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SESSION OF 2008 192ND OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 15

SENATE

WEDNESDAY, March 12, 2008

The Senate met at 11 a.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

The PRESIDENT (Lieutenant Governor Catherine Baker Knoll) in the Chair.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend RON ZEIGLER, of Church of the Servant, Palmyra, offered the following prayer:

He carried me away to a great and high mountain and showed me that great city. And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, preceding out of the throne. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You that in Your almighty reign over heaven and earth, You have established civil governments to restrain the exercise of sin, to enforce Your standards of right and wrong, and to maintain order so that all law-abiding citizens may practice righteous living. Therefore, my dear Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ, Your one and only Son and my precious Savior, I come to You on behalf of these Members of this Senate of Pennsylvania, Your servants for the preservation of our Commonwealth, and ask for Your blessing upon their labors this day. Please give each Senator the wisdom and courage they seek to serve well the precious citizens they represent.

By Your grace, enable them to humbly lean upon Your words for the insight they need to know the best way to conduct the business of this honorable Senate. In Your mercy, give each Member the courage to do that which is trustworthy and just for the benefit of this Commonwealth in accordance with its Constitution. Help these Senators in their noble calling to be united in a common purpose, to serve the people by doing what is right and good, even though it may not prove to be personally convenient or profitable. As their forefathers beseeched You in the establishment of this great body, strengthen them in humble reliance upon Your almighty providence.

Allow each Member of this Senate, in gratitude for Your blessings of civil and religious liberty with diligence and integrity consistent with their sacred oaths, to live out the reality of their calling in all of their work this day in true harmony with the Constitution of this beloved Commonwealth, established over 200 years ago. Praise the Lord, all nations, extol Him, all peoples, for great is His steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord. Amen.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair thanks Reverend Zeigler, who is the guest today of Senator Folmer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those assembled.)

HOUSE MESSAGE

**HOUSE CONCURS IN SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

The Clerk of the House of Representatives informed the Senate that the House has concurred in the resolution from the Senate, entitled:

Weekly recess.

BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE

Senator ERICKSON, from the Committee on Public Health and Welfare, reported the following bills:

SB 340 (Pr. No. 1821) (Amended)

An Act amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the Public Welfare Code, further providing for medical assistance payments.

HB 883 (Pr. No. 3405) (Amended)

An Act amending the act of September 9, 1965 (P.L.497, No.251), known as the Newborn Child Testing Act, further providing for newborn child screening and testing; and making editorial changes.

HB 1320 (Pr. No. 2532)

An Act providing for a program for the disposal of home-generated medical sharps, and for powers and duties of the Department of Environmental Protection.

RESOLUTION REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE

Senator ERICKSON, from the Committee on Public Health and Welfare, reported the following resolution:

SR 246 (Pr. No. 1799)

A Resolution designating April 16, 2008, as "Healthcare Decisions Day" in Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDENT. The resolution will be placed on the Calendar.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVES

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware, Senator Pileggi.

Senator PILEGGI. Madam President, I request a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Armstrong.

The PRESIDENT. Senator Pileggi requests a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Armstrong.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Berks, Senator O'Pake.

Senator O'PAKE. Madam President, I request legislative leaves for Senator Logan and Senator Tartaglione.

The PRESIDENT. Senator O'Pake requests legislative leaves for Senator Logan and Senator Tartaglione.

Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Senator PILEGGI asked and obtained a leave of absence for Senator SCARNATI, for today's Session, for personal reasons.

Senator O'PAKE asked and obtained leaves of absence for Senator FUMO and Senator C. WILLIAMS, for today's Session, for personal reasons.

**SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS
JOURNALS APPROVED**

The PRESIDENT. The Journals of the Sessions of February 4, 2008, February 5, 2008, and February 6, 2008, are now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journals of the Sessions of February 4, 2008, February 5, 2008, and February 6, 2008.

Senator PILEGGI. Madam President, I move that further reading of the Journals be dispensed with and that the Journals be approved.

On the question,
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The yeas and nays were required by Senator PILEGGI and were as follows, viz:

YEA-47

Armstrong	Folmer	Musto	Stout
Baker	Fontana	O'Pake	Tartaglione
Boscola	Gordner	Orie	Tomlinson
Browne	Greenleaf	Piccola	Vance
Brubaker	Hughes	Pileggi	Washington
Corman	Kasunic	Pippy	Waugh
Costa	Kitchen	Punt	White, Donald
Dinniman	LaValle	Rafferty	White, Mary Jo
Earl	Logan	Regola	Williams, Anthony H.
Eichelberger	Madigan	Rhoades	Wonderling
Erickson	McIlhinney	Robbins	Wozniak
Ferlo	Mellow	Stack	

NAY-0

A majority of the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

The PRESIDENT. The Journals are approved.

**SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS
GUESTS OF SENATOR JAKE CORMAN
PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Madam President, today we are being visited by some constituents of mine from Centre County, from Spring Mills, Pennsylvania, to be specific. Ken Hurd and his wife, Chris, along with their three children, Drew, Jared, and Danay, are visiting the Capitol on a tour and wanted to stop by and see the Senate of Pennsylvania. I ask that the Senate give them our usual warm welcome.

The PRESIDENT. Will Ken, Chris, Drew, Jared, and Danay Hurd please rise so we can welcome you.

(Applause.)

**GUESTS OF SENATOR MARY JO WHITE
PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Venango, Senator Mary Jo White.

Senator M.J. WHITE. Madam President, I really had the pleasure this morning of being followed around by a very delightful young lady. Her name is Yu Ye. She is a student at Slippery Rock University and she is here from China. She resides in the capital city of Chengdu, in the central province of Sichuan, where she informs me that there are many pandas. In fact, she gave me a lovely little postcard of a panda today.

She calls herself Vicky here in the United States, and Vicky is in her junior year at Slippery Rock University, where she is studying sports management and accounting. She loves sports and she says her ultimate goal in life is to manage a golf course. She says golf is becoming increasingly popular in China. I certainly wish her well in this endeavor, and I ask the Senate to welcome Yu Ye, "Vicky," here to the Senate today.

