

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

83rd Legislative Day

3/24/2026

Speaker Avelar: "The House will be in order. Members will be in their chairs. We shall be led in prayer today by Representative Dave Severin. Members and guests are asked to refrain from starting their laptops, turn off all cellphones, and rise for the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance."

Severin: "Good afternoon. It's an honor to be with all of you today. And... it is Blue Corduroy Day, better known as FFA Day, here in the Capitol. And last week, when I opened in prayer, talked a little bit about praying and asking the Lord for things. And I want to share a verse with you out of Matthew, this is Jesus speaking, Matthew 7:8 It says, 'For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.' Now, you don't get everything you ask for. It's kind of like living at home. But if you don't ask, you don't receive anything. So, I would encourage you today as we... as we pray and... and each day when you have something that's on your mind, on your heart, needs that you might have personally for your family, business, for your state, for your... your constituents I would encourage you to seek the Lord's help. Lord, we thank you for this day. I thank you for each one that's in this Capitol today. I thank you for the... the students that are all over the state that are here today representing the... the largest employer in the state, farming. And I just pray that you would encourage these kids to... to continue to learn about the... what God's given us in this state to take care of those things. And I pray today, as we're on this floor, in the Senate, and in this... in this Capitol, in the committees and all the different things going on, that we would consider your ways, Lord. And I just, again,

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we thank you that we can call upon you, you hear and answer our prayers, and I thank you for the opportunity to stand before you on behalf of this state to help each other out. In your name. Amen."

Speaker Avelar: "We will be led in... we will be led in the Pledge of Allegiance today by Representative Mussman."

Mussman - 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 Avelar: "Roll Call for Attendance. Leader Gabel is recognized to report any excused absences on the Democratic side of the aisle."

Gabel: "Speaker, let the record show that Representatives Andrade, Huynh, Kelly, and Ann Williams are excused today."

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

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

Speaker Avelar: "Have all recorded themselves who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. There being 112 Members answering the roll call, a quorum is present. Leader McCombie is recognized for House Resolution 665."

McCombie: "Good afternoon, everybody. Today I would like to recognize and mourn the death of previous Member of the Illinois House of Representatives, Jack Kubik. HR665, where we were very saddened to hear about this loss. Jack Lawrence Kubik passed away on February 4 of 2026. Born on May 20 of 1995 (sic-1955), Representative Kubik dedicated his life to

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Illinois, its people, and his family. From a family with a longtime identity in West Cook community newspaper publishing, he attended DePaul University, earning a degree in business administration. When his neighbor, then-Representative Judy Baar Topinka, decided to vacate her seat in the Illinois House of Representatives in order to move to the Illinois Senate, young Kubik saw his chance and successfully ran in November of 1984 with the vacancy in their West Cook County district. At the age of 28, Representative Kubik was one of the youngest Members in the Illinois House of Representatives. Representative Kubik also specialized in issues involving property tax relief, judicial reform, and the rights of persons with disabilities. As a keystone measure within his overall fight for property tax relief, Representative Kubik was the lead sponsor of a bill that for the first time created a workable process for Cook County residents to appeal their property tax assessments to the statewide Property Tax Appeal Board, and then to the Cook County Circuit Court, thereby creating a legal process that still endures to this day. Representative Kubik retired in January of 1999 after serving 14 years in the Illinois House of Representatives. He... sorry, Representative Kubik served the Illinois General Assembly during the 94th and the 95th General Assembly as the chief of staff for Representative Tom Cross, the House minority leader. Representative Kubik left behind his beloved children, two sisters, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. If I could have a moment of silence as we mourn the passing of former Illinois State Representative Jack Lawrence Kubik and extend our sincere

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condolences to his family and friends, those who all knew and loved him."

Speaker Avelar: "The body shall observe a moment of silence. This resolution was adopted in a previous day. Representative Severin, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

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

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Severin: "Not to hog the microphone today, but I'd like to recognize some FFA students that have come from my district. It's always a pleasure to have constituents on the House... in the House. And so, today Sesser-Valier High School, Carmi High School, Edwards County High School, FA... FFA students from them and their leaders are here today in the... in the Capitol. So, we appreciate them being here and welcome them to the Capitol. Thank you very much."

