State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

JOURNAL

-OF THE-

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY SESSION of the General Assembly begun and held at the State House in the City of Providence on Tuesday, the third day of January in the year of Our Lord two thousand and seventeen.

Volume 144, No. 1 Tuesday, January 3, 2017 First Day

The House of Representatives meets at the State House in Providence, Tuesday, January 3, 2017 and is called to order at 4:32 o'clock P.M., by the Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Senior Representative from Newport.

APPROVAL OF RECORD

By unanimous consent, the House Journals of Friday, June 17th and Saturday, June 18th, 2016 are approved.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney presents Reverend Monsignor Albert A. Kenney, Vicar General of the Diocese of Providence who delivers the Invocation.

(For Invocation, see Appendix, this Journal.)

POSTING OF COLORS AND ACCOMPANIMENT

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney requests the Cranston Fire Department Honor Guard to post the colors, accompanied by Richard McDonagh of Rhode Island Professional Fire Fighters Pipe & Drum Band.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney calls on Mia Slater, Madeline Slater, Amanda Marshall, Mehemiah Speaks, Talia Jellinek-Knight, and Max Jellinek-Knight to lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney calls on John Procaccini of Cranston to sing the "National Anthem".

COMMUNICATION

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney announces the receipt of the following communication:

January 3, 2017

The Honorable Nicholas A. Mattiello
Speaker of the House of Representatives
323 State House
Providence, RI 02903

To the Honorable House of Representatives:

I, Nellie M. Gorbea, Secretary of State, hereby certify the following list of members elected to the House of Representatives in the General Assembly, in accordance with the certificate of election filed in this office by the Board of Elections on the fourteenth day of December**,** 2016, as provided by Section 22-3-13 of the General Laws of 1956:

Edith H. Ajello
Christopher R. Blazejewski
Moira Jayne Walsh
J. Aaron Regunberg
Marcia Ranglin-Vassell
Raymond A. Hull
Daniel P. McKiernan
John Joseph Lombardi
Anastasia P. Williams
Scott Slater
Grace Diaz
Joseph S. Almeida
Ramon A. Perez
Charlene Lima
Nicholas A. Mattiello
Robert B. Lancia
Robert B. Jacquard
Arthur Handy
Joseph M. McNamara
David A. Bennett
Camille F. Vella Wilkinson
Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
K. Joseph Shekarchi
Evan P. Shanley
Jared R. Nunes
Patricia L. Morgan
Patricia A. Serpa
Robert A. Nardolillo
Sherry Roberts
Antonio Giarrusso

Julie A. Casimiro
Robert E. Craven, Sr.
Carol Hagan McEntee
Teresa Tanzi
Kathleen A. Fogarty
Blake A. Filippi
Samuel A. Azzinaro
Brian Patrick Kennedy
Justin Price
Michael W. Chippendale
Robert J. Quattrocchi
Stephen R. Ucci
Deborah A. Fellela
Gregory J. Costantino
Mia A. Ackerman
Jeremiah T. O'Grady
Cale P. Keable
Brian C. Newberry
Michael A. Morin
Stephen M. Casey
Robert D. Phillips
Alex D. Marszalkowski
Thomas J. Winfield
William W. O'Brien
Arthur J. Corvese
Shelby Maldonado
James N. McLaughlin
Carlos Eduardo Tobon
Jean Philippe Barros
David A. Coughlin, Jr.
Raymond H. Johnston, Jr.
Mary Duffy Messier
Katherine S. Kazarian
Helder J. Cunha
Gregg Amore
Joy S. Hearn
Jason Knight
Kenneth A. Marshall
Susan R. Donovan
John G. Edwards
Dennis M. Canario
Kenneth J. Mendonca
Marvin L. Abney
Deborah L. Ruggiero
Lauren H. Carson

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of the State of Rhode Island on this third day of January, A.D.2017.

Respectfully Yours,

Nellie M. Gorbea
Secretary of State

Received and placed on file.

