

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

77th Legislative Day

2/25/2026

Clerk Hollman: "House Perfunctory Session will come to order. Committee Reports. Representative Gabel, Chairperson from the Committee on Rules reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: approved for consideration, referred to the Order of Concurrence is House Bill 3564."

Speaker Evans: "The House shall be in order. Members shall be in the chairs. We shall be led in prayer today by Pastor Drake Caudill. Pastor Caudill is with First Baptist Church of Carmi in Carmi, Illinois. Pastor Caudill is the guest of Representative Severin."

Pastor Caudill: "Let us pray. Heavenly Father, I stand before a room of men and women today created in your image. We acknowledge that they are not here by chance or coincidence, but they have been appointed by your sovereign providence to serve the people of Illinois. Lord, I can't fathom the weight of the tasks, the complexity of their conversations, or the gravity of the decisions that await them today. Therefore, I do not come with eloquent words of human wisdom to instruct you, but instead I come as one who stands with them in need of your grace. God, I'm reminded of King David, a fellow governing authority, who wrote, 'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.' And though a king, David recognized his true identity, a sheep in need of a shepherd. He understood that without your leadership, we are prone to wander and seek paths of our own making. Even President Lincoln reminded our nation in 1863 that we often 'vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.' So, on this day, we acknowledge you are the shepherd, we are the sheep. As sheep

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before the shepherd, I pray that your hand would guide this governing body in paths of righteousness for your name's sake. May these leaders not model self-sufficiency, but instead humble dependency on you before those whom they serve. Grant them wisdom that's from above, wisdom that's pure, peaceable, and full of good fruit. And as we depend on you for wisdom and direction, we also pause to give you thanks for your great provision of the good shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep and miraculously resurrected so that we could truly say, 'I shall not want.' All of this in the name of the good shepherd, I pray. Amen."

Speaker Evans: "Members and guests are asked to refrain from starting laptops, turn off all cellphones, and rise for the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. We will be led in the Pledge of Allegiance today by Representative Meyers-Martin."

Meyers-Martin - et al: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Speaker Evans: "Roll Call for Attendance. Leader Gabel is recognized to report excused absence on the Democratic side of the aisle."

Gabel: "Speaker, let the record show that Representatives Ammons, Jones, and Olickal are excused today."

Speaker Evans: "Leader Keicher is recognized to report any excused absence on the Republican side of the aisle."

Keicher: "Thank you, Speaker. Please let the record reflect that Representative Stephens is excused for today."

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Speaker Evans: "Have all recorded themselves who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. There being 108 Members answering the roll call, a quorum is present. Mr. Clerk, Committee Reports."

Clerk Hollman: "Committee Reports. Representative Meyers-Martin, Chairperson from the Committee on Consumer Protection reports the following committee action taken on February 24, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4044. Representative Ammons, Chairperson from the Committee on Energy & Environment reports the following committee action taken on February 24, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4403. Representative Croke, Chairperson from the Committee on Financial Institutions and Licensing reports the following committee action taken on February 24, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4533 and House Bill 4754. Representative Slaughter, Chairperson from the Committee on Judiciary - Criminal reports the following committee action taken on February 24, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4138, House Bill 4217, House Bill 4332, and House Bill 4368. Representative Mussman, Chairperson from the Committee on Education Policy reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4577 and House Bill 4581. The Chairperson from the Committee on Human Services reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4112, House Bill 4606, House Bill 4780; recommends be adopted is House Resolution 583. Representative Gong-Gershowitz, Chairperson from the Committee on Judiciary - Civil reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4262, House Bill 4277, House

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Bill 4341, House Bill 4649. Representative Ann Williams, Chairperson from the Committee on the Executive reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4426; recommends be adopted is the Motion to Concur with Senate Amendment(s) 3, 7, and 8 to House Bill 3564. Representative Morgan, Chairperson from the Committee on Health Care Licenses reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4826, House Bill 4953. Representative Andrade, Chairperson from the Committee on Transportation: Vehicles & Safety reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: do pass Short Debate is House Bill 4441 and House Bill 4472. Introduction of Resolutions. House Resolution 695, offered by Representative Croke; House Resolution 696, offered by Representative du Buclet; and House Resolution 697, offered by Representative Cassidy, are referred to the Rules Committee."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Chung, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Chung: "Mr. Speaker, a point of personal privilege."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Chung: "Thank you so much. Ladies and gentlemen of the chamber, I wanted to bring your attention to the Speaker's Gallery. If... I'll have the folks up in the Speaker's Gallery stand up. We have the Illinois State University... members of the Illinois State University football team here up in the gallery today. Yes, let's give them all a round of applause. I joked with them earlier that we did wear red today for Redbird Nation, but I'd like to think that we are wearing for heart health,

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but we like to think that we all wore it for you today. I wanted to recognize their great achievements. I introduced House Resolution 689 to recognize their great achievements of this past season. I had a number of colleagues text me that night on... in January when they were playing the FCS championship because it was probably the greatest football game that any of us had ever seen. So, we've got members here from the team. We have coach Brock Spack. If you'll give a wave, coach. Yes. Thank you. And we also have the... the athletic director, Jeri Beggs, and Paul Kabbes, who's the assistant athletic director. So, thank you so much for coming. That game was, again, the best game... football game I have ever seen. ISU football team was winning a bunch of games on the road. They beat North Dakota State, our... our big enemy, and that was an amazing game. And then went on to beat... and then went on to meet Montana State in the final championship, sending the game to overtime for the first time ever in FCS history. And we are so proud of you at Redbird Nation and just wanted to really recognize you for all your great achievements, not only on the field and off the field as students, and making ISU really proud and Bloomington-Normal as a whole. So, welcome all to Springfield. And if everybody can give them another round of applause, let's welcome them all."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Severin, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Severin: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Evans: "Please proceed."

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Severin: "It's my honor today to have on the floor my page for the day, Brett Owen, better known as Bo Hart. He's a 10-year-old fourth grader in Enlightium Academy. He's here with his mother and grandmother, Cristina Hart, and his grandmother, Sherry Lynn. He participates in basketball, Buddy Ball, reading program at the library, and a baseball for special needs. And so, I met him one of the days at my office when we were doing mobile hours, and I found out what a bright young man he is. He's interested in politics. And so, this is Bo. And so, how about a round of applause and a warm welcome for Bo Hart this morning on the floor... or this afternoon. Thank you."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Swanson, what reason do you seek recognition?"

Swanson: "Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Swanson: "Thank you, sir. I, too, have an honorary page here today I'd like to introduce. His name is Colum Knox Morgan, and he's from Alexis, Illinois. Alexis is near Monmouth, Galesburg, up in the western part of Illinois. He's a seventh grader at United Junior High School... or Junior School... Junior High School near Monmouth. His parents are Levi Morgan of Alexis, and his mom, Jessa Morgan of Galesburg. His activities in school include percussionist in a band. Yes, he's a drummer. And he's also on the track and field team, where he's a mid-distance runner. His community activities include that he volunteers with local food bank through the Rotary Club of Galesburg. He volunteers at Knox College events and

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has served as Blaze, the Knox College mascot. He volunteers at Sandburg College events and has assisted Experience Galesburg, which is a tourism office in the Galesburg area. He helps set up events. He's also helped with the Shamroxville Parade in Knoxville, which is coming up the 14th of March... March in honor of St. Patrick's Day. And he also helps with the Galesburg Holly Days Parade. His special recognition, he... he loves to travel and has so far visited 26 states, two Canadian provinces, and next on his bucket list is to visit either Ireland or Germany. Colum is helping his dad restore an historic opera house in Alexis, Illinois. So, please join me in welcoming Colum today here at the State Capitol."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Niemerg, what reason do you seek recognition?"

Niemerg: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A point of personal privilege."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Niemerg: "Last night, President Trump delivered a State of the Union that reflected the values and successes of our great nation, honoring war heroes; honoring proud Olympic athletes, both men and women; reinforcing the mission to bring back American jobs and manufacturing through 'America First' trade policies; peace through strength in foreign policy; economic prosperity, including the youngest of our country through children's Trump investment accounts; and at the heart of it all, protecting American citizens. Last night, President Trump addressed the joint session of Congress, saying, 'Stand up if you agree that the first duty of the American government is to protect American citizens, not illegal immigrants.' Not one Democrat moved. It is clear the national Democrat Party

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will never stand up for citizens but will stand instead for illegals. So, I'm wondering here today, with everybody in this room, I see we're wearing red, it's Trump Day, I'm wondering if my fellow Representatives, Republicans and Democrats, if you agree that the first duty of the American and Illinois government is to protect American citizens, not illegal aliens, stand up. Stand up. I think we have some. No, no, we don't. No. Oh, we got maybe one in protest. I think there's some protesting going on. But the truth is not... that our body not only needs to stand up, but we need to have policies that reflect putting American citizens first. Thank God for President Trump getting our country back on track to serve the people it actually represents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Halbbrook."

Halbrook: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Halbrook: "Thank you. Today I rise to contrast two very different economic visions: one working to bring jobs back to America, and one that continues to drive jobs out of Illinois. At the national level, President Trump's 'America First' tariff strategy is built on one simple principle: stop letting other countries take advantage of American workers. For decades, weak trade policies hollowed out our manufacturing base, plants have closed, jobs have disappeared, communities across the Midwest have suffered. Tariffs are meant to.. to level the playing field, particularly with China, and encourage companies to reshore production and invest here at home.

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That's about economic security and restoring opportunity. While President Trump is fighting to bring jobs back to America, Governor Pritzker is driving jobs out of Illinois. Just look at the record. In recent years, Citadel moved from Chicago to Miami, Boeing relocated to Virginia, Caterpillar moved to Texas, TTX moved to North Carolina, Peak6 went to Austin. We've just heard this week about another business closure in southeastern Illinois, a thousand jobs lost. These are major employers. When they leave, jobs and investment go with them. For the same reason, our beloved Chicago Bears are trying to leave Chicago. When the Bears say the business environment no longer works, that should be a warning sign. Businesses are... and families are saying the same thing. Illinois faces crushing property taxes, overregulation, and policies that treat job creators like a revenue source for bigger government. President Trump's approach says, 'Make America competitive, reduce burdens, and protect industry.' Illinois' current approach says, 'Raise taxes and expand government and hope businesses stay anyway.' If national policy succeeds in reshoring manufacturing, Illinois should be leading. We have the workforce and we have the location, but none of that matters if our policies keep driving opportunity away. We need lower taxes, smarter regulation, and a clear message that Illinois is open for business. 'America First' trade policies are going to place the ball in the red zone. The question for both manufacturing industry and the Chicago Bears is simple, will the end zone be for Illinois, or will they punt it somewhere else? In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank everyone in this chamber

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for wearing red today, the favorite color of our beloved President Trump. Thank you."

Speaker Evans: "Mr. Clerk, Rules Report. Mr. Clerk, Rules Report."

Clerk Hollman: "Rules Report. Representative Gabel, Chairperson from the Committee on Rules reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: approved for consideration, referred to Second Reading is House Bill 841 and House Bill 910; recommends be adopted, referred to the Order of Resolutions is House Resolution 695, House Resolution 696, and House Resolution 697."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Wilhour, what reason do you seek recognition?"

Wilhour: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Wilhour: "Thank you. Before I begin, I just want to... I just want to note how good so many people on the other side look. Look really good today. Haven't seen that much red in politics since November 2024. But what I'm really here for, Mr. Speaker, I'm honored today to welcome to my... welcome to Springfield a football team from my district, the 2025 Flora Wolves, the Elite Eight football team. You guys, stand up. Now, this team has been the pride of Clay County for the past year. They've driven a lot of excitement. Couldn't go anywhere without hearing about these guys: hometown pride, sportsmanship, even involved in charity stuff at their games. They've been a... been a really good example and ambassador for our area. After 112 years of Flora Wolves football, the 2025 team is the first in school history to win a playoff game,

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taking it a step further and making it to the I... IHSA Elite Eight. The Wolves finished the season with a record of 10 and 2, and they've set a big standard moving forward. These guys got a... got a big standard to live up to going forward. Looking forward to that. So, honored to welcome the team along with coach Brian Tackitt, his coaching staff, the football players, the cheerleaders. Congratulations on the Flora Wolves and great success to come. Thank you for being in the people's House."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Will Davis, what reason do you seek recognition? Will Davis."

Davis, W.: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I have a point of personal privilege?"

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Davis, W.: "Mr. Speaker, I take my job as chair of the appropriations committee for K-12 very seriously. And every year, I avail myself to any school superintendent that would like me to visit their school districts here in the state of Illinois. And this year, I received an invitation from Dr. Joshua Stafford, who is the superintendent of Vienna High School District in Southern Illinois. So, on Sunday, I drove down, and I spent the entire day in Southern Illinois on Monday, starting with the laborers' job training center, and then eventually moving to Vienna High School in Vienna, Illinois. And I was just pleased at what I... the way I was received in that area, the students that I met with, and as well as the staff supporting our efforts to try to work on school funding, increase school funding, so that we can have better programs and better opportunities for our young

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people. Those young people at Vienna High School, they were fantastic students. They're doing great things, and I'm looking forward to what they're going to become in the future. And I want to also take this opportunity to acknowledge two of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who joined us at Vienna High School as part of our visit. That is Floor Leader Patrick Windhorst as well as Representative Paul Jacobs, who all came down to Vienna High School. And we had a great opportunity to tour the school, see the various CTE-related programs that they have there as well as have some Q&A from various people that were there as well. But, again, because I take that job seriously, I have no problem traveling the state of Illinois so that I can see the good things that are coming out of EBF and our funding reform effort that we had several years ago, which is why we continue to advocate for more money in that formula. Full funding would be ideal, which is why I filed House Bill 5409 so that we can get to full funding of EBS as well... as well as mandated categoricals. But nevertheless, when I have the opportunity to travel the state... I thought I said Vienna. Oh, I said Vienna the first time. I'm sorry, they've been correcting me on that. So, Vienna High School. But the work that we're doing here on education funding, it manifests itself in a lot of different ways. And I was pleased and honored to see how it manifests itself, particularly in the CTE space at Vienna High School on Monday. So, thank you very much, everyone. And, again, to my colleagues that joined me, thank you very much for being with me that day."