The PRESIDENT. Will Yu Ye, Senator Mary Jo White's guest, please rise. She is here from Chengdu, China.

(Applause.)

**GUESTS OF SENATOR JAMES FERLO
PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Ferlo.

Senator FERLO. Madam President, normally, like my other colleagues, I would have an opportunity to give a salutation to a guest, either someone who has been brought onto the floor, or someone up in the balcony. In this case, I beg your indulgence, Madam President, because I have a guest who is really a State worker who is about to leave the employ of my office in State government, but being the bashful hard worker that she is, she does not want to come onto the floor and we do not need to have her sitting up in the balcony. But it is certainly appropriate and I would be remiss and personally offended if I did not take a little opportunity to thank a key person in my office.

Each and every time I enter my office here in Harrisburg, like many of my colleagues, and I have the opportunity to work on the second floor here, and when I turn that corner every week on

Monday morning and I come in, I say hello to Janet Snyder of my staff. I am met with a wry smile, a sharp and keen wit, and honestly, a bank vault of experience and information that Janet has honed over many years of work here in the Pennsylvania Senate and in Harrisburg as a dedicated State employee. Next week when I turn that corner running into my office Monday morning, in that same corner I am going to unfortunately be met with a void, because today is Janet Snyder's last day here in the Senate.

Janet is retiring after more than 26 years of dedicated public service. For each and every one of those years, Janet's grace and presence have elevated discourse and raised the bar for public servants. Janet was always a hard worker and is a hard worker who has dedicated herself to training everyone else she ever met on the correct and proper way to function in the office, even Senators, myself included. The fact is, when Janet Snyder began her Senate service, she used to make coffee for Senator Craig Lewis of Bucks County, and by the time he was ready to retire, he was so well-trained by Janet that he was making coffee for her. So I think that indicates her proclivities.

But her ability to understand issues and work with others would be tested as she moved from serving the citizens of Bucks County to my three-county area - Allegheny, Armstrong, and Westmoreland Counties - here in Harrisburg. Following her work with Senator Lewis, Janet worked with three other Senators from Allegheny County, beginning with Senator Bud Belan, then on to Senator Leonard Bodack, who previously held my 38th District seat, and now as an integral part of my office. Janet Snyder has been an outstanding individual and an outstanding employee. She is pleasant, courteous, and quick with a comment. Janet has made an impact on each and every person she has met. Now as she moves on to a new and different challenge, she can take comfort in knowing that her many friends and colleagues throughout the Senate all retain fond and happy memories of working with Janet.

I just want to thank Janet. She has been a bulwark of expertise. A lot of state workers--just the evidence that she does not want to enter the floor or be in the audience today--I think often-times the public takes for granted a lot of State employees. They do not look for the limelight. They do not get to cut the ribbons and be there for groundbreaking. They do not get invited to a lot of fancy dinners and events and all the other pomp and circumstance that comes with being held in esteem and being in public office. These are the folks who day in and day out get up early, and do the hard work. It is tough to provide constituent services. With all due respect to all my lovely constituents, there are a lot of folks who are distressed when they call a State Senate office. They need help, and sometimes help is not always readily available. But I have been blessed with people such as Janet on my staff, and think I share the views of my colleagues as well.

We have State employees who earn and deserve every single hardworking State dollar they get every day, and whatever benefits they accrue. And I am sick and tired of people calling in to radio talk shows picking on PennDOT workers. Some of these people should go drive a truck on the turnpike once in a while and move snow in between trucks and traffic. Or maybe people should sit with a person struggling to feed a family who has to work on income maintenance and food stamps.

The same holds true for the staff we have here in the Senate. It is not always easy to deliver services. But we have staff, and Janet Snyder in particular has exemplified that hardworking ideal. She does not ask for anything more than a simple thank you and cooperation. Each and every day she works hard, and I think she is symbolic of a lot of other employees whom we are graced to have in our employ. I believe all my constituents are proud of the work that Janet and my other staff have done. So without any further comment, Madam President, I just want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart to Janet Snyder. I wish her well in her work. She is going to go on to some entrepreneurial activities. She is still a very young lady, even though she has worked for more than 26 years in the Senate. I want to wish her well and God bless her. She loves animals, and I hope everybody around her loves and appreciates her even more, as she moves on to the next part of her career.

So thank you very much, Madam President, and thank you, Janet.

The PRESIDENT. Thank you, Janet Snyder, for your 26 years of service to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. And to all the other employees of the Commonwealth, thank you.

(Applause.)

CALENDAR

THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILL OVER IN ORDER

HB 1152 -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PILEGGI.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

SB 1199 (Pr. No. 1810) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, further providing for educational leave of absence.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,

Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-47

Armstrong	Folmer	Musto	Stout
Baker	Fontana	O'Pake	Tartaglione
Boscola	Gordner	Orie	Tomlinson
Browne	Greenleaf	Piccola	Vance
Brubaker	Hughes	Pileggi	Washington
Corman	Kasunic	Pippy	Waugh
Costa	Kitchen	Punt	White, Donald

Dinniman	LaValle	Rafferty	White, Mary Jo
Earll	Logan	Regola	Williams, Anthony H.
Eichelberger	Madigan	Rhoades	Wonderling
Erickson	McIlhinney	Robbins	Wozniak
Ferlo	Mellow	Stack	

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION
REREPORTED FROM COMMITTEE AS
AMENDED OVER IN ORDER

SB 387 -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PILEGGI.

BILL REREFERRED

SB 9 (Pr. No. 1771) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act requiring identification of lawful presence in the United States as a prerequisite to the receipt of public benefits.

Upon motion of Senator PILEGGI, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 359, HB 874 and SB 906 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PILEGGI.

BILLS ON SECOND CONSIDERATION

SB 963 (Pr. No. 1157) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 68 (Real and Personal Property) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, further providing for application of subpart relating to condominiums to condominiums created by prior statutory law.

