

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
REGULAR SESSION  
SENATE TRANSCRIPT

1st Legislative Day

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GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

The Senate will come to order. Will the Members and our guests please make sure you're all seated? Article IV, Section 6 of the Constitution of the State of Illinois reads in part as follows: On the first day of the January Session of the General Assembly in odd-numbered years, the Governor shall convene the Senate to elect from the membership a President of the Senate as presiding officer. Credentialed representatives of the media have requested permission to record the proceedings. Hearing no objection, leave is granted. The following are appointed to the Committee of Escort for the Members of the Judiciary. Senators Cervantes, Collins, Joyce, Wilcox, and Sally Turner. Will the Committee of Escort please report to the front of the Chamber to escort the distinguished members of the Judiciary into the Chamber. Will the Members and our guests please rise? The invocation will be offered by both Rabbi Shoshanah Conover of Temple Shalom and Imam Saad Palwala of the Islamic Center of McLean County.

RABBI SHOSHANAH CONOVER: (Invocation)

IMAM SAAD PALWALA: (Invocation)

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Johnson will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.  
Senator Johnson.

SENATOR JOHNSON: (Pledge of Allegiance)

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Please remain standing for our National Anthem, which will be sung by Tiffany Mathias Posey.

TIFFANY MATHIS POSEY: (National Anthem)

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Please be seated. I hereby appoint the following persons as

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temporary Senate Officers of the 104th General Assembly: Tim Anderson, Secretary of the Senate. Joe Dominguez, Sergeant-at-Arms. The Secretary will now read the Letter of Certification from the State Board of Elections of Senate Members elected on November 5th, 2024, to the 104th General Assembly. Mr. Secretary, please read the letter.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Letter dated December 10th, 2024. Dear Secretary Anderson, Enclosed is an amended list of individuals who have been elected to serve as Members of the State Senate in the General Assembly and have been duly certified by the State Board of Elections at their Board meeting on December 2nd, 2024. The winning candidate in the 52nd Legislative District was not updated to reflect Paul N. Faraci as newly elected Senator for that district. I sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me {sic} (Brent Davis). District 1, Javier Loera Cervantes, D Chicago, four years -- four-year term; 4th District, Kimberly A. Lightford, D Westchester, four-year term; 5th Legislative District, Lakesia Collins, D Chicago, two-year term; 7th Legislative District, Mike Simmons, D Chicago, four-year term; 10th Legislative District, Robert Martwick, D Chicago, four-year term; 13th Legislative District, Robert Peters, D Chicago, four-year term; 16th Legislative District, Willie Preston, D Chicago, four-year term; 19th Legislative District, Michael E. Hastings, D Frankfort, two-year -- four-year term; 20th District, Graciela Guzmán, D Chicago, two-year term; 22nd District, Cristina Castro, D Elgin, four-year term; 25th District, Karina Villa, D West Chicago, four-year term; 27th District, Mark L. Walker, D Arlington

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Heights, two-year term; 28th District, Laura M. Murphy, D Des Plaines, four-year term; 31st District Mary Edly-Allen, D Libertyville, four-year term; 34th District, Steve Stadelman, D Rockford, four-year term; 37th District, Li Arellano, Jr., Dixon, R four-year term; 40th District, Patrick J. Joyce, D Reddick, four-year term; 43rd District, Rachel Ventura, D Joliet, four-year term; 46th District, Dave Koehler, D Peoria, four-year term; 49th District, Meg Loughran Cappel, Shorewood, D four-year term; 52nd District, Paul N. Faraci, D Champaign, four-year term; 53rd District, Chris Balkema, R Channahon, two-year term; 55th District, Jason Plummer, R Edwardsville, four-year term; 58th District, Terri Bryant, R Murphysboro, four-year term.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Will Justice Mary K. O'Brien of the Illinois Supreme Court please come to the Rostrum to administer the Oath of Office to the Members of the Senate?