ROLL CALL

The roll is called and a quorum is declared present with 74 members present and 1 member absent as follows:

PRESENT – 74: The Honorable Speaker Mattiello and Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Ajello, Almeida, Amore, Azzinaro, Barros, Bennett, Blazejewski, Canario, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Chippendale, Corvese, Costantino, Coughlin, Craven, Cunha, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Fellela, Filippi, Fogarty, Giarrusso, Hearn, Hull, Jacquard, Johnston, Kazarian, Keable, Kennedy, Knight, Lancia, Lima, Lombardi, Maldonado, Marshall, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McKiernan, McLaughlin, McNamara, Mendonca, Messier, Morgan, Morin, Nardolillo, Newberry, Nunes, O'Brien, O'Grady, Perez, Phillips, Price, Quattrocchi, Ranglin-Vassell, Regunberg, Roberts, Ruggiero, Serpa, Shanley, Shekarchi, Slater, Solomon, Tanzi, Tobon, Ucci, Vella-Wilkinson, Walsh, Williams, Winfield

ABSENT – 1: Representative Handy.

ADDRESS

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney addresses the members of the House.

APPOINTMENTS

The Chair appoints Representative Ackerman, Representative Amore, Representative Costantino, Representative Johnston, Representative Maldonado, Representative McNamara, Representative Price, and Representative Ruggiero, to escort the Honorable Secretary of State to the rostrum of the House.

OATH OF OFFICE

The Representatives-elect rise, as Secretary of State, Nellie M. Gorbea administers the Oath of Office to all members.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney calls for nominations.

Representative Cale Keable, nominates Representative Nicholas Mattiello District 15 in Cranston, to be Speaker of the House of Representatives for the years 2017-2018. Representative Keable discusses the nomination.

The nomination is seconded by Representative Kathy Fogarty. Representative Fogarty offers her remarks.

The nomination is also seconded by Representatives O'Grady, Amore, Regunberg, Craven, Perez, Ucci, Marshall, O'Brien, McEntee, Fogarty, Winfield, McKiernan, Carson, Canario Walsh, Maldonado, Williams, Almeida, Tanzi, Ruggiero, Shekarchi, Ackerman, Ranglin-Vassell, Costantino, Serpa, Hearn, Jacquard, Ajello, Vella-Wilkinson, Fellela, Lima, Kennedy, Bennett, Diaz, Corvese, Knight, Messier, McLaughlin, Hull, Slater, Azzinaro, McNamara, Morin, Phillips, Casey, Edwards, Cunha, Solomon, Tobon, Shanley, Johnston, Coughlin, Barros, Blazejewski, Kazarian, Donovan, Marszalkowski, and Casimiro.

Representative Filippi nominates Patricia Morgan to be Speaker of the House of Representatives for the years 2017-2018. Representative Filippi discusses the nomination.

The nomination is seconded by Representative Antonio Giarrusso. Representative Giarrusso offers his remarks.

The nomination is also seconded by Representatives Lancia, Roberts Nardolillo, Chippendale, Price, Newberry, Mendonca, and Quattrocchi.

The Honorable Marvin Abney asks if there are any other nominations.

Leader Skekarchi seconded by Whip Edwards, moves that nominations be closed.

The motion to close nominations prevails, on a voice vote.

The election of Representative Nicholas A. Mattiello of District 15 in Cranston as Speaker of the House for the years 2017-2018 prevails, on a roll call vote, 63 members voting for Representative Mattiello and 11 members voting for Representative Morgan and 1 member absent as follows:

MATTIELLO-63-Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Ajello, Almeida, Amore, Azzinaro, Barros, Bennett, Blazejewski, Canario, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Corvese, Costantino, Coughlin, Craven, Cunha, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Fellela, Fogarty, Hearn, Hull, Jacquard, Johnston, Kazarian, Keable, Kennedy, Knight, Lima, Lombardi, Maldonado, Marshall, Marszalkowski, Mattiello, McEntee, McKiernan, McLaughlin, McNamara, Messier, Morin, Nunes, O'Brien, O'Grady, Perez, Phillips, Ranglin-Vassell, Regunberg, Ruggiero, Serpa, Shanley, Shekarchi, Slater, Solomon, Tanzi, Tobin, Ucci, Vella-Wilkinson, Walsh, Williams, Winfield.

MORGAN-11-Representatives Chippendale, Filippi, Giarrusso, Lancia, Mendonca, Morgan, Nardolillo, Newberry, Price, Quattrocchi, Roberts.

ABSENT-1-Representative Handy.