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Speaker Evans: "Thank you. Representative Scherer, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Scherer: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Members of the House. Point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point. Proceed, speak your point."

Scherer: "OK. Thank you. Today is a very special occasion right here in Springfield. It's the 125th anniversary of the Springfield Park District. They're right up here overhead. If you'd please... please stand. Today we commemorate many, many years of dedicated service from the Springfield Park District, 125 years, founded in the year 1900. The trustees, the staff, the volunteers have given so many hours to make this the great park district it is. Welcome to Leslie Sgro, the president, and members of the board who were able to come along with. Just a reminder for the Members. When you're here and Springfield becomes your home, and you might walk in Washington Park, the... the pool, the zoo, the carillon in Washington Park, the rec centers, the golf course, the nature areas, the walking paths, that's all part of Springfield Park District. And we sincerely thank them for all their dedicated service over the years. Thanks so much. Another round of applause, please. And I welcome all Members to go on the resolution."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Grant, what reason do you seek recognition? Representative Grant."

Grant: "I'm sorry. Personal point of privilege, please."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

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Grant: "Thank you. Today I rise to recognize the life and legacy of Dr. Mildred Fay Jefferson for Black History Month. She was a surgeon and, most importantly, a woman of deep conviction. Dr. Jefferson made history as the first Black woman to graduate from Harvard Medical School. She was also the first woman to complete a surgical internship at Boston City Hospital and went on to serve as a professor of surgery at Boston University. Beyond her remarkable medical career, she became a leading voice for the pro-life movement following Roe v. Wade decision. In 1981, she met with President Ronald Reagan and helped shape the national conversation on the value and dignity of life. Dr. Jefferson proved that one determined voice can make a lasting difference. Her courage, faith, and commitment to principle continued to inspire generations. Thank you, Mrs.... Ms. Jefferson, and happy Black History Month."

Speaker Evans: "Mr. Clerk is recognized."

Clerk Hollman: "Senate Joint Resolution #55, offered by Representative Rita, is referred to the Rules Committee."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Hernandez, Norma Hernandez, what reason do you seek recognition?"

Hernandez, N.: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Hernandez, N.: "Today I'd like to recognize an extraordinary accomplishment by Team CASA Cook County in last year's Bank of America Chicago Marathon. In 2025, Team CASA Cook County raised \$110,000 to support children in foster care who have experienced abuse and neglect. These funds directly support the life-changing work of CASA Cook County, court-appointed

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special advocates who stand aside children... beside children in courtrooms, classrooms, and communities to ensure their voices are heard and their best interests are protected. I am especially proud to share that I had the honor of training alongside this incredible team. Every mile ran represented a child in Cook County who deserves stability, advocacy, and hope. With over 5,600 children in care and only a fraction currently matched with a CASA advocate, the need for community support remains urgent. Team CASA Cook County is not only building endurance on race day, they are building permanency, equity, and a brighter future for young people across our country. And today I am excited to share that CASA Cook County has expanded its fundraising program internationally. For 2026, CASA has secured charity entries for both... both and half and full marathons in Paris, France. These are free, guaranteed entries for individuals who commit to fundraising and support for children in foster care. I invite my colleagues and anyone listening to consider joining Team CASA Cook County as we take advocacy across the globe. When we run, we are not just crossing finish lines, we are standing up for children who deserve someone in their corner. Thank you."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Stuart, what reason do you seek recognition?"

Stuart: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Stuart: "Thank you, Speaker. I wanted to point out, you've probably seen a lot of younger looking folks because today is Higher Ed Advocacy Day here in Springfield. So, there's lots

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of college students milling around and trying to meet us and talk about the importance of funding their schools and supporting their studies. And I want to specifically welcome Southern Illinois University campuses. We've got Salukis in Springfield and Cougars at the Capitol. There are outstanding student leaders from both of their campuses. They're here to talk to us today about all the great things that happen in Carbondale and in Edwardsville and at the dental school in Alton and everywhere else that we have a footprint in the state and talk about the importance of SIU, the whole system, to the state of Illinois. So, please help me welcome the Salukis and the Cougars to Springfield."

Speaker Evans: "Leader Buckner, what reason do you seek recognition?"

Buckner: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Buckner: "I want to take some time to recognize some very important folks who are in the Speaker's Gallery today: scholars and adult leaders from Hope Chicago. Hope Chicago is a group that uses the pursuit of higher education across the state of Illinois. They have young students from everywhere, from DeKalb to Carbondale. And they demonstrate a radically different approach to neighborhood economic development, one that centers high school communities and invests in each of their families. As Hope Chicago funds debt-free access to college and career opportunities for multiple generations within families and provides the support needed to navigate and complete those pathways, they're shifting the trajectory

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of Chicago's neighborhood and of our future. And I'm super proud to be a champion of the work that they do here, as are many Members of the General Assembly. And so, I want them just to stand up and be recognized by the Members of the House of Representatives, the scholars, the young people, and the adult leaders from Hope Chicago."

Speaker Evans: "Representative Vella, what reason do you seek recognition?"

Vella: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Evans: "Please speak your point."

Vella: "I rise today as a lawyer and a legislator. On Friday, the U.S. Supreme Court did its constitutional duty and struck down the president's destructive tariffs. These arbitrary and capricious taxes on working families in Illinois and across the country have made it nearly impossible for them and for small and medium-sized businesses to survive. Every right-thinking economist, including Thomas Sowell, know that tariffs like this hurt consumers, hamper production, and kill economic efficiency. We need to grow, not to stagnate. This ruling is not only good for the economy, but it's proof that the American system still works. that we are still a system of checks and balances, even though the leadership in the Congress have dropped the ball and given up their Article I powers. In their filings, the administration promised that they... that if they lost a case, they would return the money that was taken from the American people. Now, they're going to... they're going back on that promise. And I'm calling on the federal government once again to release the hundreds of billions of dollars that they stole from the American people

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to the tune of \$2,000 per American. They need it, and they deserve it. And I'm calling on Congress to take back its lawmaking powers, to stop being a rubber stamp for this or any other president, and to fulfill the oath that they have taken. It is time to fulfill our duty as public servants to make people's lives better, to put money in their pockets, and to make them more free. Thank you very much, Speaker."