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

Good afternoon. Will Senators Collins, Faraci, Walker, as well as Senators-elect Arellano, Balkema and Guzmán, please raise your right hand. Repeat after me and you'll insert your name. Please stand. You'll insert your name at the proper place. I - state your name - do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the Office of State Senator to the best of my ability. I think that's right. Congratulations, Senators. Will the remaining Senators who were re-elected in 2024 please rise? If you will, raise your right hand. Repeating after me. Inserting your name at the proper place. I - state your name. Do solemnly swear, that I

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will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the Office of State Senator to the best of my ability. Congratulations, Senators.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Please be seated. Mr. Secretary, please call the roll of Senators of the 104th General Assembly.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Anderson. Aquino. Arellano. Balkema. Belt. Bryant. Castro. Cervantes. Chesney. Collins. Cunningham. Curran. DeWitte. Edly-Allen. Ellman. Faraci. Feigenholtz. Fine. Fowler. Glowiak Hilton. Guzmán. Halpin. Harmon. Napoleon Harris. Erica Harriss. Hastings. Holmes. Hunter. Johnson. Jones. Joyce. Koehler. Lewis. Lightford. Loughran Cappel. Martwick. McClure. McConchie. Morrison. Murphy. Peters. Plummer. Porfirio. Preston. Rezin. Rose. Simmons. Sims. Stadelman. Syverson. Tracy. Doris Turner. Sally Turner. Ventura. Villa. Villanueva. Villivalam. Walker. Wilcox.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Fifty-eight Present. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. A quorum is present. It is the intention of the Chair to begin organizing the 104th General Assembly under the Rules of the 103rd General Assembly until new rules are adopted as part of the organization of the newly constituted General Assembly. The next order of business is the election of the President of the Senate of the 104th General Assembly. As required by Senate Rules 12-4 and 2-2(b) of the 103rd General Assembly, thirty affirmative votes will be required to elect the President of the Senate. Nominations are now open. Senator Kimberly A. Lightford is recognized for the purpose of placing a name in nomination. Senator Lightford.

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SENATOR LIGHTFORD:

Thank you, Governor. Mr. President, on today -- I rise today to nominate Don Harmon for Senate President. This isn't the first time I've had the honor to nominate Don as Senate President. And I've been honored to rise to nominate him each and every time. It is no secret that nominating him in 2020 was tough. After personally vying for the seat. During that nomination speech, I said, I cannot think of anyone else who would do a wonderful job of leading our caucus and look forward to working with him in unity. And ever since that day. we've worked in unity. A year past, he stood by us through a pandemic. He was calm, understanding and insightful. I was then honored to nominate him again in 2021. I stood up proudly and said, "he's a skilled negotiator who respects his opponent's position and who genuinely listens to people with different viewpoints." And ever since that day, he has listened to us. Two more years passed. He supported the Black Caucus through grave racial injustice. He was intellectual, kind, and compassionate. I was honored to nominate him in 2023. And once again, I stood up and I rang Don's praises, saying, "Oh, he led us with poise. He was always accessible and led our caucus in the Senate as a whole to help millions of Illinoisans during a time they were leaning on us." And every day since, he has led us with poise. In an era of deepening political division, Don stands apart through his remarkable ability to unite people. His quiet strength, intellectual depth, and genuine compassion distinguishes him from many of today's leaders. While political tensions of recent years could have left us fractured and paralyzed, Don's leadership steered us in a different direction. Under his guidance, we've grown more innovative, cohesive, and resilient. His genuine

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willingness to listen and respect opposing viewpoints has made him an exceptional legislative leader. Most importantly, Don has demonstrated that regardless of zip code, race, or political affiliation, we share a common purpose, building an Illinois that is better, safer, and more inclusive for all. I've known Don Harmon for a long time. I respect him as a neighbor, as a father, as a legislator, and as a politician. But most of all, I respect him as a friend. My friend, it is again my honor to nominate you for Senate President. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Lightford nominates Senator Don Harmon for President of the Senate. Senator Ram Villivalam is recognized for the purpose of seconding the nomination. Senator Villivalam.

SENATOR VILLIVALAM:

Thank you, Mr. President{sic} (Governor). I also rise to second the nomination of Don Harmon for Senate President. Having been sworn in to the Senate in 2019, I have been a Member of this Body for all five years of President Harmon's tenure as Senate President. Don has illustrated his dedication to our State, our residents, and all of the Members of this Body through his leadership in ensuring the passage of bold and balanced legislation. With his leadership, our Chamber has passed historic legislation to address income inequality, reduce gun violence, spur small business growth and advance the rights of our workers, women, immigrants and LGBTQ plus members of our communities. Dan. Sorry Don. I know his name. Don has also led this Chamber in our State's accomplishment of passing five balanced budgets that have provided tax relief to working class families through programs such as the Child Tax Credit. Proving that fiscal responsibility