The Chair declares the Honorable Nicholas A. Mattiello of District 15 in Cranston is re-elected Speaker of the House for the years 2017-2018.

APPOINTMENTS

The Chair appoints Representative Almeida, Representative Bennett, Representative Corvese, Representative Diaz, Representative Kennedy, Representative Marshall, Representative Messier, Representative Morin, Representative O'Brien, and Representative Serpa, as a committee to escort the Speaker-elect to the rostrum.

The Chair appoints Representative Azzinaro, Representative Barros, Representative Canario, Representative Carson, Representative Casey, Representative Fellela, Representative McLaughlin, Representative Tobon, and Representative Williams as a committee to escort Speaker Mattiello's wife, Mary Ann and his sons to the rostrum.

The Chair appoints Representative Blazejewski, Representative Craven, Representative Filippi, Representative Lombardi, Representative McEntee, Representative McKiernan, Representative Newberry, Representative Solomon, and Representative Ucci as a committee to escort the Honorable Paul A. Suttell, Chief Justice of Rhode Island Supreme Court to the rostrum**.**

OATH OF OFFICE

The House attends while the Honorable Presiding Chief Justice Suttell administers the Oath of Office to the Honorable Speaker.

NOW PRESIDING

The Honorable Marvin Abney turns over the rostrum to the Honorable Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello.

The Honorable Speaker Mattiello addresses the members of the House.

(For Speaker Mattiello's Address see appendix of this Journal.)

GOD BLESS AMERICA

The Honorable Speaker Mattiello welcomes back to the rostrum John Procaccini of Cranston, to sing "God Bless America".

ELECTION OF THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The Honorable Speaker declares the election of Clerk is in order and calls for nominations.

Representative Mary Messier, of Pawtucket seconded by Representative Barros nominates Francis McCabe to be Clerk of the House for the Session 2017-2018.

There being no further nominations, Representative Coughlin seconded by Representative Johnston move that nominations be closed.

The motion to close nominations prevails, on a voice vote.

Representative Messier moves that Representative Barros be directed to cast one ballot for Francis McCabe to be Clerk of the House for the 2017-2018 Session, seconded by Representative Tobon. The motion prevails by unanimous consent on a voice vote.

Representative Barros casts one ballot for Francis McCabe for the office of the Clerk of the House for the years 2017-2018, seconded by Representative Tobon.

Francis P. McCabe is elected Clerk of the House of the Session 2017-2018.

ELECTION OF RECORDING CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The Honorable Speaker declares the election of a Recording Clerk is in order and calls for nominations.

Representative Newberry, seconded by Representative Corvese, nominates Linda McElroy of North Smithfield to be Recording Clerk of the House for the Session 2017-2018.

There being no further nominations, Representative Jacquard, seconded by Representative O'BRIEN, moves that nominations be closed.

The motion to close nominations prevails, on a voice vote.

Representative Corvese moves that Representative Newberry be directed to cast one ballot for Linda McElroy to be Recording Clerk for the 2017-2018 Session, seconded by Representative O'Brien. The motion prevails by unanimous consent on a voice vote.

Representative Newberry casts one ballot for Linda McElroy for the office of Recording Clerk of the House for the years 2017-2018, seconded by Representative O'Brien.

Linda McElroy is elected Recording Clerk of the House of the Session 2017-2018.

OATH OF OFFICE

The Honorable Speaker Mattiello administers the Oath of Office to the Clerk of the House, Frank McCabe and the Recording Clerk of the House, Linda McElroy for the 2017-2018 Session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Representative Arthur Handy is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, January 3rd 2017.

From Representative Art Handy:

If I were present, I would have voted for Nicholas Mattiello for Speaker.

Received and placed on file.

Leader Shekarchi addresses the members and announces that new seat assignments for the 2017-2018 will be available. The Leader also announces that session will convene at 4:00 P.M. tomorrow and invites families and friends to a reception immediately following the rise of the House on the third floor outside the Speaker's office.

Speaker Mattiello wishes the Dean of the House, Representative Brian Kennedy a Happy Birthday.

Speaker Mattiello congratulates both Leaders, and all the freshman of the House.

GUESTS

Speaker Mattiello welcomes Mayor Lombardi and Mayor Murray to the House Chamber.

Representative Morgan welcomes to the House Chamber Representative Bob Quattrocchi, his wife, Edwina Quattrocchi; Brianna and Sofia Quattrocchi, daughters; Robert Quattrocchi, father and 13 more family members and friends.

Representative Morgan also welcomes Representative Ken Mendonca and his wife, Nancy Mendonca his daughter, Kaleigh Mendonca and 3 more family members and friends.

Speaker Mattiello congratulates Minority Leader Morgan on becoming Minority Leader.

Representative O'Brien welcomes to the House Sharon Bisceglio, sister and Jacqueline Celeste, fiancée.

Representative Ucci welcomes to the House Representative Ramon Perez and his family- Mayra Perez, wife, Ramon Perez Sr., father, Maritza Perez, mother and his friends, David Talan and David Marshall..

Representative Ruggiero welcomes to the House Representative Julie Casimiro, and her husband, Rich. Representative Ruggiero also welcomes John and Dorothy Ruggiero, her parents and Lyne Cloutier.

Representative Williams welcomes to the House Representative Marcia Ranglin-Vassell, Mavis Ranglin, mom; Van Vassell, husband; Van Vassell, Jr. ; Eric Vassell, Terrence Vassell, Valrie Ranglin-Brown, Pearline Duff-Porter, Lisa Ranglin, Desmond Ranglin, Burchell Ranglin, Donovan Ranglin, Jennifer Ranglin, Carol Ranglin, Hyacinth Brown and Violet Barracks.

Representative Kennedy welcome to the House his aunt and District 38 Representative Committee Member, Dorothea Kennedy and her sister, Alroyce Morrone, Cindy Morrone (Alroyce's daughter), and Ryan Quattromani (Cindy's son).

Representative Lima welcomes to the House Representative Ramon Perez.

Representative Diaz welcomes to the House Hugo Adames, Margareta Adames, and Representative Ramon Perez and his wife, Mayra Perez.

Representative Marshall welcomes to the House Amanda, daughter; Delores, mother; Steve, brother; and Julie, niece.

Speaker Mattiello also welcomes Amanda and Delores to the Chamber.

Representative Corvese welcomes to the House his daughter, Maria Lenz; Matthew Lenz, son-in-law and his 3 month old grandson, Alexander Matthew Lenz. Speaker Mattiello welcomes Maria, Matt and Alexander to the House.

Representative McNamara welcomes to the House Representative Evan Shanley; Meredith, wife; Maxwell, 2 week old son; Mary Madden, Paul Shanley Marc Gurshy; Patti Shanley; his parents; Rev. Father Brian Shanley, uncle; and Scott Lessard, Elizabeth Wiens, Jonny Paulhus, friends.

Representative McLaughlin welcomes to the House Representative Alex Marszalkowski, the Marszalkowski family, and Mayor Murray of Cumberland.

Representative Tobon welcomes to the House Magdalena "Maggie" Picot; Javier Rios, Carlos A. Tobon, father; and his wife, Alejandra Tobon.

Representative Kazarian welcomes to the House Representative Susan Donovan and her family-Glenn Donovan, husband; Glenn Donovan, Jr., son; his wife, Erin Donovan; Colleen, daughter, and Ellie, granddaughter.

Representative Hearn welcomes to the House Representative Jason Knight and his wife, Nicole Jellinick and his children, Talia Jellinick-Knight and Max Jellinick-Knight.

Representative Amore welcomes to the House Representative Helder Cunha and his family-Sandra Cunha, wife; Arianna Cunha, daughter; Jocelyn Cunha, daughter; Roman Cunha, son; Maria Cunha, mother; Jose Cunha, dad.

Representative Regunberg welcomes to the House Representative Moira Walsh and her son, Malcolm along with her parents, uncle and friends.

Representative McEntee welcomes to the House her husband, former State Representative Michael McEntee; Meg McEntee, daughter; Mickey McEntee, Rory McEntee, sons; Dr. Ann Hagan Webb, sister; and former Councilman James O'Neill.

Representative Shekarchi welcomes to the House Representative Camille Vella-Wilkinson and family and her husband, Ken.

