces to us, but we welcome you in your new capacity. A few words on your new home: if you get lost, remember, you’re now going to the GREEN room, not the red one...this is the room where we start on time and electronic devices are not welcome here...and by the way....I’ve been known to smash cell phones with this gavel..... True story.

“I also want to thank my family and extended family for their unwavering support. My extended family would be my many, many friends who are too numerous to mention....but you know who you are and I am eternally grateful for each and every one of you...and what you have done for me.

“And thank you to my family here today: my Brother Kevin, my sister in law Donna, my niece, cousins, one of my daughters (Erica), my wife Diana (thank you for putting up with a somewhat unique...or what some would call crazy...life) and last but not least my Mom...who probably came the greatest distance – all the way from Florida -- and who has influenced my life more than I have probably ever realized...because growing up in Barre she kept the lives of my brothers and me pretty normal even though it was probably anything but...

“My Mom grew up on the Cate Farm in Plainfield, so that sense of Yankee Independence is ingrained in her soul.

“In fact, when she flew in on Monday, I started to feel pretty guilty at around 7 o’clock...I thought ...a good son would be at the airport to pick his mother up. So I sent her a text – yes, Senator Mazza, my mom texts...saying

it's already in the single digits...it's dark...I don't want you wandering around looking for your car alone...etc – She called me back and said she'd already gotten a rental car, arranged someone to take her to the car, and was waiting for her luggage.I then suggested she might want to slow down a little coming through Bolton Flats being that she hasn't driven in these conditions in a while....and she seemed a bit insulted.

“You've got to remember my mom just got rid of her 8-cylinder Chevy Impala SS and downsized to a 4-cylinder turbo.

“She's a smart lady. Valedictorian of her class at Plainfield High...but we don't need to go into the details of how many students actually graduated nor what year that was.....

“Some of you have heard the story about our mom and dad...but I don't tire of telling it...and I have the podium.

“My father was from Washington, Vermont. He fought in World War II and was seriously injured in the D-Day Invasion in France. He spent two years at Walter Reed Medical Center before returning home to Vermont. But when he returned, he came back as a double-amputee. That didn't stop him from making the most of his life – working right next door for the State Highway Department and building a camp in Elmore. The only thing he really had trouble with was getting his groceries from the Elmore General Store, because these were the days before the Americans with Disabilities Act, and there were only steps. So he would call in his grocery order, and a young woman who was attending Johnson State College and living in Elmore with her sister would bring them down the steps to him. That turned out to be my mom.

“When my parents saw an obstacle, it wasn't a road block...it was an opportunity to be creative.

“At 33 she became a widow and a single Mom with three boys...three fairly active boys... and I realize today how very fortunate we were to have a mom who was as dedicated as she was to keeping our life as normal as possible.

“So thank you, Mom, for not only being the person you are but for giving me the guidance when needed – and also the flexibility that allowed me to become the person I am today.

“As I was writing these remarks, I went back to what I said when I first took my oath in 2011...and again in 2013...and I realized something: I could stand up here today and deliver the same remarks I gave then and – with the exception of a few names – they'd be just as relevant. And today I will be repeating what I said then...and that means one of two things:

“One – Nobody is listening to me or Two – we haven’t yet solved the problems I laid out.

“If this past election taught us anything, it appears the majority of Vermonters feel disconnected from us. Fewer than 43 percent of registered voters actually cast a ballot. For far too many, it is no longer BECOMING unaffordable to live in Vermont – it IS unaffordable....many grew up here..... they want to stay here – but they just don’t know how -- and they are looking to us for relief.

“I am hopeful we can help.....I wouldn’t be here if I didn’t..... It’s a new session and we have a clean slate..... The first step is to be sure we put Vermonters first and our own personal and political agendas second. The elections are over. We must now transition from being politicians to becoming public servants. Vermonters’ expectations are high – they want us to work together. It doesn’t mean we can’t disagree or debate the issues. We’re not here to rubber stamp initiatives...we are here because Vermonters put their trust in each and every one of us...and we are here to give them hope.