Speaker Avelar: "Welcome to Springfield. Representative Halbrook, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

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

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Halbrook: "Thank you. On this Ag Day, I stand to recognize a young woman who represents the very best of Illinois agriculture and community life. This afternoon I am honored to welcome, from Effingham County in my district, the 2026 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen, Krista Phillips. Krista was crowned at the Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs Convention and now serves as an ambassador for one of our state's most important traditions. Krista is the 21-year-old daughter of Glen and

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Jeni Phillips, who are with her here today from Effingham. She is a senior at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where she is studying business management and marketing. She will graduate in May and plans to return home to Effingham to begin her marketing career with J&J Gaming while continuing to pursue her long-term dream of opening her own small business. In her role as Miss Illinois County Fair Queen, Krista will travel across our state as an employee of the Illinois Department of Agriculture promoting the importance of agriculture and our county fairs. She will visit dozen of fairs in our communities, large and small. She will serve as the official hostess of the Illinois State Fair and the Du Quoin State Fair. Madam Speaker, county fairs are more important... are extremely important summer events. They are a living classroom for the next generation. They connect our young people to the land, to livestock, and to the values of hard work, responsibility, and stewardship. They showcase the innovation and productivity of Illinois agriculture while also strengthening local economies and preserving the traditions that define our rural communities. In many towns, the county fair is the one time each year when entire community comes together, neighbors, families, small businesses alike, to celebrate what makes their hometown special. Krista understands that deeply. With strong roots in her hometown, she carries a sincere appreciation for faith, family, and community, and the role agriculture plays in all three. Krista, we thank... Krista, we thank you for your willingness to serve, for representing Illinois agriculture with excellence, and for carrying forward a tradition that

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means so much to so many across our state. Please join me again in welcoming the 2026 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen, Krista Phillips."

Speaker Avelar: "Welcome to Springfield. Leader Stuart, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Stuart: "Two points of personal privilege, if that's OK."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Stuart: "Thank you. I'm going to start with it is SIU System Day here at the Capitol. So, please make sure that you check in and you learn all about that goes on at all of our great campuses for the Southern Illinois University System. And, with that, I have a page with me today. I have Rylee Wilson, who's a student at SIU Edwardsville. Rylee was originally from Sparta, Illinois. He served four years active duty with the Army and is now back in school as a veteran studying history and political science. He serves on the student government, working on... he's the representative for military and veterans' affairs on that organization, and he's also the treasurer of his history club. So, with that major in history and political science, he does not have a specific job ready for when he graduates. But if anybody is hiring, I have a wonderful candidate here with me that I'm happy to vouch for. And then the other thing I would like to let people know, we have a... this you really, really want to pay attention to. We have a very, very busy week of deadlines, and that means caffeine. So, I want to make sure everybody knows that the Illinois Soy is hosting us for Soy Latte Day tomorrow, starting at 9 o'clock in the morning until noon. They will be in the Stratton Building in A-1 with delicious soy lattes and

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wonderful, delicious pastries. So, tomorrow morning get your caffeine fix courtesy of Illinois Soy. Thank you."

Speaker Avelar: "Representative Jones, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Jones: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Jones: "I'd like Springfield to give a warm welcome to my son, who's standing next to me, Thaddeus Jones Jr., and give him a Springfield welcome. He's back. He hasn't been here since... well, he says last year. But, you guys, many of you remember when he was younger, but he's here now. So, I want you guys to give him a welcome and allow him to enjoy Springfield. My son, Thaddeus Jones Jr."

Speaker Avelar: "Welcome to Springfield. Representative Bunting, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Bunting: "Thank you, Madam Speaker. Point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Bunting: "Thank you. I rise to join in chorus of welcoming for those visiting the Capitol for National Agriculture Day. Seeing the blue and gold jackets, along with a few green and white sprinkled in the mix, my heart grows with great pride, pride for these young men and women as they passionately advocate for ag issues and pride for the future of agriculture in the state of Illinois. I owe everything I have and everything I have become to FFA and 4-H, where the friendships I have made and the memories I will never forget will live with me forever. These two powerful youth organizations set me in the path of success. Community engagement, leadership

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skills, a positive work ethic, and the determination to see projects through are all priorities that we should still in the youth of today, and these are exactly what these programs do. To the members of agriculture, thank you for providing me and my colleagues with the baskets for Illinois products, and, more importantly, thank you for spending time with us discussing ag legislation. From increasing the spend of ag education funding to the need for farm families to have some generational stability in the form of an estate tax reform, we see you, we hear you, and we will always fight for you. You will always be our biggest cheerleaders, and we will always be your strongest advocates. Thank you."

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

Tarver: "A point of personal privilege, please, Madam Speaker."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Tarver: "Actually, I have kind of a triple point of personal privilege. First and foremost, I want to... come here, sweetheart. I want to again, now that she's here, wish my daughter a happy 13th birthday."

Speaker Avelar: "Happy, happy birthday."

Tarver: "And Leader Morgan's son, Ari, for his 11th birthday. And... and thank you all for your indulgence. Also, I have my two wonderful pages for the day. This is Esperanza, and this is Cari. Esperanza is 5. Cari is 9. Their mom is Adrienne Alexander, who we all know from AFSCME, who stands right outside the chambers. And they are down here supporting their mom, and they're going to be lobbying some folks, so be ready. If we can just give them a round of applause, please."

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Speaker Avelar: "Happy birthday, and welcome to Springfield.

Leader Cabello, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Cabello: "Thank you, Madam Chair. Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Cabello: "I rise today with a heavy heart and with a firm conviction that we are called to do better. Because in Illinois, once again an innocent life has been taken. And behind that loss is not just a tragedy but failure: failure on policy, failure on priorities, and failure of leadership. Sheridan Gorman was 18 years old. Madam, can we have some... eighteen, a young woman at the beginning of her life's journey, a freshman at Loyola... Loyola University, a daughter, a friend, a student with hopes and dreams beginning to take shape. On the morning of March 19, she was walking with friends less than a mile from campus, a simple moment, an ordinary moment, the kind that every one of us has lived countless times without a second thought. And now, she is gone. Now, we are told that this is just another tragedy, that nothing could have been done, that this is simply just the world that we live in. I reject that. We should reject that because the facts tell a different story. The individual charged in her murder has been taken in custody before by U.S. Border Patrol in May of 2023. He was released and arrested again just two months later and an active warrant followed, and still he remained. He remained here in our state under policies that tied the hands of law enforcement and placed ideology ahead of public safety. Today federal authorities have issued a detainer, and under the laws of this state, it will likely be ignored. This is not compassion.

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Compassion does not turn a blind eye, especially to danger. Compassion does not ask for families to bear an unbearable loss in the name of politics. True compassion begins with protecting the innocent. And the first duty of our government, the most basic responsibility we have in this chamber is to keep people safe. Nothing is more fundamental than that. Now, I know there are those that will say it's not about politics, that raising these concerns are somehow divisive, but there is nothing partisan about a grieving family. There is nothing political about an empty seat at the dinner table, and there is nothing acceptable about preventing tragedy. The question before us is simple. Are we willing to look honestly at the consequences of the laws that we have passed? Are we willing to admit something is not working? And, most importantly, are we willing to change course? Because we can. We can restore common sense to our laws. We can ensure that those who pose a threat are not shielded from accountability. We can stand for the law-abiding men and women of this state, the people who ask for nothing more than to live their lives in a safe community. This is not too much to ask, it is not too much to expect, and it's not too much for this body to deliver. To Sheridan Gordon's (sic-Gorman's) family, while words can never fill the void you now carry, please know that your loss is not unseen and it must not be in vain. Let it be the moment that we choose responsibility over rhetoric, action over excuses, and safety over politics. We can do better, and for the sake of every family in Illinois, we must. Thank you."

Speaker Avelar: "Representative Weaver, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

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Weaver: "Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have the privilege today of welcoming my page for the day, Silas Michels. Silas and I just met today, but I think we're of one mind. Look at this tie and shirt combo. He's an awesome kid, a super bright future. Y'all, he wants to be a lawyer, so maybe get his contact. We might need some advice from him down the road. He's a great tennis player. I just found out he's playing number one in his first tennis meet coming up this Thursday. And this kid is so up to speed on what's going on in his community. He was actually filling me in on some local school board issues that I wasn't even aware of on the walk over here. So, we're so proud of him. We're so excited to have him down here, and he gives us so much hope for our future. Thanks."

Speaker Avelar: "Representative Ness, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Ness: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Ness: "Thank you, Speaker. So, today I rise to welcome some guests here to the Capitol in the Speaker's Gallery. We have a group of young people advocating for the Boys and Girls Club Alliance of Illinois. And House Resolution 745, which I filed... or, I'm sorry, House Resolution, yeah, 745, I filed earlier, acknowledges the great work of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Illinois as they advocate for clubs throughout our state, supporting local member organizations in delivering high-quality, affordable programming to young people in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Last year, the club supported approximately 75,000 youth across the state of

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Illinois, and we have the pleasure of welcoming some of them here today to the Capitol. So, please give them a warm Springfield welcome."

Speaker Avelar: "Welcome to Springfield. Representative Chung, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Chung: "Thank you, Madam Speaker. A point of personal privilege."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Chung: "So, we have lots of visitors at the Capitol today, but the two visitors I'm most excited to be here with me today are my kids. They're right behind me. There... there's Sophie. Wait, Sophie's right there, who's 13. Mia is 11. They both don't like being on camera, but I am always so thrilled to have them here with me. They're on spring break, but they're the reason why I got into this in the first place, and, you know, I hope that they know it too, even though they really don't like being here. So, anyway, but let's all welcome them to Springfield. Thank you."

Speaker Avelar: "Welcome to Springfield. Representative Niemerg, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Niemerg: "Thank you, Madam Speaker. Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed. "

Niemerg: "With us today, I have a couple of folks from my district from the FFA. We have Georgetown FFA, and we have Hutsonville FFA. And we... we have some other folks, Dennis Green from Lawrence County and some folks from Effingham County up here for the ag week as well. And I just want to say thank you for lunch. Thank you for everything you do, and welcome to your House."

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Speaker Avelar: "Welcome to Springfield. Representative Mayfield, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Mayfield: "I'd like to draw everyone's attention to the Republican side of the gallery. Can you please stand up? And I'd like to introduce the best mayor the city of Waukegan has ever had, Mayor Sam Cunningham Jr. Welcome to the Capitol."

Speaker Avelar: "Welcome to the Capitol. Leader Elik, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Elik: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Elik: "Thank you. I'd like to take a minute to recognize Women's History Month and talk about a woman who is a real trailblazer in a field close to me, accounting. Florence Sivertson was recognized as the earliest female certified public accountant in the state of Illinois at a time when women were rarely welcomed into the financial and professional world. She didn't just earn a title, she built a path that would pave opportunities for generations of women who would follow in her footsteps. Operating her own public accounting practice in Chicago, Florence's skill, determination, and integrity knew no bounds. Her work challenged the status quo, which earned her a lasting legacy. Today, as we honor Women's History Month, I want this chamber to remember each person we talk about this month is noteworthy for making a positive change for changing the trajectory of women. Progress is built on the courage of individuals like Florence. In her honor, I want to leave you with this: Let's continue to redefine limits, let's support the women in our communities, invest in

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their futures, and ensure that the doors opened by pioneers like Florence remain open for all. Thank you."

Speaker Avelar: "Representative Deering, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Deering: "Thank you, Madam Chair. Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Deering: "For Women's History Month, I would like to highlight three trailblazing women who made great impacts on the insurance industry as we know it today. One of the communities I represent is the city of Bloomington, which is home to State Farm Insurance. State Farm's success can be directly attributed to the historic leadership of women. The company is known for employing significantly more women than men, with nearly two-thirds of the workforce being made up by women. At State Farm, women also hold nearly half of all managerial positions. The history of women in leadership roles at State Farm dates back over a hundred years ago. In mid-1922, Minnie Jones was appointed to be the office manager and voted in as the first female State Farm executive, serving as treasurer and secretary of the board. Just a year earlier, Minnie met State Farm's founder, G.J. Mecherle, who was in desperate need to buy licenses to start selling insurance, but the banks were hesitant to loan him the money for his outlandish business plan of selling auto insurance to farmers. Minnie, who had a successful background in running insurance companies, thought his idea was great and invested 40% of the needed \$25,000 so the company could get its start. After Minnie's appointment, State Farm hired its first female employee in July of 1922. Verna Huffman was a stenographer,

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secretary, underwriter, and claim handler, earning just \$21 for a 60-hour workweek. Her office in the Durley Building on State Farm campus was just 50 square feet, filled with borrowed furniture because the company didn't have their funds to buy their own. Despite her circumstances, she continued to persevere and, just nine short years later, was put in charge of payroll for the company, holding a position within State Farm that no woman had ever held before. The earliest known woman to become an agent for State Farm was Ella Turner, joining State Farm in 1924. She opened her agency with her husband in Rockford, Illinois, and it took... and eventually took over after her husband had passed away. While as an agent, State Farm began to ask for suggestions for a monthly bulletin. Ella submitted the name 'Reflector' and won the contest. The Reflector still runs internally today. Thanks to the work of these amazing women, State Farm has been consistently named top company for executive women for 17 consecutive years, dating back to 2008. Thank you."

Speaker Avelar: "Representative DeLaRosa, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

DeLaRosa: "Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on Women's History Month, and I would like to speak of the founder and the woman who gave us the right to vote, Carrie Chapman Catt. She led the final effort to win approval by Congress, the president, and the states to approve and ratify the 19th Amendment and was the founder of the National League of Women Voters. I have been a League of Women Voter for over 30 years. The slogan of the league is to make... 'Democracy is not a spectator

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sport,' and we are all responsible for Carrie Chapman Catt to be here in this chamber. Thank you."

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

Clerk Hollman: "The following committees will be meeting at 2 p.m.: Adoption & Child Welfare will meet in Room 122. Agriculture & Conservation will meet in Room 115. Appropriations: Elementary & Secondary Education will meet in Room 118. Insurance will meet in Room C-1. Public Utilities will meet in Room 114. Transportation: Regulation, Roads & Bridges will meet in Room 413. Meeting at 4 o'clock is Cities & Villages in Room 118, Consumer Protection in Room 115, Energy & Environment in Room 114, Financial Institutions and Licensing in Room 122, Health Care Availability & Accessibility in Room C-1, Judiciary - Criminal will meet in D-1, and Veterans' Affairs will meet in Room 413. The Ethics & Elections Committee was canceled."

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

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

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Buckner: "I'd like to ask that we welcome to the House today a wonderful group visiting us here in Springfield, 20 students and five chaperones from the Upward Bound program at Chicago State University. Upward Bound does powerful work of helping first-generation, college-bound young people prepare for their futures through exposures to civics, public policy, and educational opportunity. Programs like Upward Bound matter because they help young people understand that they belong in

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every room where decisions are made in college campuses, in boardrooms, in city halls, and, yes, here in state capitol. So, I ask that the House join me in warmly welcoming these students and these dedicated chaperones from Upward Bound at Chicago State University. Welcome to your Capitol."

Speaker Avelar: "Welcome to Springfield. Representative Weaver, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Weaver: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Avelar: "Please proceed."

Weaver: "Thank you, Madam Chair. There's a man in the chamber right now who's maybe listening to me. His name is Representative Dennis Tipsword. And today Representative Tipsword was honored as the Legislator of Year... of the Year by the Chiefs of Police. And I know I'm embarrassing him and he's a humble guy and everything, but please give him a round of applause. As... as many of you know, this is the final year that Representative Tipsword is going to grace us with his presence. And I know I speak for so many of us when I say it's been such an honor. I'm so proud of you, man. I wish we had longer in this chamber, but I'm grateful for the four years that we have. You've done such a great job representing the good people of the 105th. You've done a great job leveraging your experience in law enforcement to bring some common sense and expertise to this issue. And so, it's such a great award. I'm so proud of you, man. Thanks."

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

Clerk Bolin: "Agreed Resolutions. House Resolution 745, offered by Representative Ness. And House Resolution 747, offered by Representative West."

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Speaker Avelar: "Leader Gabel moves for the adoption of the Agreed Resolutions. All those in favor say 'aye'; all those opposed say 'nay.' In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the Agreed Resolutions are adopted. Now, allowing perfunctory time for the clerk, Leader Gabel moves that the House stand adjourned until Wednesday, March 25, at the hour of noon. All those in favor say 'aye'; all those opposed say 'nay.' In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the House stands adjourned."

Clerk Hollman: "House Perfunctory Session will come to order. Introduction and First Reading of House Bills. House Bill 5732, offered by Leader McCombie, a Bill for an Act concerning appropriations. First Reading of this House Bill. Introduction of Resolutions. House Resolution 740, offered by Representative González; House Resolution 741, offered by Representative González; House Resolution 742, offered by Representative Blair-Sherlock; House Resolution 743, offered by Representative Mayfield; House Resolution 744, offered by Leader McCombie; House Resolution 746, offered by Representative West; House Resolution 748, offered by Representative Swanson, are referred to the Rules Committee. There being no further business, the House Perfunctory Session will stand adjourned."