Considered the second time and agreed to,

Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

SB 1153 (Pr. No. 1538) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, further providing for the Minor Judiciary Education Board and for qualifications of certain minor judiciary.

Considered the second time and agreed to,
Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 1169, HB 1214, HB 1281, HB 1329, HB 1330, HB 1612 and HB 1693 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PILEGGI.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
SENATE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

Senators COSTA, TOMLINSON, FERLO, STACK, KASUNIC, BOSCOLA, LAVALLE, DINNIMAN, RAFFERTY, ROBBINS, MADIGAN, C. WILLIAMS, FONTANA, ARMSTRONG, KITCHEN, PUNT, PIPPY, REGOLA, LOGAN, ERICKSON, WOZNIAC, EARLL, GREENLEAF, BROWNE and D. WHITE, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 257**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing March 15 through 20, 2008, as "'Won't You Be My Neighbor?' Days" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Madam President, Fred McFeely Rogers was born in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, in 1928. As so many of us know, he was the creator and host of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood, the longest-running program in the history of public television. Mr. Rogers worked very closely in conjunction with WQED, Pittsburgh's public broadcaster and the nation's very first community-sponsored educational television station, to produce nearly 900 episodes of this iconic children's program. Public stations across the United States continue to this day, for nearly 40 years, to air these programs as part of their regular broadcasting.

Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood has had and continues to have a significant and positive impact on children across this Commonwealth and across this country. Its characters, including Mr. McFeely, and puppets such as Daniel Striped Tiger and Lady Elaine Fairchilde, are ingrained in our memories and the memories of generations of children.

Madam President, Mr. Rogers formed a company called Family Communications, Inc., in 1971 as a nonprofit company to help produce Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood. That company currently continues Mr. Rogers' work by producing nonbroadcast materials that reflect his values and philosophy by encouraging the healthy growth of children and their families. Madam President, March 20, 2008, is the 80th anniversary of Mr. Rogers' birth. This past February 19, 2008, was the 40th anniversary of the very first national broadcast of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood.

Madam President, Family Communications, Inc., seeks to recognize and honor Mr. Rogers' achievements by continuing its impact on children of this Commonwealth and across this country. To that end, Madam President, this resolution recognizes the week of March 15 through March 20, 2008, in conjunction with

the Sprout Fund and the Pittsburgh 250 Community Connections, as "'Won't You Be My Neighbor?' Days," a series of events honoring Mr. Rogers and his vision to enrich the lives of children across this country and across this Commonwealth.

This celebration and recognition of one of Pittsburgh's greatest persons is particularly appropriate as part of the Pittsburgh 250, a celebration recognizing the city of Pittsburgh's founding. "'Won't You Be My Neighbor?' Days" is also a partnership involving a number of organizations, including 30 cultural and literary institutions from throughout the 14 counties of southwestern Pennsylvania, which will encourage children and their families to learn by offering reduced admission prices to the various services they provide.

Madam President, in recognition of Mr. Rogers and his achievements, and recognizing the week of March 15 through 20, one special component of the "'Won't You Be My Neighbor?' Days" is that on March 20, his birth date, people across this Commonwealth are going to be encouraged and will be wearing a sweater to acknowledge Mr. Rogers' commitment to our children and to our families across this Commonwealth. So I encourage my colleagues and all those individuals who are watching this program to participate in this program on March 20 by wearing a sweater in recognition and honor of the great work of Fred Rogers.

Thank you, Madam President.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

Senators REGOLA, ARMSTRONG, BAKER, BROWNE, BRUBAKER, COSTA, DINNIMAN, EARLL, ERICKSON, FERLO, FOLMER, FONTANA, GREENLEAF, KASUNIC, LAVALLE, LOGAN, McILHINNEY, O'PAKE, ORIE, PILEGGI, PIPPY, PUNT, RAFFERTY, RHOADES, ROBBINS, STACK, TOMLINSON, WASHINGTON, D. WHITE, WONDERLING and WOZNIAK, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 258**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the week of March 16 through 22, 2008, as "Land Surveyors Week" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Westmoreland, Senator Regola.

Senator REGOLA. Madam President, I would like to submit my remarks for the record.

The PRESIDENT. Without objection, the remarks will be spread upon the record.

(The following prepared remarks were made a part of the record at the request of the gentleman from Westmoreland, Senator REGOLA:)

Madam President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the contributions of Pennsylvania's land surveyors through the adoption of

this resolution designating the week of March 16 through 22 as Land Surveyors Week in Pennsylvania.

This resolution not only honors the great men who worked as land surveyors, such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Daniel Boone, and Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, the fathers of the Mason-Dixon line at the southern border of Pennsylvania. It also honors the contributions of lesser-known surveyors, like Enoch Marvin, who helped shape the Pennsylvania we live in today and the Commonwealth of tomorrow.

We know that the military and public safety officials lead dangerous lives. What tends to be forgotten is the fact that in the early days of Pennsylvania's history, land surveyors could end up in perilous situations as well. And such was the case with Enoch Marvin, a surveyor from Pittsburgh who helped plot out the then-uncharted regions just north and west of his hometown. The following is a brief summary of Mr. Marvin's exploits as recorded in the "History of Lawrence County":

"Many stories are told of his being threatened, while surveying different tracts, by those who had squatted on them. It is related that at one time an Irish woman came out of her cabin and threatened to 'smash his compass' if he went any farther in that direction, and to save the instrument he wisely pulled up stakes and left for a more congenial atmosphere. At another time a settler or squatter came out with his rifle and threatened to 'shoot him if he stuck another stake.' Marvin was simply doing his duty, but so many against one was too great odds, and he finally desisted from his work, took his surveyor's instruments and left."

That, Madam President, is just one of the many stories about the contributions and the perils of the land surveyors of the past, and the good work continues today. Therefore, I ask my colleagues to join with me in supporting the resolution commemorating March 16 through 22 as Land Surveyors Week in Pennsylvania.

Thank you.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

Senators PICCOLA, FERLO, PUNT, FONTANA, ERICKSON, KASUNIC, TARTAGLIONE, STOUT, WAUGH, BOSCOLA, COSTA, M. WHITE, RAFFERTY, C. WILLIAMS, MELLOW, ORIE, REGOLA, WASHINGTON, MUSTO, BAKER, FOLMER, TOMLINSON, WOZNIAK, PIPPY, SCARNATI, O'PAKE, McILHINNEY, ROBBINS, PILEGGI, BROWNE, DINNIMAN, ARMSTRONG, WONDERLING, STACK, LAVALLE, D. WHITE, EARLL and A. WILLIAMS, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 259**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the month of March 2008 as "Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Which was read, considered, and adopted by voice vote.

Senators PICCOLA, FERLO, PUNT, FONTANA, ERICKSON, COSTA, KASUNIC, RAFFERTY, ORIE, WASHINGTON, FOLMER, TOMLINSON, PIPPY, O'PAKE, LOGAN, WAUGH, ROBBINS, PILEGGI, BROWNE, DINNIMAN, BOSCOLA, ARMSTRONG, D. WHITE, EARLL and A. WILLIAMS, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 260**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the month of March 2008 as "International DeMolay Month" in Pennsylvania.

Which was read, considered, and adopted by voice vote.

Senators ORIE, WONDERLING, PILEGGI, PUNT, TOMLINSON, BRUBAKER, TARTAGLIONE, PIPPY, KASUNIC, HUGHES, STOUT, STACK, LAVALLE, PICCOLA, RAFFERTY, BOSCOLA, DINNIMAN, GREENLEAF, C. WILLIAMS, LOGAN, O'PAKE, FONTANA, ARMSTRONG, REGOLA, KITCHEN, MELLOW, WAUGH, ERICKSON, GORDNER, EARLL, BAKER, BROWNE, CORMAN, COSTA, EICHELBERGER, FERLO, FOLMER, FUMO, MADIGAN, McILHINNEY, MUSTO, RHOADES, ROBBINS, SCARNATI, VANCE, WASHINGTON, D. WHITE, M. WHITE, A. WILLIAMS and WOZNIAK, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 261**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing March 2008 as "Women's History Month" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Allegheny, Senator Orie.

Senator ORIE. Madam President, I rise today to offer a resolution in the State Senate recognizing the month of March 2008 as Women's History Month in Pennsylvania. In 1987, the U.S. Congress declared March as National Women's History Month. It has been celebrated in Pennsylvania each year since then to ensure that the history of American women will be recognized and celebrated in schools, workplaces, and communities throughout the country. The resolution is intended to recognize the accomplishments and experiences of women and their contribution to the growth and strength of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as well as the United States.

As one of 10 women in the Senate, I have seen the trend where more and more women are getting involved in government and are now reaching the highest levels of leadership. But that is only one area where women are breaking through barriers and making huge contributions. American women were particularly important in the establishment of early charitable, philanthropic, and cultural institutions in our nation. Women of every race, class, and ethnic background served as early leaders in the forefront of every major progressive social change movement in this country.

American women have been leaders not only in securing their own rights of suffrage and equal opportunity, but also in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation movement, the industrial labor movement, the civil rights movement, and other movements, especially the peace movement, which creates a more fair and just society for all.

Pennsylvania is home to many women leaders who made their mark here in the Commonwealth. Florence Kelley of Philadelphia championed sweatshop and child labor reform. She helped organize the NAACP and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Lavinia Lloyd Dock of Harrisburg was a hospital nursing reformer and a radical proponent for women's suffrage. She was jailed four times for attempting to vote.

Cornelia Bryce Pinchot, the wife of Governor Pinchot, serving as a nurse during World War I, took up the suffrage cause and

women's rights and particularly was outspoken on the subject of sweatshop reform. Madam President, she was the woman who coined the phrase "politics is the greatest inside sport."

Marian Anderson, the internationally acclaimed contralto, was born and raised in Philadelphia.

A Pittsburgh native, Rachel Carson, the mother of the age of ecology, saw the devastation wrought by progress and decided to do something about it. Her 1962 book "Silent Spring" is credited with ushering in a new age of environmental awareness.

Daredevil reporter Nellie Bly also made Pittsburgh her home. Globetrotting exploits made her famous, but she got her start at the Pittsburgh Dispatch.

Gertrude Stein, another groundbreaking writer, got her start in Pittsburgh, where she was born on the city's north side, as was Mary Roberts Rinehart, a prolific journalist and writer who coined the accusation "the butler did it."

These and thousands of other women have contributed to our great Commonwealth, and the month offers us a chance to remember, recognize, and honor these successes. The knowledge of women's history provides us a more expansive vision of what women can do. This perspective can encourage girls and women to think larger and bolder and give boys and men a fuller understanding of the female experience.

"Women's Art: Women's Vision" is the 2008 theme for the National Women's History Month. This year's theme provides a special opportunity to discover and celebrate women's visual arts in a variety of forms and media. Not just in the field of art, but in every field, women are advancing in Pennsylvania and our country and leaving an indelible mark on society. Madam President, I would be remiss not to pay tribute to you and my fellow nine Senate women colleagues for being trailblazers here in Pennsylvania. It is an honor and a privilege to serve with each and every one of you.

This resolution is one more way to acknowledge those contributions of women of Pennsylvania and the history of women. Thank you, Madam President, and I ask my colleagues to join me in providing unanimous consent.

The PRESIDENT. To all of these young students who just joined us, this is Senator Jane Orie, who just offered a resolution recognizing the month of March 2008 as Women's History Month in Pennsylvania. So I want to give her a round of applause.

(Applause.)

