

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 second day of January in the year of Our Lord two thousand and eighteen.

Volume 145, No. 1

Tuesday, January 2, 2018

First Day

The House of Representatives meets at the State House in Providence, Tuesday, January 2, 2018 and is called to order at 4:14 o'clock P.M., by the Honorable Nicholas A. Mattiello, Speaker.

The roll is called and a quorum is declared present with 70 members present and 5 members absent as follows:

PRESENT – 70 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, Handy, Hearn, Hull, Jacquard, Johnston, Kazarian, Keable, Kennedy, Knight, Lancia, Lima, Lombardi, Maldonado, Marshall, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McLaughlin, McNamara, Mendonca, Messier, Morgan, Morin, Nardolillo, Newberry, Nunes, O'Brien, O'Grady, Perez, Phillips, Price, Ranglin-Vassell, Regunberg, Ruggiero, Serpa, Shanley, Shekarchi, Slater, Tanzi, Ucci, Vella-Wilkinson, Walsh, Williams, Winfield.

ABSENT – 5: Representatives McKiernan, Quattrocchi, Roberts, Solomon, Tobon.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Speaker presents Monsignor Albert Kenney, Vicar General of the Providence Diocese who delivers the Invocation. Representative Diaz introduces Ashley Ogoffa, Brianna George, and Mia Morales students from the Sophia Academy to lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

(For Invocation, see Appendix, this Journal.)

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Representative Ackerman and on behalf of Representatives McLaughlin, Marszalkowski and Phillips presents the Cumberland Clef Singers, from Cumberland High School to sing the National Anthem.

ADJOURNMENT OF 2017 SESSION

On motion of majority Leader Shekarchi seconded by Minority Leader Morgan the House adjourns the 2017 session on a voice vote.

APPROVAL OF RECORD

By unanimous consent, the House Journal of June 29, and September 19, 2017, is approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Representative Joseph J. Solomon, Jr. is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, January 2, 2018.

Representative Daniel McKiernan is unable to attend session today, Tuesday January 2, 2018.

Representative Carlos Tobon is unable to attend session today, Tuesday January 2, 2018.

OPENING DAY ADDRESS

The Honorable Speaker Mattiello addresses the members of the House.

(For Speaker's Address see appendix of Journal)

GUESTS

Representative Abney welcomes to the House Chamber as guests LTC Angela Butts and James Butts, CEO API Global Resources. Speaker Mattiello also welcomes them to the House and thanks them for all they do for us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leader Shekarchi congratulates House Oversight Committee Chairwoman Patricia Serpa and Representative Teresa Tanzi who were singled out by GoLocalProv as "17 Who Made a Difference in 2017".

Leader Shekarchi congratulates Representative Brian Patrick Kennedy on his 30th year of service as Representative and wishes him a Happy Birthday, tomorrow. Speaker Mattiello wishes Speaker Pro Tempore Kennedy a Happy Birthday and congratulates Chairwoman Serpa and Representative Tanzi and thanks them for their continued hard work on behalf of the citizens of the state.

NEW BUSINESS**House Resolution No. 7001**

BY McNamara, Bennett, Vella-Wilkinson, Shanley, Shekarchi

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF
BRUCE S. PLACE {LC3301/1}

With the agreement of the Majority and the Minority, Representative McNamara requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Read and passed, on a motion of Representative McNamara seconded by Representatives Bennett, Vella-Wilkinson, Shanley, and Leaders Shekarchi and Morgan by unanimous consent, on a rising vote.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:41 o'clock P.M. on motion of Representative McNamara, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Bruce Place; on motion of Representatives Edwards and O'Grady, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Zeno Trabucchi; on motion of Representative Giarrusso and as a further mark of respect to the memories of Evelyn Delfino and Richard Delfino, Sr. seconded by Leaders Shekarchi and Morgan the House adjourns, on a unanimous rising 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, to 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 lights 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**OPENING DAY REMARKS****BY SPEAKER MATTIELLO****TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2018**

I'd like to welcome everyone back for our 2018 legislative session.

I thank so many of you who have worked hard during the off-session on various committees and commissions. We will be organizing other commissions to begin work in the coming weeks.

This year, we will continue to focus on improving Rhode Island's economic climate and making us more competitive with our neighboring states.

This is going to be a challenging year. However, we will produce a balanced budget that addresses all of society's needs while continuing the car-tax phase-out.

Our House Finance Committee, under the leadership of Chairman Marvin Abney, has been monitoring the budget very carefully. The budget picture is only going to get worse if we don't start fixing things between now and the end of the fiscal year. While we look forward to the Governor's budget submission on January 18th, we hope that her administration is following its corrective action plans to tighten its reins.

We must continue to take care of people who need it the most.

At the same time, we need to take a hard look at all existing programs and see what is benefitting our taxpayers.

I am committed to the elimination of the car tax, and I fully expect the funding for Year Two will be included in the budget we enact this June. This chamber UNANAMOUSLY adopted the car tax phase-out last year, and our constituents deserve to have this onerous tax eliminated within the next five years.

We will continue to review our tax policies to see what is working and see what we can do to continue to help businesses. The business community is the engine that drives our economy.

In that regard, I want to see more progress made in the area of regulatory reform.

The House Oversight Committee, under the leadership of Chairwoman Patricia Serpa, has done an excellent job in monitoring UHIP, DCYF and other critical issues. The Oversight Committee will also be looking this year at regulatory reform.

Our state can, and must, be more friendly to businesses.

I will be attending the Small Business Administration's annual Economic Summit this Friday and I look forward to hearing the suggestions directly from the business community.

We will continue to support programs to help our economy and attract good paying jobs to our state. I encourage good ideas from all of you on a bipartisan basis.

Let's work together and continue to grow our economy.

There are many other issues we will be reviewing in 2018. My pledge to you is that we will have fair hearings that will be televised and open to the public.

I want to assure everyone in the public that the House is listening and we will weigh the pros and cons of every issue fairly and objectively. We will listen carefully to the needs of our constituents and appropriately address the wishes of our people.

I encourage members of the public to weigh in on the issues important to you. Your voice will be heard in this chamber!

It is an honor to continue to serve as Speaker, and my door is always open to you.

I encourage you to file your bills as soon as possible. Our new chief legal counsel, Danica Iacoi, stands ready to assist all of you. I hope you will all have the opportunity to work with Danica during the session.

Let's get off to a great start and have a very productive 2018 session as we accomplish the business of this wonderful state of ours.

Finally, I'd just like to take a minute to introduce my guests here today: My wife, MaryAnn, my sons, Nick and Tony, and my good friend, Nick Capobianco.