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and helping those that need a hand up or a push forward are able to go hand in hand. In addition to Don's leadership to ensure the passage of bold and balanced legislation, I must also acknowledge the way in which he leads. With his calm, collected, and collaborative approach. Don has shown that he has an innate ability to meet people where they are and work with them to accomplish their goals. Let's face it, the Members of this Body have one of the most unique jobs one could have. We are expected to represent the voices of 217,000 constituents on hundreds of issues, and work with colleagues who are doing the same and come together somehow to pass legislation to move our State forward. And if we're -- if we're being truly honest, I'm sure there are times each of us have felt alone because we are the only ones in our districts that truly know the stress of weighing and making these policy decisions that will impact people's lives. Because of the way he approaches the role of Senate President, Don has never once made me feel alone, even with me being the only Asian American in the Senate. And in fact, he has had the ability to sense those feelings and work to find a solution for whatever that challenge might be. I fully appreciate the fact that while he is entering his 23rd year of service to the 39th District, his openness to new ideas and different perspectives every day seems unmatched. He is incredibly patient. He always returns telephone calls and there are a lot of telephone calls. He always makes the time to meet with you. Whether we are seeking guidance, asking a question, or looking to catch up with a friend, we can count on Don. Don not only is a strong, steady, and reliable leader, but he is a friend, a father, a neighbor, and a role model. He has shown that it is possible to hold on to your core values and principles and achieve

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bipartisanship, a trait that I've learned from him and try to replicate in the transportation work we do. Presiding over the Senate is an honor, and Don has shown he will serve humbly, thoughtfully, and respectfully. Today, we are not only electing a Senate President, but a person who will continue to support our communities, the caucus, and the Senate as a whole. While I don't have my kids with me today, which, as Don described a few years ago, is the reason we don't hear colorful music at this moment. My family and I will forever be grateful for your service over the last five years as Senate President. I can think of no one better to lead us in the 104th General Assembly, and I am honored to second the nomination for Don Harmon for Senate President. Thank you.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Villivalam seconds the nomination of Senator Don Harmon for President of the Senate. Senator Laura Murphy is recognized for the purpose of seconding the nomination. Senator Murphy.

SENATOR MURPHY:

Thank you, Mr. President, Governor. Today I rise to nominate Senate -- Senator Don Harmon to serve as President of the Illinois -- State of Illinois, 104th General Assembly. It has been my honor and privilege to know and work with Don over the last twenty-two years. Most of it has been in his district as he serves as committeeman of the wonderful community of Oak Park. And now, in the General Assembly. For the past ten years, I've been able to watch his work up close, both in this Chamber, then in the Howlett, and then back in this magnificently refurbished Chamber that we all get to enjoy today. I've seen him give voice to those who have



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been marginalized, to those who feel that they have been forgotten, and Don Harmon has done an incredible job of establishing a structure whose core purpose is to ensure that these people feel heard. That they feel that government can actually work for them again. As Senate President, Don Harmon has been able to balance the agendas of multiple caucuses to ensure, at the end of the day, the hard working people of Illinois benefit from the policies, the plan, and the legislation that the General Assembly initiates. And it's for these reasons that I believe in the continued leadership of Senator Don Harmon, and I am honored to nominate him again for Senate President. Thank you.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Murphy seconds the nomination of Senator Don Harmon for President of the Senate. Senator Dave Koehler is recognized for the purpose of seconding the nomination. Senator Koehler.

SENATOR KOEHLER:

Thank you, Governor. Today, I also rise to support and second, the nomination of Don Harmon for Senate President. But first I want to take a trip down memory lane. I first won an election in the 2006, and so the year was 2007 when I got sworn in. What was going on in 2007? Well, Steve Jobs announces a new invention from Apple called the iPhone. Phil Jackson of the Chicago Bulls became the fastest head coach to reach 900 career wins in the NBA history. Nancy Pelosi is elected as the first female Speaker of the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., for the 110th United States Congress. And two men from very different parts of Illinois who shared the same desire to be a better State, who shared the same hairline, sat next to each other for the first time on the Floor. It was the year that I first got to know Don

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Harmon, and from the first time I spoke to him, I had a sense that he would one day lead our caucus and become Senate President. The reasons were quite simple. He was intellectual. He was constantly curious. He was compassionate and kind. He was quiet, but in a way that showed strength. He was respectful and genuinely listened to other's viewpoints. At the time Don had only been in the General Assembly for four years, but it was obvious to me that he was on his way to becoming a great legislator. So, has he changed as a person over these past 18 years? Oh, he has more experience and many more successes. But I stand here today, almost two decades ago, since I learned to first know the Senator from Oak Park, and I can honestly say that he has not changed who he is. He is still considerate and poised. He is resilient and passionate. He is kind and inclusive, and he is a leader who I'm proud to stand behind. And so, I'm very proud to be able to second the nomination of Don Harmon for Senate -- Senate President for the 104th General Assembly. Thank you.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Koehler seconds the nomination of Senator Don Harmon for President of the Senate. Senator Sue Rezin is recognized for the purpose of placing a name in nomination. Senator Rezin.