And the question recurring,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following resolutions, which were read, considered, and adopted by voice vote:

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Robert E. Orner by Senator Baker.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Greek-American community of the City of Bethlehem by Senator Boscola.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Margaret Kurtz and to Jordan Enck by Senator Brubaker.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Ethan Kibe, Ethan Michael Harwell and to Zachary Zimmler by Senator Corman.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Joseph Keller by Senator Eichelberger.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Robert Thomas Clark by Senator Erickson.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Lee Musser by Senator Gordner.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Michael Lamont Bivins, Kenneth Gamble, Leon Huff and to Boyz II Men by Senator Hughes.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Brian Notman by Senator LaValle.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Charlene Hrivnak and to Ben Bergel by Senator Logan.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Knights of Columbus, Father Stommel Council 4545, of Ottsville, by Senator McIlhinney.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Ruddy by Senator Mellow.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Phillip Dalton Bleiler and to Charles A. Haddad by Senator O'Pake.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Elizabeth Colcombe by Senator Orie.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Marcia Lee Ernst, Wasyl James Polischuk, Jr., Marissa McDonald, Maria McDonald, Jennie Gordon, Lyndsay Jones and to Devin Andren by Senator Piccola.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to St. Michael's Byzantine Catholic Church of McAdoo by Senator Rhoades.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Chiesa, Levi Kodi Hewitt and to the Liberty Volunteer Fire Department by Senator Scarnati.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Raphael Tancredi by Senator Stack.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Rina Cutler, Patrick J. Eiding and to Joseph R. Syrnick by Senator Tartaglione.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to John Buchanan, Nate Trimmer, Joe Kaelin, Brian Finnell, John Wallover, Dan Doyle, Ray Hopkins, Earl Stevens, Sr., Don Bellerby, George Kutzer, Sam Pierce, Harry McCormick, Bob Beck, Vincent Jackamonis, Jr., Kevin Barlow, Vince Macaronis, Bill Kocher, Jerry Hathaway, Brice Demuro, George Aufschlag, Dave Walker, Kristi Ann Komyanek, Richard Newbert, Gail McGowan, Jim Nevel, Lew Gibson, Sr., Lew Gibson, Jr., Ken Hopkins, Jr., Mike Hires, Jim Fournier, Greg Hoff, Bob Struble, Fred Kutzer, Jack Sassani, Ryan Hires, Jason Lawson, Garry Moore, John Peterson, Tom Tryon, Tim Tryon, Jim Tryon, Bob Doyle, Mike Smith, George Suttong, Bill Findlay, Ed Dikun, Harry Beck, Francis Fishburn, Harry Fawkes, Gordon Roberts, Al Sylvester, Gene Midkiff, Ed Wilcox, Tom Kraczyak, Elmer Aufschlag, Horace Hopkins, Matt Dons, Chuck Lehr, Ray Bader, Ken Hopkins, Sr., Bill Lehr, Joe Lawson, Sr., Jim Vaughan, Jim

Hampton, Ronald Harris, Robert Sponheimer, Jeffrey Sarcewicz, Rocky Fontaine, Mark Pachucki, Thomas Topley, Kevin Costello, Frederick Sponheimer and to John-Paul Shirley by Senator Tomlinson.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to John Kenney by Senators Tomlinson and Greenleaf.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Sven P. Beauchmin, Scott C. Henley and to Kyle Miller by Senators Tomlinson and McIlhinney.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Michael B. Rodgers by Senators Tomlinson and Wonderling.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Center for Independent Living of Bucks County by Senator Tomlinson and others.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Joseph Michael Napoli and to Mallie Shuster by Senator Vance.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Helen Stauffer Krick by Senator Washington.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to William Griffith, Jr., William Griffith, Sr., and to the York City Bureau of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program by Senator Waugh.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Charles Thane Hegland by Senator D. White.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Drake and to Mr. and Mrs. Donald L. Johnson by Senator M.J. White.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mary R. Marinari by Senator C. Williams.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to A.M. Kulp Elementary School of Hatfield by Senators Wonderling and Greenleaf.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Herbert H. Aust, Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Giles, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Kelley, Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Miles, Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey J. Petrosky, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Romanko, Casey N. Smith and to Keith Takacs by Senator Wozniak.

CONDOLENCE RESOLUTIONS

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following resolutions, which were read, considered, and adopted by voice vote:

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late Kenneth Moore by Senator Kitchen.

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late William H. Eastburn III and to the family of the late Michael G. Wiggins by Senator McIlhinney.

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late Nicholas V. Picozzi II by Senator Pileggi.

BILLS ON FIRST CONSIDERATION

Senator RHOADES. Madam President, I move that the Senate do now proceed to consideration of all bills reported from committees for the first time at today's Session.

The motion was agreed to.

The bills were as follows:

SB 340, HB 883 and HB 1320.

And said bills having been considered for the first time,
Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for second consideration.

PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Schuylkill, Senator Rhoades.

Senator RHOADES. Madam President, last week, I read an article in the Uniontown Herald-Standard that deeply troubled me. In the article, DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty was quoted as saying, "We need to find ways not to burn coal." That statement is a big problem for me and, I believe, thousands of hard-working men and women who earn an honest living in the coal industry.

At the Senate Committee on Appropriations hearing, I had the chance to ask Secretary McGinty about the article, and I was assured that the Secretary was taking steps to clear up the misunderstanding with her statements to the newspaper. As a follow-up, I sent a letter to the Secretary asking her to set the record straight in reconciling her statements surrounding the use and importance of coal in Pennsylvania. Madam President, I continue to eagerly await her response.

In my home area, as in the home area of many of my colleagues here, but for me especially in the heart of Pennsylvania's anthracite coal fields, many coal businesses and associated businesses—I think we have to remember that not only is the extracting of coal significant, but the jobs that go with the boilers being made, the furnaces being made, the hauling, the loading, all of these things are associated businesses. They have shown that coal can still be a very cost-effective and environmentally sound alternative to liquid fuels such as foreign oil.

Coal is the least expensive fossil fuel for electricity generation. Today, 56 percent of our electricity is generated by coal in Pennsylvania. It is estimated that a total of 76 billion tons of coal remain in Pennsylvania. So it is a certainty that coal can and should remain a vital part of our economy for many years to come. Now technology can convert coal to liquid fuels to again provide an opportunity for the Commonwealth.