Speaker Tarver: "Tarver in the Chair. Leader Guzzardi, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Guzzardi: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A point of personal privilege."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Guzzardi: "Mr. Speaker, may I have the body's attention, please?"

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to honor the life of a constituent of mine, Ofelia Torres, who passed away on February 13 of this year at the age of 16 years old. You all have heard me speak about Ofelia on this floor twice already in the last year. Last spring, I told you about this brilliant, funny teenager I'd met who had been diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. She came to my district office to advocate for a better health care system for people like her. And then, in the fall, I told you about another tragedy that struck her family. One Saturday morning, her father, Ruben, an undocumented immigrant, a hardworking taxpayer who's been in this country for decades with nothing more than a traffic ticket on his record, was jumped in a parking lot by ICE agents, dragged from his vehicle, and locked up in the Broadview detention facility. Ofelia had been discharged from the hospital the night before to spend some of her precious final days on this earth with her family. Instead, she spent the weekend

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wondering if she'd ever see her father again. Ofelia's story captured the heart of our city and our nation. The story of a father doing nothing wrong, being ripped away from his daughter in the middle of her chemotherapy treatments reminded everyone that, in her words, 'immigrants are humans with families and deserve to be treated with love and respect.' It reminded us that it's not just the cold-blooded killings of Silverio González and Alex Pretti and Renee Good that should shock our conscience. It's every abduction, every smashed window, every group of masked men jumping out of unmarked cars and grabbing someone off our streets. That someone is a father, a mother, a son or a daughter, a caregiver, a coworker, a classmate, and the lives of everyone who loves them are darkened forever when they're taken. Thanks to Ofelia lifting up her voice, telling her story in the midst of her treatments, thanks to her brave mother, Sandibell, and to the attorneys and leaders who amplified her story, Ruben was eventually able to come home. He's actually begun a pathway to citizenship, and he got to spend time with Ofelia as her rare and aggressive cancer took its toll. Ofelia left us a couple of weeks ago, her too-short life touched by the whims of a cruel fate that struck her with this disease and of cruel men, men in power and men on our streets who tore her family apart as she was fighting for her life. In my faith tradition, there's a prayer that we say when we lose someone. It ends like this: Oseh shalom bimromav, hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisra'eil v'imru amen. It means, in English, 'May the source of peace send peace to those who mourn and comfort all who are bereaved.' To Ruben and Sandibell, to

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your beautiful son, and to your whole family, may he bring you comfort and peace in your time of bereavement. And we say together, amen. Mr. Speaker, when other Members have spoken on this topic, I'd ask the body for a moment of silence."

Speaker Tarver: "Absolutely. Representative Faver Dias, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Faver Dias: "Point of personal privilege, Mr. Speaker."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Faver Dias: "I wanted to take this opportunity to express my deepest sympathies to not only the Torres family but also to the entire Lakeview High School family and to my dear friend, Valerie Wadycki, who gave me the opportunity to be able to connect with Ofelia. From what I picked up from my connections with Ofelia, and what I know from Mrs. Wadycki, is that she was a teacher's dream. She was smart, curious, engaging, and had a real desire to not only learn about the world around her but also to fight for what she knew was right. And, Rep. Guzzardi, I think she would have loved your remarks. To Val in Lakeview, I know that you are in deep grief, and this body stands with you and we send our condolences. Thank you for being an example of what a teacher and school community should be when families are enduring the unimaginable. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "The body will observe a moment of silence. Thank you. On page 5 of the calendar, under Third Readings, we have House Bill 1088, offered by Leader West. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Hollman: "House Bill 1088, a Bill for an Act concerning criminal law. Third Reading of this House Bill."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader West is recognized."

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West: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. House Bill 1088 provides that a committed person may take a requested 12... may take a requested transfer to another institution or facility. And after an amendment, we made it for every 12 months that they can make that request, after the initial request is made. I don't know of any objections. I'll ask for a favorable roll call."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative... Leader Keicher is recognized."

Keicher: "Thank you, Speaker. The Republicans would request an immediate caucus in Room 118, please."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Keicher, I'll return to you in just one moment. Mr. Clerk, will you please pull from the record House Bill 1088? Leader Hernandez, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Hernandez, L.: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Hernandez, L.: "Members, please help me give a warm welcome to our future generation of leaders. Morton High School students, can you please stand up? We have about 80 to 90 students from Morton High School District 201 in my district, who made the long drive from Cicero today to connect with what they've been learning in the classroom to real, live legislative action. We're proud to have you at Illinois... at the Illinois State Capitol, and we hope this visit inspires you to stay engaged, ask questions, and see yourselves as part of the future of public service. I also want to recognize and thank their outstanding teacher... teachers, Brenda López, a social study teacher who teaches civics and AP U.S. government and politics, and Nathalie Guerrero-Ramirez, a social science teacher who teaches biliteracy, U.S. history,

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and civics. Thank you both for preparing and inspiring these students to be informed and engaged citizens. And thirdly, what I want to also is introduce Andres Gonzalez, who is standing right next to me. What I did is I did a little bit of a raffle, we did a raffle, and he was the one chosen out of all these students to come down to the floor to get a real experience of what it's like. And he tells me that this is his first time here in Springfield. Everyone, please give him a warm welcome."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Keicher, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Keicher: "Thank you, Speaker. The Republicans would request an immediate caucus in 118."

Speaker Tarver: "How long will the Republicans caucus in Room 118?"

Keicher: "Long enough to have a discussion. Short enough to come to a conclusion."

Speaker Tarver: "The Republicans will caucus in Room 118 immediately. The Democrats will not caucus. The House will stand in recess to the call of the Chair. Proceeding to Order of Bills on Third Reading. On page 5 of the calendar, under Third Readings, we have House Bill 1088, offered by Leader West. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Hollman: "House Bill 1088, a Bill for an Act concerning criminal law. Third Reading of this House Bill."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader West."

West: "Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. House Bill 1088, as amended, allows a person... an incarcerated person committed to the Department of Corrections to make a request to be

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transferred to another facility every 12 months. Similarly, a... a child incarcerated in the juvenile justice system or parent/guardian can make the same request. I have no opposition. I ask for a favorable roll call."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Windhorst."

Windhorst: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the sponsor yield?"

Speaker Tarver: "He indicates that he will."

Windhorst: "Thank you. Leader West, this bill came through Judiciary - Criminal, I believe, last year, so I'm getting up to speed on it. The... we are going to be putting in law what is the current policy of DOC and DJJ. Is that correct?"

West: "We're simply codifying rules that they've been put in place... that have been put in place in the last couple of years. Yes."

Windhorst: "And the policy that's currently in place, it would now become law if this passes, would be for DOC. The inmate could request transfer to another facility every 12 months, and that would not be automatic. It'd be discretionary to the department. Is that correct?"

