

Journal of the Senate

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Bills Committed

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Collamore Senate Committee bill entitled:

S. 324. An act relating to legislative operations and government accountability.

Was committed to the Committee on Government Operations.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Watson Senate Committee bill entitled:

S. 325. An act relating to studying the creation of model bylaws.

Was committed to the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Clarkson Senate Committee bill entitled:

S. 327. An act relating to economic development.

Was committed to the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Westman Senate Committee bill entitled:

S. 326. An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to laws relating to motor vehicles.

Was committed to the Committee on Transportation.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Clarkson Senate Committee bill entitled:

S. 328. An act relating to housing and common interest communities.

Was committed to the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Senate Resolution Referred

S.R. 21.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senators Hashim, Beck, Ram Hinsdale, Baruth, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Lyons, Perchlik, Plunkett, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman and White,

S.R. 21. Senate resolution relating to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Operation Metro Surge.

Whereas, on January 5, 2026, approximately 3,000 federal agents, from both U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), were deployed to Minnesota's Twin Cities area as part of Operation Metro Surge, an ICE initiative to intensify the arrest and deportation of individuals not legally residing in the United States, and

Whereas, on January 7, 2026, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, an ICE agent fatally shot Renée Good, a U.S. citizen, while she was in her car at a location where ICE agents were engaged in Operation Metro Surge, and

Whereas, on January 24, 2026, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, CBP agents fatally shot Alex Pretti, also a U.S. citizen, at another location where Operation Metro Surge activity was occurring, and

Whereas, these and multiple other events pertaining to the methods of enforcing immigration law have triggered large protests both in and out of the State of Minnesota, as well as in Vermont, and

Whereas, as Caledonian Record publisher, Todd Smith, perceptively wrote, "A government that kills, then lies, and then threatens its citizens is not protecting the nation. It is undermining the foundations that make it worth protecting in the first place. And if those who claim to *be* the law are permitted to kill without consequence, then the law no longer governs them — and soon, it will no longer protect anyone," and

Whereas, the current situation is intolerable and must be changed immediately, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the President of the United States must immediately suspend Operation Metro Surge, take urgent steps to de-escalate federal enforcement actions, and reset the federal government's immigration enforcement priorities toward individuals who pose genuine threats to public safety, in full compliance with constitutional limits and the rule of law, and in the absence of such presidential action, Congress and the federal courts must fulfill their constitutional responsibility to intervene and restore adherence to due process and fundamental rights, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Senate of the State of Vermont unequivocally condemns the extrajudicial killings of Renée Good and Alex Pretti as grave violations of human dignity, civil liberties, and the constitutional protections owed to all persons, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Senate of the State of Vermont affirms that individuals possess inherent and inviolable rights under the First, Second, and Fourth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, including the rights to free expression, the right to keep and bear arms, and protection against unreasonable searches and seizures, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Senate of the State of Vermont further declares that the lawful exercise of these constitutional rights—peacefully, responsibly, and within the bounds of the law—can never justify empowering federal agents to act as judge, jury, and executioner, nor to employ lethal force outside established legal process and accountability, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Senate of the State of Vermont strongly urges the Vermont Congressional Delegation to oppose any additional federal funding for ICE or related agencies unless and until there is demonstrable, enforceable reform that:

(1) restores immigration enforcement to its core mission of identifying, prosecuting, and removing individuals who have committed serious criminal offenses;

(2) ends indiscriminate, militarized enforcement tactics that undermine public trust and constitutional governance; and

(3) reestablishes a lawful, functional immigration system—rooted in due process, transparency, and humanity—that provides clear, genuine pathways to legal status and citizenship for individuals, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

Thereupon, the President, in his discretion, treated the joint resolution as a bill and referred it to the Committee on Judiciary.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 39.

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

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 39. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on February 6, 2026.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, February 6, 2026, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, February 10, 2026.

Appointment Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed by the Senate, upon full report given by the Committee to which it was referred:

The nomination of

Nolan, Christina E. of Burlington - Associate Justice of the Supreme Court - January 5, 2026 to March 31, 2029.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 23, Nays 7.

Senator Collamore having demanded the yeas and nays, they were taken and are as follows:

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Benson, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Collamore, Cummings, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Morley, Norris, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Clarkson, Gulick, Lyons, Major, Perchlik, Watson, White.

Appointment Taken Up

The following Gubernatorial appointment was taken up by the Senate, upon full report given by the Committee to which it was referred:

The nomination of

Drescher, Michael P. of Hinesburg - Associate Justice of the Supreme Court - from January 5, 2026 to March 31, 2029.

Pending the question, Shall the Senate confirm Michael P. Drescher as an Associate Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court?, Senator Clarkson moved that the appointment be recommitted to the Committee on Judiciary.

Recess

Whereupon, Senator Ram Hinsdale moved that the Senate recess until ten o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon, which was agreed to on a division of the Senate, Yeas 17, Nays 13.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Motion Withdrawn

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the appointment be recommitted to the Committee on Judiciary?, Senator Clarkson requested and was granted leave to withdraw the motion.

Appointment Confirmed

The Gubernatorial appointment of:

Drescher, Michael P. of Hinesburg - Associate Justice of the Supreme Court - January 5, 2026 to March 31, 2029.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 15, Nays 15.

Senator Beck having demanded the yeas and nays, they were taken and are as follows:

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Beck, Benson, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Collamore, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Morley, Norris, Plunkett, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Baruth, Chittenden, Clarkson, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Perchlik, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, *White.

There being a tie, the Secretary took the casting vote of the President, who voted "Yea".

*Senator White explained her vote as follows:

"I vote no in solidarity with the courageous people of the Upper Valley."

Message from the House No. 15

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

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 648. An act relating to banking, insurance, and securities.

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

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, February 4, 2026.