Madam President, the development of coal liquefaction technology in the Commonwealth can benefit our environment in a big way. It can also put billions of tons of coal reserves and the existing deposits of coal waste to good use. And let me say that, because I think we are all familiar with that, not only in terms of the liquefaction, but the other plants that we are using now can end up getting rid of all the spoil banks that mar our environment.

I also believe, most importantly, that coal can be burned safely. It gives us a viable energy source to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. And let me emphasize the point, too, because many people right now say, well, you cannot burn it because it generates carbon, and carbon is one of the gases that hurts our environment. Well, I believe wholeheartedly that we have the technology, the scientists, and if we have the will, we can find the type of machinery, the type of technology that can clean that up.

One of the issues in the cars, if we remember, we said we had carbon coming out of the exhaust. What did we end up doing? We ended up putting catalytic converters in our cars to reduce

the amount of carbon dioxide. We can do the same thing with units in our homes or in our big plants. One of my issues, I always say this, is if George Washington Carver could find 100 uses for a peanut, and that was in days past when he did not have all the technology and the computers and resources of today, we should be able to find at least 500 uses for a piece of coal.

Let me add to that, too, that maybe if we were not as worried about making the big almighty buck, and I look back to the days when the electric light bulb was invented, the telephone was invented, it was not that they were not looking to make money, it was not that they did not put patents on, but that did not drive them. The invention and the creation of the invention is what drove it. We need more of that attitude today. We need more of that presence today.

Madam President, for the past few weeks, I have come to this podium to talk about the increases in the cost of home heating fuels and how they have reached a crisis point for many Pennsylvanians. Just think about it. Over \$3 a gallon for home heating oil? People on fixed incomes cannot survive on that. We have young couples with children, mortgages, car payments, and they have to take away from that to be able to pay the fuel bills. I do not blame the distributors, because it is not their fault, and I do not blame the gas station owners, it is not their fault. It is the big oil companies who stand to make billions of dollars of profit and continue to do that and cause this inflation, this recession within our American economy.

Dealing with this crisis has become one of most urgent problems facing the people we represent, and one we must address. One of the things we are doing here is we are looking, and I can look to the other side of the aisle, we used to have a coal caucus, and the coal caucus would deal with the coal industry in terms of helping it to continue to produce product. We are going to reestablish a coal committee. For some reason, it got politically mixed up. We never had the problem here in the Senate, and I have talked to some of my colleagues on both sides of our aisle who are interested in coming together.

I followed up, too, in saying, why can we not bring in our universities, who claim to have such strong invention and research technologies and abilities, to find and assist us in how we can burn coal more environmentally safe and get the most BTUs out of it? Those are things that we are going to be looking to do, and we are going to need help to do that.

Madam President, I firmly believe that coal remains a viable and, moreover, affordable energy resource and that it can be burned in an environmentally safe manner that can ease the burden on the citizens of this Commonwealth. Let me also remind you, too, when you compare the BTUs in, let us say, 100 gallons of oil versus the same amount of money that you could buy coal, the BTUs in the coal is like two to three times what you will get out of oil.

Coal has played an important part in the development of our communities, and it will continue to play an important role in the future, and it should. We should not minimize the impact that coal can have on our economy and our way of life. I once again urge Secretary McGinty to set the record straight on her statements and join with us in our coal committee regarding one of our region's most important economic drivers. The coal industry

supports a workforce of 7,000 in Pennsylvania and has the potential to hire thousands more. It is really minimized when we do not do anything to make a difference here.

So I make these comments from the standpoint of alerting my colleagues to the coming coal committee, and anyone can join, whether you are from the bituminous area or the anthracite area or you are just interested in finding an alternative to burning coal. And I also say it is time we begin to move on this. We cannot let this continue to pass us by. We cannot continue to pay \$3.25, say they are going up to \$4, for a gallon of gas. That is ridiculous. That is asinine. The second thing is, from the standpoint, too, if we talk about great inventors, great research institutions, well, now it is time for them to step up to the plate and show us how great their research is to be able to serve the people of the Commonwealth.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT. Thank you, Senator Rhoades, for calling attention with your petition to the fact that 76 billion tons of coal remain in Pennsylvania, and you are starting a coal committee caucus. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Northampton, Senator Boscola.

Senator BOSCOLA. Madam President, in case you have not been following the news lately, our national economy is sick. You do not need to be a doctor to recognize the symptoms here in Pennsylvania. Plants are closing. Workers are being laid off. Unemployment rates are going up. In fact, local employment rates in 6 out of 12 regions of our State are now higher than the national average. And for some of these regions, that is something that has not happened for several years now.

I hate to brag, I am not an economist, but I do not think a \$600 check from Washington is going to stimulate our economy enough. We need to do more--much, much more. We need to be brave, we need to be bold, and we need to have rock-solid leadership to do this. Maybe this check would help someone pay their electric bill or afford some of their home heating costs, which, by the way, is why I support Senator Rhoades' bill to freeze fuel prices.

I commend him, and I have told him that, for standing up and fighting for people, because he is not just fighting for poor people. We have programs to help low-income people. He is also fighting for the working people who pay for those programs that help poor people with their hard-earned money, with their tax dollars. I am talking about middle-class families, families that are very worried, and more than about just the high price of heating oil. They are also worried about the price of gasoline, the cost of healthcare, their property taxes, and their school taxes.

So it is good that Senator Rhoades worries about them, because Congress certainly does not. They are more worried about bringing Roger Clemens to Washington to talk about baseball players taking steroids. Now, there is a national priority for you. Let us clean up major league baseball first. We can fix our economy and put people back to work later. Congress does not fix problems anymore, it just creates bigger ones.

So in this era, who speaks up for the middle class? They do not have a lobbyist. They do not have a cottage industry of service providers who parade in and out of our offices every budget season asking for more money to fund their programs. The mid-

dle class pays for everything, every State program, every Federal program. And who is going to help them?

But the minute some big corporate lobbyist just whispers something, all they have to do is just whisper one little word about cutting business taxes, and we have people falling all over themselves to help them. Senator Rhoades is right. It is David versus Goliath when you take on Exxon and you take on big oil companies. We can freeze heating oil prices and we can freeze electric prices by keeping rate caps on so that middle-class families do not have to pay 50 percent more each month for their electricity.

People are already circling days on their calendar to figure out how to pay their bills. So much comes out of this check. I do not have enough money to pay this bill until next month. If more people in this legislature listened more to what working families are saying around their kitchen tables instead of listening to what the lobbyists want, we could really help these families. I think Senator Rhoades would agree with me.

I am not against companies making profits. I do not expect them to give it away for free, and neither do most people. People are willing to pay for what is fair and what is reasonable. But we also need to step in and do our jobs when we see price gouging and price fixing and corporate greed that makes Enron look like the United Way.

I know that some of my colleagues really believe that people are just going to have to bite the bullet in these tough times, and I know the corporate lobbyists are now clinging to deregulation like it was one of God's own commandments. This legislature enacted deregulation, and now it is up to the legislature to fix it, because it is not working here. It is not working in Pennsylvania. It is not working in any other State, either. The people back home did not send us here to hand them a bunch of excuses about why deregulation is not working. They sent us here to get results.

Billions of dollars are at stake here, and the deck is stacked against working families, just one more royal failure by government that they will have to pay for, just because that is the way it is. We have all heard the saying, you cannot fight city hall. There is a reason why people use that saying, because they are frustrated, and their own government is unresponsive to them. That is also why we could stand to see a lot more real reforms here from one end of this building to the other.

Well, Madam President, I have a saying, too, and I hope all the CEOs of all of Pennsylvania's energy companies are listening here today, because there is a real difference between need versus greed. It is the legislature's job to stop these greedy corporate companies from becoming even greedier. So I hope those CEOs will stop counting their millions just long enough to write this down and remember it: Pigs get fat, and hogs get slaughtered.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Stack.

Senator STACK. Madam President, I rise today to offer comments on the proposal recently unveiled by the House Democrats regarding healthcare reform. You know, all Pennsylvanians deserve access to affordable, quality healthcare. But right now, hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children in this State are uninsured. Many of them cannot pay for insurance. In 2007, Governor Rendell introduced his Cover All Pennsylvanians plan,

which he says will make quality healthcare accessible to small businesses and individuals without insurance.

Now the House Democrats have introduced a compromise plan called Access to Basic Care, or ABC. Their plan calls for subsidizing coverage to people with incomes of 200 percent of the poverty level or less. It encourages small employers to offer healthcare benefits by providing tax credits to small businesses that offer insurance to their employees. The plan will be funded by using half of the existing fund now generated from the 25-cent cigarette tax that is not needed for Mcare abatements as well as existing adultBasic and uncompensated care funds.

The House Democrats' Access to Basic Care program is another proposal that addresses access to care for uninsured Pennsylvanians. I ask my colleagues to seriously consider this alternative. Let us work together to move the healthcare access plan forward in the near future to help uninsured Pennsylvanians.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT. Thank you, Senator Stack, for your petition.

BILL SIGNED

The PRESIDENT (Lieutenant Governor Catherine Baker Knoll) in the presence of the Senate signed the following bill:

HB 363.

PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES (Continued)

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Hughes.

Senator HUGHES. Madam President, I had to get my cardio in, running from one side to the other.

We are here at 12:08 p.m. on this day, and we still are obligated by the reality that exists for so many hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvania citizens. At 12:08 p.m. on March 12, I had to count down the days, because we are trying to count the days and keep specific track of where we are. We are still obligated, Madam President, on March 12, with 35 scheduled Session days on the Calendar before we adjourn, hopefully adjourn, for the summer. We are still obligated on this day to remind this body and those who are paying attention, those who are focused, that we are still a State without a resolution on the issues of providing health coverage, health insurance, and affordable health insurance to the 767,000 adults in Pennsylvania who have no health insurance.

There still remains a blot on our record. There still remains a missed opportunity. There still remains a situation where, not just looking at us, Madam President, but if you look squarely and specifically for those individuals in Pennsylvania who have no health insurance, it remains a missed reality for them. They sit making those hard decisions as their heating bills come in, which have gone up dramatically, as they try to figure out how to get from one place to another in their automobile, or now probably their friend's automobile, because they are probably now being forced to ride together, two, three, four, five individuals in an automobile just to get from one place to the other because gas prices are now well up, and some places are spotting \$4 per gal-

lon. They are still in a situation with food prices going up, with inflation going up.

It is a very interesting dynamic, Madam President, where you still have those individuals on Wall Street who are still making tons and tons of money. They are still doing very well. The stock market went up yesterday, as I understand, Madam President, over 400 points. Four hundred points. So somebody is doing well, and 767,000 people in Pennsylvania are still going without health insurance. Somebody is doing well and a lot of people are doing bad. And we are in a situation, Madam President, where it remains untenable for those individuals, and it is not a positive position for us as legislators of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as Senators in this august body, which is not so august anymore, given the fact that we are not dealing with this issue. We still remain in a situation where folks who need our help are not getting it. They are not getting it.

They have abandoned Washington, D.C., for a resolve on this issue. Washington, D.C., could not even get the SCHIP program passed, which is an expanded coverage program for our young people, probably because we are spending hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars or, rather, hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars going to this insane conflict in Iraq. And while we send those guys money, as we contract with those guys, as we send those guys dollars, they cannot even spend the money right down there.

Then we have a new corporation, it just came out, a corporation that we contracted with, where our soldiers were forced to wash and bathe in dirty water, told that it was going to be okay, just a little discolored. Just a little discolored. Now we find out they are coming down with skin conditions as a result of bathing in what was supposed to have been approved water. This was a subcontractor of Halliburton. Halliburton was a company that was in Texas, and then they just got up and decided, after they got billions and billions of dollars' worth of contracts, they got up and decided to move their international headquarters to Dubai. So they got the money, and they ran with it.