West: "That's correct."

Windhorst: "And then for DJJ, is that request can be made at any time. Do I have that correct?"

West: "That is correct."

Windhorst: "And that also is discretionary to the department. They can approve it or not approve it."

West: "Correct. And that's what their desire was as well."

Windhorst: "What is the position of the Department of Corrections, DJJ, and other interested parties?"

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West: "After working with both entities, they are both favorable to the language."

Windhorst: "And I believe the reservation that some of us had in committee on our side, why it was a partisan roll call vote, was that we are putting into law something that would bind a future governor. If there's a change in administration, they would have to abide by this rather than setting their own policy. Why do you feel this is the correct policy to put in law?"

West: "Just to maintain consistency and fairness for even those who are incarcerated in our... in our system. Like you mentioned, it's at the discretion of both agencies, and so we're not forcing their hand in that regard. But we just wanted to make sure there was fairness and equity... and equitable for even those incarcerated."

Windhorst: "And does both agency, or department, rather, feel they have adequate staffing to deal with requests as they're made?"

West: "I'm assuming so. I wouldn't have moved forward without getting the green light for both agencies."

Windhorst: "Thank you."

West: "Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Keicher is recognized."

Keicher: "Thank you, Speaker. If you could please excuse Representative Meier for the remainder of the day."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Deering."

Deering: "Thank you, Speaker. Will the sponsor yield?"

Speaker Tarver: "He indicates that he will."

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Deering: "Representative, can you confirm for me that there is still, in this possible transfer request, the ability for biological males to request transfer to a women's facility?"

West: "My bill has nothing to do with political rhetoric such as that."

Deering: "Can you clarify for me in DOC policy if that is allowed?"

West: "I am focused on the language that is in House Bill 1088. None of the language in my bill has anything to do with that. And so, I can't speak to that in this present time."

Deering: "OK. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader West to close."

West: "I ask for a favorable roll call, Mr. Speaker. Appreciate it."

Speaker Tarver: "The question is, 'Shall House Bill 1088 pass?' All in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 70 voting in 'favor,' 36 voting 'opposed,' none voting 'present.' And this bill, having received the constitutional majority, is hereby declared passed. Representative Canty. Sorry. On page 5 of the calendar, under Third Readings, we have House Bill 1391. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Bolin: "House Bill 1391, a Bill for an Act concerning civil law. Third Reading of this House Bill."

Speaker Tarver: "Now, Representative Canty."

Canty: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. House Bill 1391 is a technical bill bringing our current Illinois rules of civil procedure regarding waiver of service of summons into alignment with

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the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure regarding waiver of service of summons. I know of no opposition."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Windhorst."

Windhorst: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the sponsor yield?"

Speaker Tarver: "She indicates that she will."

Windhorst: "Thank you. Representative, would you explain how this change would actually affect the service of process in civil cases?"

Canty: "Yes. So, when a defendant is served by a process server, they're given a certain amount of time to respond to the complaint, but it can often be expensive or hard to do those things. However, under the civil rules and, hopefully, the Illinois rules once we pass this bill, they would be able to waive service. So, they could fill out a form that the plaintiff would have to serve on them via mail, usually certified, file it with the clerk. They would get additional time to respond to the complaint. If they... if they do not waive service when they really should have, they would be responsible for fees and costs. But there may be opportunities where they would not want to waive, such as if they don't believe they're the correct defendant or something like that. And in that case, they would likely not have to pay for the fees."

Windhorst: "And it requires a defendant and the plaintiff both be located within the United States for this to apply?"

Canty: "I believe so, yes."

Windhorst: "It appears that the State Bar Association, Trial Lawyers Association, and National Employment Lawyers Association are proponents. Is that correct?"

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Canty: "Yes. That is correct."

Windhorst: "It also appears that the Illinois Defense Counsel is neutral."

Canty: "Yes. That's my understanding."

Windhorst: "They've not expressed opposition to this?"

Canty: "Correct."

Windhorst: "And the committee vote was 19 to nothing?"

Canty: "That is correct."

Windhorst: "Thank you."

Canty: "Y'all like it. We have the best bills together."

Windhorst: "Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Canty to close."

Canty: "Thank you so much. This will make lives less complicated and make it easier for defendants to have their voices heard. I encourage an 'aye' vote."

Speaker Tarver: "The question is, 'Shall House Bill 1391 pass?' All in... all in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 106 voting in 'favor,' 0 voting 'against,' 0 voting 'present.' And this bill, having received the constitutional majority, is hereby declared passed. On page 5 of the calendar, under Third Readings, we have House Bill 2539, offered by Leader West. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Bolin: "House Bill 2539, a Bill for an Act concerning State government. Third Reading of this House Bill."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader West."

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West: "Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. Forgive me for that. House Bill 2539 amends the Department of Human Services Act by requiring DHS to update all their forms and billing codes to remove the term 'mental retardation' and replace it with 'intellectual disability.' Please vote 'yes.'"

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Windhorst."

Windhorst: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the sponsor yield?"

Speaker Tarver: "He indicates that he will."

Windhorst: "Thank you. Leader, I appreciate the description. And just so we're clear, this is simply a terminology change, as you outlined."

West: "Simply a terminology change. Yes."

Windhorst: "To be used on DHS forms and billing codes."

West: "Correct."

Windhorst: "All right. And this was unanimous in committee as well."

West: "Yes, sir."

Windhorst: "Thank you."

West: "Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader West to close."

West: "Please vote 'yes.' Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "The question is, 'Shall House Bill 2539 pass?' All in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 104 voting in 'favor,' 0 voting 'opposed,' 0 voting 'present.' This bill, having received the constitutional majority, is hereby declared passed. On page 5 of the calendar, under Third Readings, we have House Bill

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3769, offered by Leader Morgan. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Bolin: "House Bill 3769, a Bill for an Act concerning regulation. Third Reading of this House Bill."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Morgan."

Morgan: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pleased to present House Bill 3769 to you today. This ensures occupational therapy services are consistent with the safe scope of practice and typical patient relationship. This is really a cleanup bill that we ran through Health Care Licensing Committee. HCL passed this unanimously, and it does a few things. Again, cleans up the act, but, in particular, it codifies that a licensed occupational therapist is able to operate within the scope of their practice without a referral. That really was cleanup language to what is intended under law. The bill makes it so that a referral is not required for the purpose of providing typical OT services. It also removes an artificially short treatment protocol, something that is not, in practice, what we see and what we expect to see in the appropriate policy. So, again, I know of no opposition. Ask for your support here today."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Windhorst."

Windhorst: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the sponsor yield?"

Speaker Tarver: "He indicates that he will."

Windhorst: "Thank you. This is an initiative of the Illinois Occupational Therapy Association. Is that correct?"

Morgan: "That's correct."

Windhorst: "And what are we hoping to accomplish with this bill?"

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Morgan: "Well, as I... I covered, in... in Health Care Licensing, we have a number of cleanup pieces of legislation where the act sometimes might not reflect what's happening in practice or what's in rules. This is one of those examples where occupational therapists have a variety of different obligations and also autonomy. And this is something that just codifies what is happening in the state of Illinois already, which is why there was no opposition. It's why we're here to today to pass this bill."

Windhorst: "And we show that the state med... or association, or society, rather, state med society and IDFPR have no position on the bill or did not..."

Morgan: "That's correct."

Windhorst: "...slip either way. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Morgan to close."

Morgan: "I urge an 'aye' vote."

Speaker Tarver: "The question is, 'Shall House Bill 3769 pass?' All in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 107 voting in 'favor,' 0 voting 'opposed,' 0 voting 'present.' And this bill, having received the constitutional majority, is hereby declared passed. Second Reading, House Bill 2531, offered by Representative Canty. Out of the record. House Bill 3280... on Second Reading, House Bill 3286, offered by Leader West. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Bolin: "House Bill 3286, a Bill for an Act concerning civil law. The bill was read for a second time previously. No

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Committee Amendments. Floor Amendment #1 is offered by Representative West."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader West to explain the amendment."

West: "I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. Can you come back to me for House Bill 3286?"

Speaker Tarver: "Out of the record."

West: "Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "On Second Reading, House Bill 35... excuse me, 34... excuse me, 3454, offered by Representative Mason. Out of the record. Under the Order of Resolutions, we have House Resolution 696, offered by Representative du Buclet. Representative du Buclet."

du Buclet: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This month marks a hundred years since this nation first set aside time to recognize Black history. In 1926, Carter G. Woodson created Negro History Week because Black Americans were excluded from textbooks, erased from scholarship, and denied acknowledgement in the American story. Black History Month was founded to correct distortion and not to create comfort. Black History Month exists because the truth has to be defended. And today, 100 years later, we are again confronted with distortion. We have a president who claims to recognize Black History Month, but he uses this month, Black History Month, to circulate racist rhetoric, revive inequities of the past, and diminish the full story of Black Americans in this country. And this contradiction matters. Earlier this month, racist imagery targeting former President Barack Obama and former First Lady Michelle Obama was shared publicly and widely. These images relied on tropes that have historically

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been used to dehumanize Black people. Many of you may have seen last night, at the State of the Union speech, Congressman Al Green held up a sign that said, 'BLACK PEOPLE AREN'T APES.' We are not apes. You cannot honor Black history while amplifying caricatures rooted in racism. You cannot celebrate progress while normalizing language that drags us backwards. And you cannot claim unity while resurrecting narratives that once justified inequities. At the same time, we are seeing efforts to roll back diverse... diversity initiatives to strip institutions of language that acknowledge race and to debate whether the word 'Black' even belongs in Black History Month programming. We are seeing conversations about minimizing references to slavery at historic sites. Colleagues, that is not recognition. That is erasure. Black History Month was created to confront myths like the 'Lost Cause,' which romanticized oppression and distorted reality. Today we are again watching history be edited, sanitized, and reframed in ways that make inequality easier to ignore. History cannot be preserved by omission, it cannot be strengthened by silence, and it cannot be honored by distortion. And let me just say this. This is not abstract to me. My father, Samuel Neely Sr., was run out of Mississippi by the Ku Klux Klan. He was sent to Chicago with a fifth-grade education, forced to flee violence born of hatred and inequity. In Illinois, he built his life... he rebuilt his life and became a successful businessman. He raised a family, and he contributed to this state. He was also a World War II veteran. This is what opportunity makes possible, this is what truth makes possible, and this is what progress looks like. When we

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tolerate rhetoric that echoes the injustices of the past, we risk reopening wounds that generations have worked to close. Black History Month is not separate from American history. Black history is American history. It is a story of perseverance in the face of exclusion. It is a story of labor, innovation, faith, and migration and leadership. It is foundational to who we are as a nation. So, let's be clear: If Black History Month is to mean anything, it must mean honesty, it must mean acknowledging slavery without minimizing it, it must condemn racist imagery without excuse, and it must refuse to revive inequities we have fought to dismantle. Recognition without respect is hollow. Celebration without truth is performative. Illinois will not participate in erasure. We will stand for truth, we will stand for dignity, and we will stand for the full and unedited story of America. And we will not allow a century of progress in recognizing Black history to be undermined by rhetoric that seeks to drag us backwards. So, my colleagues, Black History Month was created because history was being distorted. Distortion does not disappear on its own. It must be confronted. We cannot claim to value democracy while remaining silent when racist tropes are normalized. And we cannot teach equality while excusing rhetoric that diminishes dignity. This resolution is about one moment... it's not about one moment. It is about standards. It is about affirming that racism, whether subtle or blatant, whether analog or digital, has no place in our civic life. And it is about declaring that Black history is not optional. It's not political. It shouldn't be controversial. It is essential. So, let's be

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clear: We stand for truth. We stand for dignity. We stand for the full and unedited story of America. So, I respectfully ask for your support of House Resolution 696. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Crawford."

Crawford: "To the resolution. I rise today not in anger but in clarity. Throughout American history, comparing Black people to apes has been one of the most enduring and vicious tools of racial degradation. It was used to justify slavery. It was used to rationalize segregation. It was used to deny basic human rights. That history is not abstract. It's painful, it's documented, and it's real. We serve in this chamber as elected officials. Our words and our actions carry weight. When someone with a public platform amplifies imagery rooted in racial animus, it does not simply offend. It reinforces a legacy of dehumanization that our state and our nation have worked hard to move beyond. This is not about partisan disagreement. Disagree with President Obama's policies. Debate his record. Criticize his decision. That is democracy. But dehumanization is not debate. We can have sharp disagreements in this chamber. We do. That is healthy. But we cannot normalize rhetoric or imagery that strips people of their humanity. When we allow that, we erode the moral foundation of our institutions. If we're serious about building a more just nation and state of Illinois, then we must be serious about calling out racism when we see it, clearly, consistently, and without hesitation. So, I urge all of us to recommit to the standard of discourse worthy of the decent people that we represent. Racism is not politics,

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dehumanization is not free speech, and silence in the face of it is not leadership. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader West."

