

Journal of the House

Thursday, February 19, 2026

At nine o'clock and forty-five minutes in the forenoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Ceremonial Reading

H.C.R. 196

Offered by All Members of the House

Offered by All Members of the Senate

House concurrent resolution honoring U.S. Army Major General and Vermont Adjutant and Inspector General Gregory Knight on his exemplary service on behalf of our State and nation

Whereas, the military and civilian careers of Gregory Knight represent the best attributes of public service and patriotism, and his 43 years in uniform commenced in 1983 with a six-year U.S. Coast Guard enlistment, and

Whereas, upon leaving the U.S. Coast Guard, Gregory Knight served for four years as a Burlington police officer and then seven years as the Chief Liquor Investigator at the former Department of Liquor Control, and

Whereas, concurrently, for seven years, he was an enlisted member of the Vermont Air National Guard, working as a security forces specialist, drawing on his law enforcement expertise, and

Whereas, in 1997, the trajectory of his military service assumed a new path; he was a commissioned graduate of Officer Candidate School, for three years he served as a Vermont Army National Guard officer, and in 2000, he began full-time Active Guard Reserve duty, and

Whereas, starting in June 2005, Gregory Knight completed a one-year deployment to Ramadi, Iraq, as a battle captain for Task Force Saber, and

Whereas, since 2001, Gregory Knight advanced educationally, earning several academic degrees, including a master's degree from the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, and he assumed increasingly important roles, reaching the rank of U.S. Army Major General, and he received many military honors, including a Bronze Star Medal, and

Whereas, in 2019, recognizing U.S. Army Major General Gregory Knight's superb qualifications, the General Assembly elected him as Vermont Adjutant and Inspector General, the State's highest ranking military officer, and

Whereas, Adjutant and Inspector General Gregory Knight's outstanding seven-year tenure featured the 2021 welcoming of Austria to the State Partnership Program, and he can reflect on his military service with great pride, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors U.S. Army Major General and Vermont Adjutant and Inspector General Gregory Knight on his exemplary service on behalf of our State and nation, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Vermont Adjutant and Inspector General Gregory Knight and to the Vermont National Guard.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, February 13, 2026 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

Recess

At nine o'clock and fifty-eight minutes in the forenoon, the Speaker declared a recess until the fall of the gavel.

Message from the Senate No. 17

A message was received from the Senate by Ms. Gradel, its Assistant Secretary, as follows:

Madam Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has on its part passed Senate bill of the following title:

S. 218. An act relating to reducing chloride contamination of State waters.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

The Senate has considered the report of the Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses upon Senate bill of the following title:

S. 23. An act relating to the use of synthetic media in elections.

And has accepted and adopted the same on its part.

Pursuant to the request of the House for a Committee of Conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on House bill entitled:

H. 790. An act relating to fiscal year 2026 budget adjustments.

The President announced the appointment as members of such Committee on the part of the Senate:

Senator Perchlik
Senator Lyons
Senator Westman

Called to Order

At three o'clock and thirty minutes in the afternoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rep. Ela Chapin of East Montpelier.

House Bill Introduced

H. 910

By Duke of Burlington

House bill, entitled

An act relating to supporting business growth and development in the State

Was read the first time and referred to the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development.

Senate Bill Referred

S. 218

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to reducing chloride contamination of State waters

Was read the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment.

Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

H. 567

House bill, entitled

An act relating to unclaimed property, State retirement systems, and capital debt

Appearing on the Notice Calendar, and pursuant to House Rule 35(a), carrying an appropriation, was referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

Bill Referred to Committee on Ways and Means**H. 588**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to professions and occupations regulated by the Office of Professional Regulation

Appearing on the Notice Calendar, and pursuant to House Rule 35(a), affecting the revenue of the State, was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Pending Entry on the Notice Calendar**Bill Referred to the Committee on Appropriations****H. 578**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to penalties and procedures for animal cruelty offenses

Pending entry on the Notice Calendar, and pursuant to House Rule 35(a), carrying an appropriation, was referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

Ceremonial Reading**H.C.R. 200**

Offered by Representatives Chapin of East Montpelier, Casey of Montpelier, McCann of Montpelier, Bluemle of Burlington, Dodge of Essex, Krasnow of South Burlington, Krowinski of Burlington, Minier of South Burlington, and Noyes of Wolcott

Offered by Senators Cummings, Perchlik, and Watson

House concurrent resolution celebrating the life of Nathan Suter of Montpelier

Whereas, adventurous, attentive, engaging, and welcoming all describe the amazing Nathan Suter, whose life was sadly abbreviated, and

Whereas, born in the Panama Canal Zone, Nathan Suter grew up in Poughkeepsie, NY, developing his prowess as a long-distance runner, and

Whereas, at Haverford College, he captained the cross-country track and field team and earned a fine arts degree in photography, and he subsequently graduated with a master's degree from San Francisco Art Institute, and

Whereas, in 2002 in San Francisco, he cofounded Root Division, which offers subsidized studios to artists in exchange for teaching or curating art exhibits, and