SENATOR REZIN:

Thank you, Governor Pritzker. Good afternoon, colleagues, friends, and honored guests. It's my distinct privilege to rise today and nominate a leader for Senate President who has consistently demonstrated the qualities we all respect and admire, Leader John Curran. Leadership is more than holding a title. It's about inspiring confidence, fostering relationships, and standing firm on your principles while navigating the complexities of public

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service. Leader Curran embodies all these qualities and more. His calm and collected temperament serves as a steadying force throughout the Chamber, allowing us to focus on what matters most serving the people of Illinois. And it's his quiet strength that truly sets him apart. He leads not with volume, but with vision, and his impact resonates throughout this Chamber. Now let's talk about the man himself. At six foot eight inches tall, John is quite literally head and shoulders above the rest. He's impossible to miss. And I'm not going to lie. For once, I'm the shortest person in the group photo, and I kind of like it. And while his stature is impressive, it's his character that truly elevates him. Of course, his athletic past gives us a little insight into the team player he's always been. A former college football player at the University of Illinois, ILL. Oh, that was pretty pathetic. But we'll let it go. We'll just skip past that. Leader Curran knows the value of discipline, determination, and strategy. As a deputy leader, I have had the pleasure of working closely with John over the past two years to help move our caucus forward in efforts to help our State. I've seen firsthand how he values every Member of our caucus, ensuring that every voice is heard and every opinion matters. He especially values the input of the female Members. As a girl dad, a father of five daughters, he listens. He hasn't just given us more seats at the table. He genuinely listened to our perspective and champions the issues that matter to us. Not only are public policy ideas, but how organization can run better and diversify as a whole. That's not just leadership, that's respect. John understands that productive dialog doesn't always require agreement, but it does require consideration. His ongoing relationship with Senate President Don Harmon illustrates this

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principle. While they may not always see eye to eye, they share a mutual respect for each other, our caucus, and the constituents that allow them to work together for the good of Illinois. This calm dialog may not be the exciting drama that you see in DC. After all, these two men have the uncanny ability to make even a lead guitarist and a former college football player seem boring. But what some call boring, we call the upper Chamber. And there is no better person suited to lead it than John Curran. As we look ahead to another legislative session, I'm confident in Leader Curran's ability to guide us through both challenges and opportunities. I've seen the dedication that he brings to his work, the care he has for his colleagues and the vision he has for Illinois. It's our privilege to stand side by side. And I look forward to continuing our work together in the year ahead. Colleagues, it's my honor to nominate Senator John Curran to serve as Illinois Senate President for the 104th General Assembly. Thank you.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Rezin nominates Senator John Curran for President of the Senate. Senator Dale Fowler is recognized for the purpose of seconding the nomination. Senator Fowler.

SENATOR FOWLER:

Thank you, Governor. Serving in the Illinois Senate is an enormous honor and privilege, but it's also a serious responsibility requiring hard work and resolve. Public service is a calling, one which should be met with enthusiasm, as well as empathy. It is an honor to stand before you today, to speak on behalf of a leader who has not only proven his exceptional dedication to our State, but has also demonstrated the courage, wisdom, and integrity necessary to lead this Body with distinction.

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Which is why I am proud to second the nomination of Senate Republican Leader John Curran for President of the Illinois Senates 104th General Assembly. Since assuming the role of Senate Republican Leader in 2023, Leader Curran has shown unwavering commitment to the values that matter most to the people of Illinois. He deeply understands that the success of this State hinges on collaboration. But collaboration must be rooted in respect, fairness, and a clear vision for the future. As leader, he has worked tirelessly not only to represent the interests of our constituents, but to build an environment where every voice is heard and every perspective is valued. Leader Curran is someone who cares deeply for Illinois, its people, its communities, and its future. Whether advocating for fiscal responsibility, job -- job growth, or the needs of our most vulnerable, he has been steadfast advocate for the issues that matter most. His leadership goes beyond these legislative halls. He is a listener, a proven solver, and someone who values the input of every colleague, irrespective of party. Under his leadership, the Republican Caucus has flourished. He fosters unity within his team, creating an atmosphere of cooperation that drives us toward results. His dedication to mentoring, supporting, and championing fellow Republicans in the Senate, speaks volumes about the character of the man we are so fortunate to have as our leader. In these challenging times, it is crucial that we have a President who will lead with integrity, who understands the complexities of governing, and who has a proven track record of putting the needs of all the people in Illinois first. Leader Curran embodies all these qualities. His calm, steadfast approach to leadership has earned him the trust and respect of his colleagues on both sides

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of the aisle. It is an honor to second the nomination for Senate Republican Leader John Curran as President of the Illinois Senate's 104th General Assembly. His vision for a better Illinois, his deep care for the people he serves, and his unmatched leadership are exactly what we need to guide us forward. Thank you, Governor.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Fowler seconds the nomination of Senator John Curran for President of the Senate. Senator Jill Tracy is recognized for the purpose of seconding the nomination. Senator Tracy.

SENATOR TRACY:

Thank you, Governor. We stand here today on the threshold of a new year, with the start of this new year, 2025, join me for a moment to reflect that it has been twenty-five years since the start of a new century and a new millennium. The 104th Biennial General Assembly convenes today, and one of our most important tasks is to elect from our ranks a leader to guide this process of making laws. Ladies and gentlemen, I rise to second the nomination of Senator John Curran for the office of Senate President of the 104th General Assembly. The convening of a new two-year General Assembly is a time for lawmakers to reflect on the lessons of the past. We also renew our commitment to find true -- true solutions for current challenges and embracing new opportunities for Illinois. Serving in the Illinois Senate is an enormous honor and privilege, but it is also a very serious responsibility that requires hard work and resolve, as well as compromise and empathy. Having worked alongside general current -- excuse me, Senator Curran, I can honestly say he is eminently qualified and suited for this role. Leader Curran's long history of football strategies and legal training has served him well. He focuses on each of our

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members talents and skills. He strives to build a solid team to represent all interests across the State, while still allowing Members to be true to the needs of their districts. I have worked with many leaders since I have served Western -- West Central Illinois in the General Assembly. All have had their strengths. John Curran is a unique mix of smarts, work ethic, legal knowledge, common sense, and the people skills to come up with solutions that benefit all the residents, all the residents of Illinois from Northern Illinois to the tip of Illinois. And that's very important in Assembly. And it's not just his region or his party. When you meet John Curran, you know exactly who he is, how tall he is, and where he stands. He knows that working together, we can move Illinois forward on a path of stability and prosperity. Senator Curran is no stranger to reaching across the aisle and to find a friend or ally on the other side of the aisle. Solutions to State's problems require the kind of cooperation and willingness to work together with all the Members of the Senate, and I believe Senator John Curran possesses those qualities. He is loyal, he is experienced, he is hardworking, and he's a true public servant. Most importantly, he gets things done. For these reasons and many more, I am proud to second the nomination of Senator John Curran for the Office of Senate President for the 104th General Assembly. Thank you.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Tracy seconds the nomination of Senator John Curran for President of the Senate. If there are no further nominations, Senator Aquino is recognized for the purpose of making a motion.

SENATOR AQUINO:

Thank you, Governor. Governor and Members of the Senate, I

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move that nominations of the Office of the President of the Illinois State Senate for the 104th General Assembly be closed.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

Senator Aquino has moved that nominations be closed. All those in favor of the motion, indicate by saying Aye. Those Opposed, Nay. In the opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it. The motion carries, and the nominations are closed. The Secretary will call the roll of the Senators. Each Senator should answer the roll by stating one of the names nominated or by voting Present. Please call the roll, Secretary Anderson.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Anderson. Aquino. Arellano. Balkema. Belt. Bryant. Castro. Cervantes. Chesney. Collins. Cunningham. Curran. DeWitte. Edly-Allen. Ellman. Faraci. Feigenholtz. Fine. Fowler. Glowiak Hilton. Guzmán. Halpin. Harmon. Napoleon Harris. Erica Harriss. Hastings. Holmes. Hunter. Johnson. Jones. Joyce. Koehler. Lewis. Lightford. Loughran Cappel. Martwick. McClure. McConchie. Morrison. Murphy. Peters. Plummer. Porfirio. Preston. Rezin. Rose. Simmons. Sims. Stadelman. Syverson. Tracy. Doris Turner. Sally Turner. Ventura. Villa. Villanueva. Villivalam. Walker. Wilcox.

GOVERNOR PRITZKER:

The results of the roll call are as follows: Senator Don Harmon, 40 votes; Senator John Curran, 18 votes. Senator Don Harmon, having received the constitutionally required number of votes, is hereby declared elected President of the Senate of the 104th General Assembly. Will Senator Don Harmon and Justice O'Brien, please come to the rostrum?

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

Let's start over. Senator Don Harmon, if you'll raise your



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right hand and repeat after me. I, Don Harmon,

SENATOR HARMON:

I, Don Harmon,

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

Do solemnly swear

SENATOR HARMON:

Do solemnly swear.

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

That I will Support the Constitution of the United States.

SENATOR HARMON:

That I will support the Constitution of the United States.

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

And the Constitution of the State of Illinois.

SENATOR HARMON:

And the Constitution of the State of Illinois.

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

And that I will faithfully discharge the duties.

SENATOR HARMON:

That I will faithfully discharge the duties.

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

Of the Office of President of the Illinois Senate.

SENATOR HARMON:

To the of Office of President of the Illinois Senate.

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

To the best of my ability.

SENATOR HARMON:

To the best of my ability.

JUSTICE MARY K. O'BRIEN:

Congratulations, President.

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PRESIDENT HARMON:

Good afternoon, all. I want to take a moment to tell you a quick story about the universality of the Senate. Back in October, Senator Cunningham and I had the good fortune of accompanying the Governor on a trade mission to Japan. We spent that trip either in meetings learning about clean energy and quantum computing, or in the back of a van being shuffled between those meetings. It was rainy and overcast almost the entire two and a half days we were there. A dream vacation, but on the final morning, Senator Cunningham and I found ourselves up and out at about 7 a.m. we had some time to kill and there was a break in the weather, so we decided to walk to the National Diet Building, the home of Japan's legislative branch. Now, the first door we came to was that of the Japanese House of Representatives. We approached, we asked about tours or seeing the building, and the Japanese House promptly turned us away. True story. Undaunted, we continued on the next door we came to belong to the upper Chamber of the House of Councilors, Japan Senate. And let me tell you, they could not have been more welcoming. We got the full tour. I came away thinking, hoping that there is some welcoming universality to Senate's everywhere as a place where differences and conflicts are set aside so that we can come together to do the people's business. And now, to hold up my end of the bargain, I'd like to welcome all of you to the new and improved Senate Chamber. We have been gone for nearly two and a half years. On behalf of the Senate, I want to congratulate Capitol Architect Andrea Aggertt, Mark Flowers and the army of men and women whose extraordinary craftsmanship produced this stunning Chamber. Of note, the stained-glass skylight was in this Chamber when the Senate first met here in

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January of 1877. It was destroyed in a fire in the 1930s, and now it is back. And I'm also advised that the women's facilities received long overdue upgrades. Governor Pritzker, thank you for being here and opening today's ceremony again. I've told you we'd eventually have a normal inauguration, and this one is pretty darn close. I want to take a moment to thank Communications Director Brandy Renfro and her inauguration team, LIS, the pages, the volunteers and the custodians. The pages, volunteers and custodians who moved heaven and earth and a lot of furniture to get us back into this Chamber and make today's ceremony possible. I am once again humbled and honored to receive the support of my colleagues to serve in this post. Thank you. My commitment to you is that I will strive each day to do my best to live up to the responsibilities and trust you have placed in me. And congratulations to Leader Curran. I appreciate your leadership and look forward to continuing to work with you in the Session ahead. I want to thank Senator Murphy, Senator Koehler, Senator Villivalam for their kind words, and especially I want to thank my seatmate and my legislative -- legislative neighbor back home, Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford. I am humbled. I am humbled to have your support and look forward to working with you to another great and productive Session, working with all of you. I want to thank Tiffany Mathis Posey for gracing us with her voice. Thank you. Rabbi Shoshanah Conover and Imam Saad Palwala, thank you very much for the invocations. My friend and neighbor, Doctor Marshall E. Hatch. We're looking forward to the benediction at the end. Thank you. I also want to recognize several guests who have joined us today. The Honorable Kwame Raoul, Attorney General of the State of Illinois. The Honorable Michael Frerichs and his bride our