West: "Thank you. I rise today in support of House Resolution 696. And, Mr. Speaker, I do so with both conviction and clarity. Because when we talk about Black History Month, especially as we mark its 100th recognition, we are not talking about a symbolic observance. We are talking about truth, we are talking about legacy, and we're talking about the responsibility we carry in this very chamber to protect both. Black history is not an accessory to American history. It is American history. It's a story of people who built this nation with their hands, who strengthened it with their faith, and who perfected it with their courage, even when this country did not yet recognize their full humanity. So, when racist rhetoric is elevated, especially from someone who has held the highest office in the land, it's not just offensive, Mr. Speaker, it's dangerous. Because words shape culture; words shape policy; and words, when left unchallenged, can shape a false narrative about who belongs and whose story matters. This resolution makes clear that here in Illinois, we will not participate in the erasure of truth, we will not allow history to be rewritten to make others comfortable, and we will not be silent when the dignity of our communities is undermined. We honor Black History Month not just by looking back but by standing firm today; by teaching our children the full story; by acknowledging both the pain and the progress, the good and the bad; and by committing ourselves to building a future worthy of those who sacrifice so much for us to be

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here. Because honoring Black history is not about division. It's about honesty, it's about growth, and it's about ensuring that every person, regardless of race, knows that their story has value and their presence has purpose. I'm proud to stand in support of this resolution, proud to stand on the side of truth, and proud to affirm that in Illinois we do not hide from history. We learn from it, we honor it, and we carry it forward. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative du Buclet moves for the adoption of House Resolution 696. All in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 69 voting in 'favor,' 0 voting 'opposed,' 0 voting 'present.' This resolution, having received a constitutional majority, is hereby adopted. Mr. Clerk, Rules Report."

Clerk Hollman: "Rules Report. Representative Gabel, Chairperson from the Committee on Rules reports the following committee action taken on February 25, 2026: recommends be adopted, referred to the Order of Resolutions is Senate Joint Resolution 55."

Speaker Tarver: "Under the Order of Resolutions, we have House Resolution 695, offered by Representative Croke."

Croke: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. House Resolution 695 condemns Senate Bill 3572 that was filed in the Senate earlier this month. Senate Bill 3572 seeks to legally define any fertilized human egg as a person in the eyes of the law. The bill seeks to subject women seeking reproductive health care and their doctors to first-degree murder charges and with no exceptions

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for rape or incest and would subject a survivor to harsher criminal penalties than the rapist. It contains no exception for in vitro fertilization, subjecting doctors providing assisted reproductive technology to criminal charges. Antichoice politicians in Illinois continue to push legislation like Senate Bill 3572 that would punish women for accessing reproductive health care and would force survivors of rape and incest to carry their abuser's child to term and would bar access to IVF. We oppose Senate Bill 3572, we oppose any effort to punish women for accessing reproductive health care, and we oppose efforts to subject survivors of rape and incest to... to more severe punishments than a rapist. And be it further, we oppose efforts to restrict access to IVF and other forms of assisted reproductive technology. I ask for the body's support of the resolution. "

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Cochran."

Cochran: "I rise in support of Resolution 695. One of our esteemed colleagues today asked is... asked us if the duty of the government is to protect our citizens. And what a fantastically rich question coming from Members of a party who have chosen to champion policies that shape the government into a never-ending source of enmity when it comes to women's choice over their own bodies. The proposed legislation would not only criminalize abortion, but they're also asking to bring back the death penalty. What an example of saying the quiet part loud, which is that you have no value for the lives of women. You can hem and haw all day long about protecting the citizens of this country and this state, but this extreme policy making has nothing to do with protection. It has

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everything to do with power, authority, coercion, and the continued pursuit of medievalizing women's ability to make choices of their own health care. But make no mistake. If what you care about is protecting the citizens of this country, then defending their liberty and their freedoms is the first measure that you should take. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Croke moves for the adoption of House Resolution 695. All those in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 69 voting in 'favor,' 0 voting 'opposed,' 0 voting 'present.' And this resolution, having received the constitutional majority, is hereby adopted. Under the Order of Resolutions, we have House Resolution 697, offered by Representative Cassidy."

Cassidy: "There we go. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. House Resolution 697 deals with a topic we've been dealing with for a very long time. For years, we heard Republicans calling for the release of the Epstein files, declaring that they are full of evidence of sexual abuse and that they would reveal literal monsters in the Democratic Party. We spawned multiple conspiracy theories, but now that their dear leader has been revealed to be featured prominently with as many a... as many as a million mentions in the documents, we've now seen the claims pivot to claim that there's no there there. Literally all evidence to the contrary. To be clear, I don't care what party a person who sexually abuses children represents. I want them brought to justice and removed from any positions

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of power. This regime's so-called Department of Justice has repeatedly and cruelly gone out of their way to disrespect, disregard, and perpetuate harm and trauma on the nearly 1,000 survivors of Epstein and friends' abuse by refusing to meet with them, intentionally leaving their identities unredacted, and subjecting them to relentless harassment and continued abuse. While conducting his legally guaranteed oversight examination of the unredacted files and the clear pattern of redaction abuses, Representative Jamie Raskin found that Trump is mentioned as many as a million times. Let that sink in. In a shocking display of abuse of power, Attorney General Bondi was seen with a burn book of attacks on members of.. of the Judiciary Committee that included proof that the department has been surveilling members conducting their legally guaranteed right to examine files and recording which documents they had reviewed. The bottom line here is we should all want to bring all of the abusers to justice and stop playing games with survivors' lives. It's time to pull back the curtain and make it all public, outside the influence of the clear corruption of this regime's so-called Department of Justice. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Stuart."

Stuart: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the resolution. It was at the end of 2025 that our U.S. Congress acted together to pass the Epstein Files Transparency Act in a bipartisan manner. It's now months later. We still have not seen all of the Epstein files. And those we have seen, that small portion that have been released, those have been heavily redacted. The Department of Justice is not in compliance with a

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congressional ruling. That results in a continued lack of accountability and transparency for both survivors of Epstein and for all Americans, who deserve to know who in our country are connected to a child sex trafficking ring, especially those in the positions of power. It's interesting because Republicans claim they are the party of law and order. They say they want to punish the worst of the worst. I can't really imagine worse than a massive child sex trafficking ring. They say they're the party of family values. They're the ones that are going to protect women and protect children. If that were true, federal Republicans and the Trump administration would have fulfilled those campaign promises they made a long time ago and they would have released the Epstein files long ago. The true worst of the worst are those who participated in, excused, or knowingly overlooked the sexual abuse and sex trafficking of children. We must release these files. Our abusers need to be... the abusers need to be held accountable. And the survivors, they deserve justice. It's literally the least we can do because we can never undo the wrongs that were done to them by the monster Epstein and the elites around the world. Silence is unacceptable. By not denouncing Jeffrey Epstein's documented abuse of women and girls, girls, children, the federal government is excusing the sexual abuse and trafficking of hundreds of young girls. I would encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting Representative Cassidy in denouncing sexual abuse and trafficking and join our call on the Department of Justice to release all of the Epstein files. Thank you."

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Speaker Tarver: "Representative Cassidy moves for the adoption of House Resolution 697. All in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 69 voting in 'favor,' 0 voting 'opposed,' 0 voting 'present.' And this resolution, having received a constitutional majority, is hereby adopted. Representative Canty, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Canty: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Canty: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for women. And February is American Heart Month, and today is National Wear Red Day. We wear red to be seen, heard, and spread awareness of cardiovascular disease. General Assembly Members were encouraged to participate in Wear Red Day, and many answered the call out of respect for those we have lost and those we hope to save. This afternoon, multiple Members of the Republican Caucus commented on this outward display of support. These comments included noting that red is a favorite color of President Trump and that today is 'Trump Day.' Noticeably absent, any comment recognizing the deadliest disease facing women today. These Members want to score points with the misogynistic national party, one that continuously and recently made clear they do not recognize the resiliency of American women. We, in the Democratic Women's Caucus, take note. We won't sink to that level. But we will, with our colleagues, continue to put our efforts into supporting the more than 60 million American

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women living with cardiovascular disease. Because the only thing more dangerous to women than heart disease is this current administration's policies. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "On Supplemental Calendar #2, under the Order of Resolutions, we have Senate Joint Resolution 55, offered by Leader Rita."

Rita: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I offer Senate Joint Resolution #55. And this is a result of all the hard work from the Audit Commission. And for this last past year, we've put many hours into coming up with a recommendation for this full body to name the next auditor general for the state of Illinois. The Audit Commission is a bicameral commission, and we went through a number of resumes, went through a number of interviews to put the... pick the right person for a recommendation. And Senate Joint Resolution #55 is naming Chris Meister to be our next auditor general for the state of Illinois. I'd be happy to answer any questions."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Elik."

Elik: "Thank you, Speaker. I just want to speak on the resolution. I want to also echo Representative Rita's comments on reminding everybody that the Legislative Audit Commission is a bicameral and bipartisan commission, and we worked very hard over the last, I guess, several months, the last year to make sure that we could present to you a qualified candidate. And we've done that today. So, I would urge a 'yes' vote, and I appreciate all the members of the commission that put in a lot of extra time to make sure that we did a thorough search throughout the state of Illinois. So, thank you. I would also mention that we had some amazing candidates. And I think we

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should all be proud that we have some amazing public servants in state government, and I thank everybody that participated. So, thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Rita moves for the adoption of Senate Joint Resolution 55. All those in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' In the opinion... I'm sorry. All... all in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 97 voting in 'favor,' 1 voting 'opposed,' 0 voting 'present.' And this resolution, having received the constitutional majority, is hereby adopted. Returning to bills on Second Reading. On page 3 of the calendar is House Bill 3454, offered by Representative Mason. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Hollman: "House Bill 3454, a Bill for an Act concerning health. This bill was read a second time previously. No Committee Amendments. No Floor Amendments. No motions are filed."

Speaker Tarver: "Third Reading. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Hollman: "House Bill 3454, a Bill for an Act concerning health. Third Reading of this House Bill."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Mason is recognized."

Mason: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been a long week. This bill is a very simple bill that... many of you may be familiar with EpiPens or epinephrine autoinjectors. And this updates our statute to include additional epinephrine delivery options, such as nasal sprays that are now on the market and future items that may... that are in the pipeline to come, which are

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actually like Listerine breath strips with epinephrine in them. These delivery devices are less expensive than EpiPens, easier to store, have longer shelf lives, and are great for everybody. So, again, just updating everywhere in statute to include these items to the number of options that people with life-threatening allergies can utilize."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Windhorst."

Windhorst: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the sponsor yield?"

Speaker Tarver: "She indicates that she will."

Windhorst: "Thank you. Representative, these epinephrine delivery devices must be FDA approved to be considered."

Mason: "Correct, yes."

Windhorst: "And what are we hoping will be accomplished with including these? We're amending various acts. So, will that make those more available or will they cover the costs of them? How will this benefit people?"

Mason: "It doesn't... it doesn't change anything about costs, although the new options are more affordable than... than the traditional autoinjectors. But it, say, for example, in the area about schools where it says that school nurses may keep an epinephrine autoinjector on hand or in an ambulance, they have information about that. This will just open up the possibility that they could, you know, now example... for example, carry the nasal spray instead of that... that big needle that they have to jab into people."

Windhorst: "Thank you."

Mason: "Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Mason to close."

Mason: "I ask for an 'aye' vote. Thanks."

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Speaker Tarver: "The question is, 'Shall House Bill 3454 pass?' All in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 105 voting in 'favor,' 0 voting 'opposed,' 0 voting 'present.' And this bill, having received the constitutional majority, is hereby declared passed. Representative Morris, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Morris: "Thank you... thank you, Speaker. A point of personal privilege."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Morris: "As we recognize Black History Month, we are reminded that progress in this country has never come easily. It has never come without action. Black history is not just a record of the past, it is a roadmap for the work we must do today. Leaders like Shirley Chisholm, Harriet Tubman, Ida B. Wells, and Angela Davis showed us that fairness does not happen on its own. It requires courage, truth, and laws that protect people and expand opportunities. As legislators, we must turn those lessons into actions, strengthen civil rights, investing in communities, expanding opportunities, and ensuring... and ensuring fairness is not determined by race, zip code, or income. Black History Month challenges us to do more than commemorate. It challenges us to act when injustices persist. Let Black history guide not just our memories but our legislation, our leadership, and our courage today. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Mr. Clerk, committee announcements."

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Clerk Hollman: "The following committees will be meeting after session: Elementary & Secondary Education: Administration, Licensing & Charter Schools will meet in Room 115. State Government Administration will meet in Room C-1. Meeting at 4 o'clock is Appropriations-Public Safety and Infrastructure in Room C-1."

Speaker Tarver: "Mr. Clerk, Agreed Resolutions."

Clerk Hollman: "Agreed Resolutions. House Resolution 684, offered by Representative Niemerg. House Resolution 689, offered by Representative Chung. House Resolution 690, offered by Representative Ness. And House Joint Resolution 56, offered by Representative Hauter."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Gabel moves for the adoption of the Agreed Resolutions. All in favor say 'aye'; all opposed say 'nay.' In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the Agreed Resolutions are adopted. Mr. Clerk, please read the Adjournment Resolution."

Clerk Hollman: "House Joint Resolution #57, offered by Representative Gabel.

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that when the two Houses adjourn on Thursday, February 26, 2026, the House of Representatives stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 18, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until Thursday, March 19, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until Friday, March 20, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until March 24, 2026 or to the call of the Speaker; and the Senate stands adjourned until Tuesday,

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March 03, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 04, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until Thursday, March 05, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 10, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 11, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until Thursday, March 12, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until March 13, 2026, and when it adjourns that day it stands adjourned until March 24, 2026, or to the call of the President."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Gabel moves for the adoption of the Adjournment Resolution. All those in favor say 'aye'; all opposed vote... say 'nay.' In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the Adjournment Resolution is adopted. And now, allowing perfunctory time for the clerk, Leader Gabel moves that the House stand adjourned until Thursday, February 26, at the hour of noon. All those in favor say 'aye'; all opposed say 'nay.' In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the House stands adjourned."