So we can pretty much forget Washington, D.C., in terms of resolving this problem, at least in this current administration. Fortunately, we only have to deal with them for another 7, 8, 9 months, and then they are out of there, unless they try to steal the next election like they stole the last one.

But I do not want to get too far astray from my original point, Madam President, which is the fact that 767,000 people are suffering without any health insurance, and we are not moving aggressively forward. We had hoped there would be some action in the House, and hopefully today, there will be some positive resolution in the House to get us some legislation so hopefully we can be proactive to deal with this issue here on the Senate side. We have to respond to this.

As I have said continually, Madam President, this is a health issue, but it is also an economic issue. These are individuals who wind up without any coverage, wind up, when they need coverage, going to the most expensive coverage available, which is the coverage and care provided in our emergency rooms. It does not get any more expensive than that. So that becomes a financial drain not just on our hospitals, not just on those individuals who had to get treatment there, but it becomes a financial drain on all of us. It becomes an economic issue. If we step into the breach

and address this issue and provide them the coverage that they need, then we do not just deal with their health issue, but we deal with the economic condition for all of us. I want to quote a phrase that I heard from someone. It is, "I just want to take common sense to high places." That is all we need to do, put a little common sense in high places.

We are teetering. We are teetering on economic recession in this State, and for many of us, they are already in a recessionary reality. Many of our constituents with their houses being taken from them, they have no healthcare coverage, they are not making ends meet, their credit card interest rates are still sky-high. They have no means to get out of their situation. We have to put some common sense in high places.

It is common sense for us to deal with this issue, to help prevent this State from going in a bad direction economically. And when I say our State, I am talking about the 12 million people who live in it. It is our responsibility. So we need to, yes, move the stimulus package that the Governor has presented to us, make some accommodations, do some work on the edges of it, but let us move that thing and get that thing out and get it moving so our people can realize the benefits of it. But in addition to that, we need to deal with the issue of the uninsured, and we need to deal with it right away, proactively, fully engaged, addressing the issue of providing coverage for those who do not have coverage, addressing the issue of trying to ratchet back any increases in coverage for those of us who do have coverage, and making coverage more affordable, which is what they are supposed to be dealing with in the House.

So we hope, and as I said before, we must keep hope alive. We must have the audacity of hope. We must be from a place called hope. We must be friendly to hope, because hopefully, hope will spring eternal and grow in the House of Representatives, and they can send us a measure and get it over to us, and hopefully we can get something done on our side sooner rather than later.

When we started this countdown, Madam President, last year, and my good friend and colleague, Senator Fumo, who is announcing, I guess right at this moment, his intention to retire from this body, and he will be sorely missed, he put out an idea that suggested that we get this thing done by Valentine's Day, not by Valentine's Day 2009, but by Valentine's Day 2008. He put that out from this podium last year, last November, I believe it was. Well, there is no love, because Valentine's Day has passed.

Now we have 35 scheduled Session days for this body between now and when we are supposed to be done at the end of June. We started on Monday. We had 37. There was no action then. Yesterday was 36. No action. Today is 35, and as we are about to adjourn, no action. How long do the people have to wait? How long do the 767,000 adults have to wait? How long are we, as a general body, a general public, all 12 million of us, how long must we remain crippled and held hostage by this unaddressed issue where there is a resolve immediately in front of us that we can address and get done? How long?

I just want to put a little common sense in high places. It is sensible for us to get this thing done. It is responsible. It is a responsible thing if we do it. It is a wise and appropriate thing that the people of Pennsylvania, especially those suffering, see us step into the breach for them and resolve this issue. Thirty-five days

left, Madam President, and we are still counting, and those people, our residents, our brothers and sisters, our neighbors, our friends, our constituents, they continue to suffer. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT. Thank you, Senator Hughes, for calling attention to the needs of 767,000 adults for affordable healthcare. Thank you, students, for being here to observe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY

The following announcements were read by the Secretary of the Senate:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2008

10:00 A.M.	COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 246 (public hearing to receive testimony on Senate Bill No. 246)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2008

10:30 A.M.	JUDICIARY (public hearing on Senate Bill No. 1250)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
12:30 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (to consider Senate Bills No. 9, 428, 820 and 822)	Room 461 Main Capitol
Off the Floor	RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS (to consider certain executive nominations)	Rules Cmte. Conf. Rm.

Off the Floor	COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (to consider Senate Bill No. 1286)	Rules Cmte. Conf. Rm.
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TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2008

10:00 A.M.	BANKING AND INSURANCE (to consider Senate Bills No. 998, 1254 and 1276; and Senate Resolution No. 248)	Room 461 Main Capitol
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11:30 A.M.	JUDICIARY (to consider Senate Bills No. 1021, 1107, 1149, 1150, 1250, 1269 and 1278; and House Bills No. 306 and 675)	Room 8E-B East Wing
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12:30 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (to consider Senate Bills No. 9, 428, 820 and 822)	Room 461 Main Capitol
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12:30 P.M.	STATE GOVERNMENT (to consider the nomination of Rudy N. Battle to the State Athletic Commission; and Senate Bills No. 1103, 1308 and 1311)	Room 8E-B East Wing
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Off the Floor	RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS (to consider certain executive nominations)	Rules Cmte. Conf. Rm.
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MONDAY, MARCH 31, 2008

10:00 A.M.	COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE FOR SENATE BILL No. 246 (discussion on Senate Bill No. 246) C A N C E L E D	Room 8E-B East Wing
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TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2008

9:00 A.M.	COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE FOR SENATE BILL No. 246	Room 8E-A East Wing
10:00 A.M.	BANKING AND INSURANCE (public hearing on House Bill No. 1150)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
10:30 A.M.	ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY (informational briefing on the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' natural gas leasing plan)	Room 8E-B East Wing

RECESS

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Schuylkill, Senator Rhoades.

Senator RHOADES. Madam President, I move that the Senate do now recess until Monday, March 17, 2008, at 1 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The Senate recessed at 12:20 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.