Representative Vella-Wilkinson welcomes to the House Joe Fargnoli; Dolores Bergeron, Alberto Cardona, Kim Wineman, Barry Teddy, Dean and Heather Johnson, Jason Rioas, Father Roland Simeno, Vivian Iadevia, Ronnie Ricci, Gerri Tagleone, Angel Garcia, Rosemarie Borengassor, Ken Wilkinson, Jan and Amanda Vella-Wilkinson.

Representative Williams welcomes to the House her mom, Violet Rose Little and cousin from Atlanta Georgia, Angela Robinson.

Representative Jacquard and Speaker Mattiello welcome to the House former Representative Aram Garabedian.

BENEDICTION

The Honorable Speaker Mattiello presents Reverend Edward Pieroni, Pastor of St. Raymond's Parish in Providence for the benediction.

(For Benediction see Appendix of this Journal)

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:28 o'clock P.M. on motion of Leader Shekarchi seconded by Leader Morgan the House adjourns, on a voice vote.

Linda M. McElroy
Recording Clerk

APPENDIX

INVOCATION

MONSIGNOR ALBERT KENNEY

Let us remember we are in the holy Presence of God.

Blessed are you God of mercy, who through your Son gave us a marvelous example of charity and the great commandment, love one another. Send down your blessings on these your servants who so generously devote themselves to helping others. When they are called on in times of need, let them faithfully serve you in their neighbor and all the citizens of our great state.

Let the light of your divine wisdom direct the deliberations of this impressive chamber and shine forth in all the proceedings. May they seek to preserve peace, the common good of our citizens and continue to bring us the blessings of life, liberty and equality.

We thank them for their willingness to be role models in a world that needs positive, faithful and courageous leaders. Leaders who care; Leaders who serve with distinction. We are grateful to their families for their love, support and guidance.

Finally we commend to your unbounded providence all citizens of the State of RI. That we may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of your holy law.

For we ask this all in your name. Amen

APPENDIX

BENEDICTION

REVEREND EDWARD PIERONI

For those of us who are people of faith different though our beliefs maybe we turn to the source of all goodness and service the Almighty and the Eternal whomever we conceive that power to be. For those of us of little or no faith, let us reflect upon the ideals that inspire us to be of service to the citizens of this great state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. Source of all that is good and true foundation of our life and love as the people. We join our good thoughts and wishes and we ask for guidance and strength from you and from each other. We seek compassion and understanding. Grant us the wisdom that we may find the courage to celebrate our diversity and not to dwell on our differences. In time of distress, turn our rancor to reconciliation. In our problems and quandaries may we only find the potential for the greater good to which we were all called. Under your watchful care, may we build a better life for all as we inspire each other to be better people and more devoted citizens and servants of the public good. May we be blessed and unified as we proceed in the solemn endeavor. Amen

APPENDIX

SPEAKER MATTIELLO' S ADDRESS

Thank you. I want to thank each and every one of you for placing your trust in me. I am grateful for your continued support and the opportunity to serve as your Speaker for another term.

Like each of you, **I owe a debt of gratitude to the people of my district.** Without their support, I would not be here today. So to the residents of District 15 in Cranston, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

A sincere thank you to **Representative Marvin Abney**, who, as the senior member from Newport, is charged by our constitution with convening the first day of session.

Marvin is a trusted friend who does not shy away from a challenge. At a very difficult time in the waning months last session, he stepped up to fulfill the critical role of House Finance Committee chairman. Under his leadership, the Finance Committee crafted a responsible budget for the citizens of our state in a short amount of time. I am excited to see what the Finance Committee will accomplish under two full years of Chairman Abney's leadership. Thank you, Marvin.

I'd also like to thank **Representatives Cale Keable and Kathy Fogarty** for placing my name into nomination. Both of you are tireless public servants. Under Representative Keable's leadership, the House Judiciary Committee has considered many challenging and nuanced pieces of legislation. Whether you are a member of this chamber or the public, no matter your party or politics, you can count on your issue receiving thoughtful consideration by the House Judiciary Committee.

Representative Fogarty may be relatively new to this chamber, but she is not new to public service. She served a decade on the South Kingstown Town Council before arriving here, and that municipal government experience has served her and her colleagues well in this chamber.

At our Democratic Caucus in November, we elected a new **Majority Leader, Joe Shekarchi**. Leader Shekarchi will be a great partner.

