

Journal of the Senate

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2026

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

S. 223.

Senate bill of the following title, appearing on the Calendar for notice and carrying an appropriation or requiring the expenditure of funds, under the rule was referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

An act relating to water quality of the waters of Vermont.

Bill Passed

S. 210.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to access to autopsy reports.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 516.

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

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of Essex.

Rules Suspended; Joint Resolution Amended; Rules Suspended: Joint Resolution Placed in all Remaining Stages of Adoption; Joint Resolution Adopted; Rules Suspended: Joint Resolution Messaged

J.R.S. 42.

Pending entry on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the joint resolution entitled:

Joint resolution condemning the Russian Federation's military and political actions in Ukraine and especially their impact on Ukrainian children.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

Senator Brock, for the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, to which was referred joint Senate resolution entitled:

Joint resolution condemning the Russian Federation's military and political actions in Ukraine and especially their impact on Ukrainian children.

Reported recommending that the joint resolution be amended by striking out all Whereas and Resolved clauses and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Whereas, the large-scale Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, significantly extended its already existing occupation of sovereign Ukrainian territory, and

Whereas, this occupation was initiated with the February–March 2014 invasion of Crimea, which the Russians quickly annexed, premised on the dubious election they ordered and controlled, and later in 2014 Russia invaded the Donbas region of Ukraine, and

Whereas, these illegal invasions are violative of Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter that provides “All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations,” and

Whereas, according to the Brookings Institution, these Russian actions also “violated the agreement among the post-Soviet states in 1991 to accept the then-existing republic borders.... the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances for Ukraine and [the] 1997 Ukrainian-Russian Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership,” and

Whereas, the continuing presence and reinforcement of Russian military personnel, the ongoing land-based warfare, and the unrelenting onslaught of missiles and drones on civilian infrastructure, which have wrought havoc and loss of life on Ukrainians located far from the front lines of ground combat, including leaving millions of civilians without regular heating and power for months during Ukraine's harsh winter, have all severely and negatively impacted daily life in Ukraine, and

Whereas, the war's effect on Ukrainian children has been devastating, and

Whereas, on March 9, 2022, Russian forces attacked a maternity hospital in Mariupol, Ukraine, a key event in a multimonth siege on that Ukrainian city, and, according to the Mayor of Mariupol, over 20,000 Ukrainians perished due to this attack, and

Whereas, the Yale School of Public Health Humanitarian Research Lab (the Lab) has identified at least 210 sites where Russians have relocated Ukrainian children, which are located in either Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine or within Russia's internationally recognized borders, and they include camps or centers dedicated to the systematic reeducation (attempting to change the children's language and cultural heritage) or militarization of Ukrainian children, and in some instances they serve as a facilitator for involuntary Russian family adoptions, and

Whereas, Lab researchers assessed there is "a substantial basis for violations of the 1949 Geneva Convention and [the] 1977 Additional Protocol and Rome Statute of the International Court (Rome Statute) that amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity," and

Whereas, Maria Lvova-Belova, the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights of the Russian Federation, is closely associated with her nation's policy of abducting Ukrainian children, now numbering in the thousands, facilitating their forced relocation, and, in some instances, their involuntary adoption into Russian families or forced placement in the Russian military, and

Whereas, on June 16, 2022, the proxy Russian government of the occupied Kherson region of Ukraine announced that all newborns would be granted Russian citizenship and that orphans will also be registered as Russian citizens; further, on July 11, 2022, Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres ordered an investigation into the deaths and injuries of Ukrainian children, and

Whereas, according to the Office of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukrainian military casualties now exceed 390,000 wounded and 55,000 dead; the nation's Ministry of Internal Affairs, with collaboration from on the ground nongovernmental organizations, reports that between 80,000 and 90,000 Ukrainian soldiers are missing, and the vast majority are presumed dead; the United Nations reports verifiable civilian casualties exceeding 41,000 wounded and 15,000 dead in communities the Russians did not occupy quickly in 2022, and therefore, for example, not including the separate estimated Mariupol casualty count, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly condemns the Russian Federation's illegal invasion of sovereign and internationally recognized Ukrainian territory, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the General Assembly condemns the Russian Federation's abduction and forcible transfer of Ukrainian children; the large network of camps and centers that facilitate the cultural and linguistic reeducation of Ukrainian children and the corresponding impact on the future of Ukraine's cultural, linguistic, and national identity; and the involuntary adoption and military induction of seized Ukrainian children, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the General Assembly strongly urges the government of the Russian Federation to cease immediately its bombardment of Ukrainian infrastructure, withdraw its forces from Ukraine's internationally recognized territory, and return to Ukraine all children whom it has forcefully removed, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Russian Federation and Ukrainian ambassadors to the United States, President Donald J. Trump, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

And that when so amended the resolution ought to be adopted.

Thereupon, the resolution was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, the recommendation of amendment was agreed to, and third reading of the resolution was ordered, on a roll call, Yeas 28, Nays 0.

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

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Benson, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Morley, Norris, Perchlik, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent and not voting were: Harrison, Plunkett.

On motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the resolution was placed on all remaining stages of its adoption.

Thereupon, the resolution was read the third time and adopted.

Thereupon, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the resolution was ordered messaged to the House forthwith.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, February 26, 2026.