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Treasurer. Nice to see you both. Once a Senator, always a Senator. Good to have you in the Chamber. Thank you, Justice Mary K. O'Brien for administering the oath not only to me, but to all of the Members being sworn in today. Thank you, Justice. It's a privilege to honor the a or welcome the Mayor of the City of Springfield, the honorable Misty Buscher. Thank you very much for being here. I have my Harmon support group here today. My wife, Terri is here, and our daughter Frances, representing herself and her two siblings. My family is the foundation of any good decision I may make. So, now let's turn our attention to all of you, the Members of the Illinois Senate. Congratulations. Give yourselves a well-deserved round of applause. Now we each took different paths to get here, but here we are. Now, for some of you, this is a welcome return to this grand Chamber. For others, it's the first time you have been here. I invite you all to take it in. I hope you will appreciate that fewer than 1500 people in the history of our great State have ever held the title Illinois State Senator. And now you will forever be listed among them. So, whether you've been here for 30 years or 30 minutes, you are an Illinois State Senator. We're all in this together. And if you've read media clips or financial reports, it might be a tough year ahead. We will face stressful moments. So, I am challenging myself and everyone here to be the better leaders of our State. To treat everyone with decency and respect and to let that shine through our work. Now, as your Senate President and the presiding Midwestern dad of the Chamber let me offer some thoughts on achieving that resolution. First, treat your neighbors well. Look to your left. Look to your right. Your seatmates, the Members of our caucuses, they're your neighbors in the Senate. Your time here will be much more pleasant

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if you are good to them. Take a new lawmaker under your wing. Co-sponsor a piece of legislation. Take a colleague out for a cup of coffee to celebrate a legislative win, or to console them after a tough defeat. Remember that your neighbors in this Chamber are some of the only people in Illinois who can relate to what you're going through. The Senate is an active laboratory for coalition building. Forge those bonds and look out for one another. Now, I want you to look a little farther. Look across the aisle separating the partisan caucuses. The Senators sitting on the opposite side of the room are here for the same reason you are. They want to serve Illinoisans and make our State a better place. We'll often disagree about how to reach our goals. We will often become passionate when advocating for our causes, but we will all be more productive and do more good if we remember that our political counterparts are also our neighbors. We can disagree without being disagreeable. Look even farther. Expand your view out of this building entirely. Each of us represents a district with at least 216,119 neighbors. Your presence in this Chamber means that a majority of the voters in your district that you represent agree with you politically. But you came here to represent the ones who didn't vote for you to your neighbors, the volunteer who knocked on hundreds of doors for you in the fall. Your neighbor is also the person who supported your opponent. Your neighbors may not look, eat, love, or pray the same way you do, but you are here in Springfield to be their voice. And remember that while you cannot make every constituent happy. You can serve every constituent well. Next. Stay humble. No matter how strong a sense of humility you have. Being in Springfield will challenge it. People will offer you meals, drinks, and coffee. People will hold open doors for

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you. People will let you go in line in front of them. There are people in this town whose job description includes puffing up your ego. You even get a special license plate. But you run into trouble when you start to believe you are owed any of these things. Your one vote is just as important as anyone else's. Cagey veteran or green rookie. But your one vote is only as important as everyone else's. And it's important to remember. Try as you might, you cannot pass a bill with only one vote. Work with those neighbors I mentioned earlier. The voters sent you to Springfield with a great responsibility of representing them in the Senate. Hold on to the values that inspired you to seek office. And remember that you answer to your constituents. Finally, be kind. I have often described the Senate as a family. We certainly spend enough time together. As in any family, when tensions get high relationships can be strained. When two people equally passionate about a topic find themselves adamantly opposed to one another tempers can flare. Don't let them. Don't let your words in a heated moment diminish the valuable work you've come here to do. Because at the end of the day, we're all here because we love this State. The people who call it home and we want what's best for them. We can't do this job on our own. We need all of our neighbors. And so don't forget a please and a thank you for the people who keep this building running are excellent staff. They, like everyone else, deserve kindness and respect. They deserve to be treated like the professionals that they are. We are 59 people individually, yet collectively we are chosen to represent all of the people of Illinois. We come from many different places, and you don't have to travel halfway across the world to learn just how much we have in common. So may the universality of the Senate, the camaraderie

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shared, sense of purpose guide us in this Chamber through these next two years. Thank you for placing your trust in me to lead us through the next chapter. Thank you for your service to the people of the great State. The Illinois Session is now -- the Illinois Senate is now in Session. The next order of business is the election of the Minority Leader of the Senate. Senator Syverson.

SENATOR SYVERSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to unanimously consent on behalf of the Republican Members of the Senate to declare Senator John Curran, as Minority Leader of the Senate of the 104th General Assembly.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Senator Syverson requests unanimous consent on behalf of the Republican Members of the Senate to declare Senator John Curran, the Minority Leader of the Senate, for the 104th General Assembly. Is leave granted? Seeing no objection, leave is granted. Senator John Curran is declared the Minority Leader. Congratulations, Senator Curran. The Chair recognizes Minority Leader John Curran.