As the former Chairman of the House Labor Committee, Joe Shekarchi earned praise for his fairness and collaboration. He worked tirelessly to bring together stakeholders on different sides of an issue to reach compromises that advanced the interests of all Rhode Islanders. These skills will serve him well as Majority Leader, and I know that his door will always be open to members of the House.

We also re-elected **Whip Jay Edwards and Deputy Whip Chris Blazejewski,** whose leadership we are fortunate to have in this chamber.

At the same time, I want to congratulate our new **Minority Leader Patricia Morgan** and the new **Minority Whip Blake Filippi.** I look forward to working with both of you and the entire Republican caucus. I know our collaboration will lead to great things for our state.

I want to thank **Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea** for swearing-in all of the House members.

And, it is a great honor to have Chief Justice of the RI Supreme Court, the Honorable **Paul Suttell**, administer the Oath of Office.

I also want to take a moment to recognize **Governor Raimondo, Lieutenant Governor Dan McKee and Attorney General Peter Kilmartin**. Along with the Senate, we have worked together to put the interests of all Rhode Islanders first.

I want to acknowledge the many mayors here today, including my **hometown mayor Allan Fung**.

Today, we welcome **12 new members to the General Assembly.** Congratulations! I can easily recall my first inauguration. I was filled with humility, hope and optimism. Take that humility and hope with you as you work to build a brighter future for your constituents and every Rhode Islander.

While I had the opportunity to talk with each of you on Orientation Day, I encourage you to reach out to your colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Each of us represents a diverse and unique community within in our state, but we must work together to move Rhode Island forward.

I can't wait to begin working with everyone in this chamber. When I took this rostrum for the very first time in March 2014, I said our focus would be **"jobs and the economy**." For two and a half years, we worked together to implement a series of reforms to improve our business climate.

Some of these items include:

- Reducing the **corporate tax** rate from the highest in the Northeast to the lowest in the region.
- Raising the exemption on the **estate tax** to $1.5 million dollars, while eliminating the cliff provision.
- Cutting the **minimum corporate tax** by 20%.
- Eliminating the **state income tax on Social Security** and other retirement benefits for many recipients.
- Removing the **sales tax on utility costs** for all businesses.
- Expanding the **earned income tax credit** to help working families.
- And, passing **Majority Leader Shekarchi's jobs bill** which has created hundreds of new jobs and has attracted Fortune 500 companies to our state such as General Electric and Johnson & Johnson.

Rhode Island has finally regained the jobs it lost during the Great Recession. Yet, much work remains if we are to turn our recovery into a resurgence. Now is the time to be bold. Now is the time for decisive actions that will improve the lives of all Rhode Islanders.

That is why my number one priority is **phasing out the car tax and eliminating it within the next five years.**

Make no mistake, this year's budget will provide significant relief from this regressive tax. Cutting the car tax will also improve our tax competitiveness nationally, advance quality of life in our communities, and increase spending in our local economy.

Folks throughout our state are frustrated by the car tax. At nearly every doorstep during my campaign, I heard about its impact on working families and their household budget. This proposal is designed to provide immediate tax relief to Rhode Island's middle class.

There are other priorities that I want to look closely at this session:

- Raising the **minimum wage** to assist every member of our workforce.
- Eliminating the **"double tax" on cars that are leased.**
- Increasing the **level of income that would be exempted for retirees** on their state income tax.
- Expanding the **estate tax exemption** to be regionally competitive.
- And, doubling down on our commitment to provide a first-rate **public education** to every child in Rhode Island.

As I conclude, I want to take just a few minutes to thank many of my family members and friends who are here today.

- My wife, **Mary Ann**, thank you for all your love and support.
- My sons, **Nick and Tony**.
- My sister, **Susan**.
- My dear friend and longtime supporter, **Nick Capobianco**, who has shared every step with me on this journey.
- Thank you to **John Procaccini** for doing such a great job singing today, and to the **Cranston Fire Department Honor Guard.**

- Finally, thank you to **Monsignor Kenney** and **Rev. Edward Pieroni** for participating in today's proceedings.

To all my family members and my many friends, thank you for your support and your friendship.

And once again, thank you to all the Members who placed their confidence in me today. I look forward to working with all of you over the next two years.

Thank you.