“We can no longer kick this can down the road...and we have to face some harsh realities. However, since the election, it seems we are reaching some areas of agreement on what those realities are:

“Many Vermonters are working two to three jobs, struggling to pay their property taxes, put heating fuel in the tanks, and food on the table. The affordability issue we face in Vermont isn’t just about the ever-rising burden of taxation on working Vermonters – it’s about real Vermonters who are making less and less every year.

“In the long run I believe the only responsible way to ensure we all get what we want is to grow the economy. This will undoubtedly require new approaches – and new public policy – across virtually every area of state government.

“The underlying challenge of every policy question we face in Vermont – from social services to education to the environment – is having an economy and workforce strong enough to support the necessary investments in these areas.

“Our economic policies – for individuals and for businesses and their employees – are not firing on all cylinders. We are competing in a world that operates and updates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We MUST be innovative and keep up with the times; I think it’s fair to say in many instances that we’re using 20th century economic policies to try to attract 21st century jobs.

“We need to be better partners with Vermont businessesthey need some certainty for planning purposes....like what taxes and fees they’re facing – and

know we in Montpelier want to help them grow and prosper so that we can prosper as well.

“Vermonters deserve affordable health care – quality health care – and a fully functional health care exchange.

“Sowhere do we go from here?”

“What I’m asking is this: At the beginning of the day, before we start our work, remind ourselves that we are members of a team of 625,000 people. You are a team of 30 in whom Vermonters have bestowed their trust.

“We have to acknowledge that egos will always exist in this buildingI know it’s hard to believe.....and there will always be “politics” in the equation...but while I know we cannot change all of the behavior...because emotions come into play..... I also believe we can do better.

“We can learn to listen to each other...at least a little bit better. We can learn to find areas of agreement...at least a little more often. I don’t have a seat in this Chamber – but I have a lot of chairs in my office – and if you reach a stalemate, or need a place to hash things out, or want to vet ideas – come in.

“So in order for all of us to pull in the same direction, I urge each and every one of you to simply view every bill through the lens of: “Will this help our economy? Will this improve efficiencies and reduce costs?” If the answer to those questions is “yes,” then put it on the front burner. If the answer is “no,” then maybe it goes on the back burner...or maybe even in the fridge.

“So as we enter the Biennium, I ask you to:

“Listen to Vermonters. And not just listen, but really hear what they’re saying.

“As I’ve learned in my 56 years of life....40 years of racing....30 years in business and 14 years in political life.....: Nobody wins alone...it takes a team...and success is so much sweeter when we celebrate TOGETHER.

“Do well by your family. Do well by your friends. Do well by your neighbors.

“My door is always open and you are always welcome. I, along with my entire staff...which means my Chief of Staff Rachel and our 2 unpaid interns, Hayden and Tony, look forward to working with you to make this a productive and positive session...together.

“Thank you.”

Appointments

The President announced the appointment of

RACHEL FELDMAN

of Montpelier, as Chief of Staff to the incoming President.

Recess

On motion of Senator Campbell the Senate recessed until one o'clock and twenty-five minutes in the afternoon.

Message from the House No. 3

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Melissa Kucserik, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolutions originating in the Senate of the following titles:

J.R.S. 4. Joint resolution relating to Town Meeting adjournment.

J.R.S. 5. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the budget message of the Governor.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Recess

The Chair declared a recess until the fall of the gavel.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Joint Assembly

At one o'clock and thirty minutes in the afternoon, the hour having arrived for the meeting of the two Houses in Joint Assembly pursuant to:

J.R.S. 3. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the inaugural message of the Governor.

The Senate repaired to the hall of the House.

Having returned therefrom, at three o'clock and twenty minutes in the afternoon, the President assumed the Chair.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Campbell, the Senate adjourned until nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the morning.