Whereas, several years after his 2001 marriage to Vermonter, and now Montpelier Union Elementary School teacher, Morgan Lloyd, the couple moved to the Green Mountain State, where they raised their children, Amani and Asa, and in Stowe, Nathan Suter served for a decade as executive director of what is now known as the Current, an art center, and

Whereas, his curatorship was bold and daring, and gave the Current a reputation for artistic innovation and excellence, and included nurturing and expanding the educational program to serve more than 500 students, and

Whereas, in 2016, Nathan Suter decided to venture into a new career as an organizational management consultant, establishing his own firm, which he creatively named BUILD, and

Whereas, a passion for community engagement and social activism led to long-term board service at Migrant Justice and the Peace & Justice Center, and he played a pivotal role on the Montpelier Commission for Recovery and Resilience, which was formed after the devastating 2023 flood, and

Whereas, his contribution to the youth of Montpelier as a respected and popular track and field coach, first at Main Street Middle School, and more recently at Montpelier High School, helped rejuvenate a small program into a highly popular school activity, and

Whereas, the sudden death of Nathan Suter at 52 years of age on May 13, 2025, while running, saddened and shocked his wife, children, and the Montpelier community, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly celebrates the life of Nathan Suter of Montpelier, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the family of Nathan Suter, Montpelier High School, the Montpelier Commission for Recovery and Resilience, Migrant Justice, the Peace & Justice Center, and the Current.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, February 13, 2026 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

Remarks Journalized

On motion by **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the following remarks by **Reps. Birong of Vergennes, Sibia of Dover, and Hango of Berkshire** made earlier in the day following the ceremonial reading of H.C.R. 196 were ordered printed in the Journal:

Rep. Birong of Vergennes offered the following remarks:

“Madam Speaker, Members, and Guests:

I first met Major General Greg Knight in January of 2019. I was in my first weeks as a freshman legislator and he was a Colonel in the Vermont National Guard just beginning his campaign for his current role as the Adjutant General.

We’ve shared many meals over the seven years of shared service, but the one that stands out the most was the first time we sat together at the café I previously owned.

I quickly realized that the man I was meeting was committed to duty as an officer, service to Vermonters, and to the United States of America. He presented his goals for the future of the National Guard with conviction, vision, and honor. The conversation was natural, and I came to realize that he was the right person at the right time to serve as the Adjutant General.

I recall General Knight asking for my vote. I replied by saying ‘you have my support.’ He locked eyes with me, and with his classic grin said, ‘that wasn’t a yes.’ He then asked another question that was unexpected. He asked if I would help him with his campaign because as he put it, ‘I have no idea how to campaign.’ I knew then that he would not be shy when recognizing moments when he needs insight or support. This trait of self-awareness and humility struck me in a way I still vividly remember. I knew then he was of a detail-oriented mind and would leave nothing of importance, open or ambiguous. I said ‘yes’ to both questions and we continued with our meal and banter.

My intuition had me confident that I was choosing the correct candidate. That he would be an outstanding leader of the organization and a reliable collaborator in legislative work, but what I didn’t expect, is that I would spend the next seven years alongside a fearless man. An individual who sees a problem and runs toward it—a person who became an unexpected mentor and lifelong friend.

You have left a lasting impression on not only me, but this institution. General Knight, you are a true leader. On behalf of the Legislature, the National Guard and Veterans Caucus, and the Committee I serve as Chair, I want to thank you for being a good human, an honorable commander, and a dear friend.”

Rep. Sibilia of Dover offered the following remarks:

“Madam Speaker:

We just heard a resolution recognizing Major General Greg Knight for his service and leadership of the Vermont National Guard.

This day is a professional and personal milestone for General Knight, but it is also a poignant one for many in the Vermont Legislature. I know that many of us in this body consider General Knight a friend, and a few of us have had the privilege of working closely with him over his tenure as Adjutant General.

He stepped into this role during a period of significant challenge for the Guard — a moment that required not just stability, but real change, especially for women serving in uniform.

When the senior Senator from Addison and I nominated him, we spoke openly about his coming up through the ranks and his deep understanding of the institution from the inside out. We were also clear about our willingness to hold him accountable for that change.

He has exceeded our expectations. A culture of accountability and a depth of institutional capacity has been built during his tenure that will long outlast him. That kind of leadership is rare, and our State, and especially our soldiers and airmen, have benefited greatly. Vermont is stronger because of his service, and the people who will continue this work are better supported because of the standards he set throughout the organization. Thank you.”

Rep. Hango of Berkshire offered the following remarks:

“Madam Speaker:

Today marks seven years that then-Colonel Greg Knight started his journey with this body. Through his leadership and engagement, our relationship with the Vermont National Guard is strong and cordial. Thank you from all of us who have had the honor to make this journey with you. Madam Speaker — would you kindly welcome Major General Gregory Knight, his family, and their guests to the State House.”

Third Reading; Bill Passed

H. 710

House bill, entitled

An act relating to defining electricity generating facilities

Was taken up, read the third time, and passed.

Adjournment

At three o'clock and fifty-six minutes in the afternoon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the House adjourned until tomorrow at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon.