

Journal of the Senate

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend and Senator Deborah J. Ingram of Chittenden District.

After delivery of the devotions, on motion of Senator Clarkson the remarks made by Senator Ingram during her presentation of Devotional Exercises were entered in the Journal, and are as follows:

“Mr. President:

52-year old retired Air Force colonel Jason Denney, working as a defense contractor in Orlando, was in the first wave of people who contracted COVID in March. After a business trip to Cincinnati, he started running a 103-degree fever and spent a week at home managing fever spikes and crushing body aches. His wife drove him to the hospital on March 23 and he was immediately put into isolation, not even getting the chance to say goodbye to his wife.

On March 27th, Col. Denney said farewell via FaceTime to his family, having just had what he believed was his final visit from his parish priest. The day before, he learned that his 16-year old son had tested positive for COVID, too, and Col. Denney was not only struggling to breathe, he was wracked with guilt that he had given his son the disease as well.

Hours after the priest left, hospital housekeeper Rosaura Quinteros, wearing a mask, gown, and gloves, went into Col. Denney’s room to clean it. The immigrant from Guatemala recalls, “He seemed very fragile, and it broke my heart.” She approached his bedside and told him, “you have a great medical staff. But ultimately the person who has the last word is God. Put your faith and hope in God.”

Every day for the next few days, Ms. Quinteros shared the same refrain with Col. Denney, and on the fifth day he was well enough to be discharged from the hospital. As he was leaving, he commented, “She showed up at just the right time. God places us in people’s lives for a reason.”

Since then, the two have stayed in touch via text and hope to introduce their families when the pandemic is over. “This is such a sad disease – you’re all alone,” says Col. Denney. “But people like Rosie are the unsung heroes.”

The Vermont General Assembly has spent an extraordinary amount of time this session passing emergency legislation to meet the needs brought on by the pandemic. We have sought to help frontline workers with proper protection and hazard pay, and we have provided financial resources to struggling businesses and the unemployed. We have set up parameters for child care and school for families with young children. We have neglected our own families as we've put in countless hours trying to be worthy of the Vermonters, the Americans, the human beings, who have helped each other and shown caring and love even to total strangers.

I know we all feel what an honor it is to serve all these special people, these unsung heroes. As we finish these last days and hours, let us keep them in the forefront of our minds and take courage and inspiration from them during this historic time.”

Message from the House No. 84

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

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

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

S. 24. An act relating to naming the Courthouse located at 9 Merchants Row in Rutland.

S. 27. An act relating to maintaining the home health agency provider tax.

S. 119. An act relating to a statewide use of deadly force policy for law enforcement.

S. 124. An act relating to governmental structures protecting the public health, safety and welfare.

S. 237. An act relating to promoting affordable housing.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposals of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House bill:

H. 954. An act relating to miscellaneous tax provisions.

And has severally concurred therein with further amendments in the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House bill entitled:

H. 969. An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government.

And has refused to concur therein and asks for a Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses;

The Speaker appointed as members of such Committee on the part of the House:

Rep. Toll of Danville
Rep. Hooper of Montpelier
Rep. Fagan of Rutland City

Roll Call

The roll of the Senate was thereupon called by the Secretary, John H. Bloomer, Jr., and it appeared that the following Senators were present.

Addison District	Senator Christopher A. Bray Senator Ruth Ellen Hardy
Bennington District	Senator Brian A. Campion Senator Richard W. Sears, Jr.
Caledonia District	Senator Joseph C. Benning Senator M. Jane Kitchel
Chittenden District	Senator Timothy R. Ashe Senator Philip E. Baruth Senator Deborah J. Ingram Senator Virginia V. Lyons Senator Christopher A. Pearson Senator Michael D. Sirotkin
Essex-Orleans District	Senator John S. Rodgers Senator Robert A. Starr
Franklin District	Senator Randolph D. Brock Senator Corey. J. Parent
Grand Isle District	Senator Richard T. Mazza
Lamoille District	Senator Richard A. Westman
Orange District	Senator Mark A. MacDonald

Rutland District	Senator Brian P. Collamore Senator Cheryl Mazzariello Hooker Senator James L. McNeil
Washington District	Senator Ann E. Cummings Senator Andrew J. Perchlik Senator Anthony Pollina
Windham District	Senator Rebecca A. Balint Senator Jeanette K. White
Windsor District	Senator Alison Clarkson Senator Richard J. McCormack Senator Alice W. Nitka

Message from the Governor

A message was received from His Excellency, the Governor, by Ms. Brittney L. Wilson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the Senate that on the twenty-third day of September he approved and signed bills originating in the Senate of the following titles:

S. 233. An act relating to uniform licensing standards.

S. 337. An act relating to energy efficiency entities and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the thermal energy and transportation sectors.

Committee of Conference Appointed

H. 969.

An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government.

Was taken up. Pursuant to the request of the House, the President announced the appointment of

Senator Kitchel
Senator Ashe
Senator Westman

as members of the Committee of Conference on the part of the Senate to consider the disagreeing votes of the two Houses.

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 187.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to transient occupancy for health care treatment and recovery.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill as follows:

In Sec. 2 by striking out the following: “July 1, 2020” and inserting in lieu thereof the following: passage

Thereupon, the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, was decided in the affirmative.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 611.

House bill of the following title was read the third time and passed in concurrence with proposal of amendment:

An act relating to the Older Vermonters Act.

Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged

On motion of Senator Ashe, the rules were suspended, and the following bill was ordered messaged to the House forthwith:

H. 611.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Ashe, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, September 24, 2020.