SENATOR CURRAN:

Thank you, President Harmon. Governor Pritzker, my fellow Senate colleagues, I rise to accept the task and trust bestowed upon me by my fellow Senate Republicans to continue to serve as minority leader of this honored institution. I am honored at such a talented group of people have chosen me to lead our caucus, and I am grateful for their trust and their guidance. I would also like to thank my leadership team, especially my Deputy Leader, Sue Rezin, for the collaboration, hard work, and leadership they show. I'm also lucky to manage one of the most dedicated and experienced staffs in the Capitol, whose work is -- is shown every day by what

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we do. I've spent my life playing on or working in a team, and I can honestly say this team is the best yet. I am thrilled to welcome two new teammates today, Senator Chris Balkema and Senator Li Arellano. As we gather today at the start of the 104th General Assembly in the great State of Illinois, I see a lot of loved ones here to support my colleagues and I. I know the tremendous effort and amount of support we all have back home that allows us to come here and do this work for the people. The incredible work you do on behalf of us and the State of Illinois cannot be understated. I know we will never get back the missed games, concerts, recitals and family events, but I think I can speak for all of us when I say we are trying to make it worth it by utilizing this opportunity to help our neighbors, our community and our State and hopefully making you a little proud along the way. Most importantly, I want to thank my wonderful wife Sue, and my four daughters; Sarah, Lauren, Jennifer and Rachel, who are here with me today. Thank you for your grace and strength. Your love is what keeps me going. And your patience and understanding keep me grounded. Like many of you in this room, my siblings and I are the sons and daughters of immigrants. Though my parents' thick Irish brogues would not allow anyone to mistake them for being from Illinois, they took great pride in their earned citizenship. They, like many, came here for a better life. And through their hard work, community, and faith they made one. They taught me that here in Illinois, anything is possible. And as my colleagues on this side of the aisle have watched over the last several years, boy, is anything possible. I want to continue in their footsteps in helping the next generation achieve their American dreams. That is why I first ran for office. That is why I'm here today. Before joining the Senate, I had the



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good fortune of serving in the majority as the vice chairman of the DuPage County Board. What I've learned on both sides of that power balance is that regardless of party, we were all elected to serve our communities and our State. We can and we will disagree on policy, on procedure, and just about everything else in this Chamber, but there is no disagreement that we are all here because we share in the commitment to making our State a better place for future generations. It's what unites us. Every Member has something an expertise, a passion, an idea that they can bring to the table. I want to thank President Harmon for making that table more open to the minority party, and I look forward to that continued inclusion in the upcoming Session. We represent the geographic majority of the State, and we have a lot to offer. As President Reagan said, "the future does not belong to the faint hearted. It belongs to the brave." It's easy to insulate ourselves with people who look, live, and think like us. But if American democracy has taught us anything, it is that real progress comes from stepping outside of your comfort zone and building a coalition of different viewpoints to craft policy for the greater good and the broader inclusion. It was this bravery that our predecessors dug into to reject the evils of slavery and become the first State to ratify its abolition. It was this bravery that allowed legislators to make Illinois one of the first states in the nation to establish a State supported system of treatment for disabilities and mental illness. Bravery was the glue that allowed Illinois legislators from all walks of life to come together to be the first State to pass civil rights laws and to ratify the 19th amendment recognizing women's rights to vote. It is this collaboration that fostered an environment of ingenuity and innovation that created the cell

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phone, the ultrasound, and led an industrial agricultural boom that continues to feed this very world. These are the brave shoulders upon which we stand, and we must seize this opportunity and this moment to continue Illinois's rich history of rising to meet the moment. Emily Dickinson wrote that forever is composed of nows. Let me assure you, no one would confuse me for a poetry enthusiast. But every, now and again, something sticks. And this forever is composed of nows has stayed with me. Not all of our nows are going to be this monumental. No one may remember the Floor speech, the thoughtful question in committee, or the compromise that garnered broader support on a policy proposal. But many of these now moments have a profound effect on our districts, our State, and our democracy. We are not going to be here forever, but we, the upper Chamber of the 104th General Assembly of the great State of Illinois are all here today, right here, right now. This time -- this time is our time. God bless you. God bless America. God bless the great State of Illinois. Thank you.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Thank you, Leader Curran. We look forward to working with you in this next General Assembly. The benediction today will be offered by the Reverend Doctor Marshall Hatch of New Mount Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago. My friend, Pastor Hatch, please join us.

PASTOR HATCH: (Benediction)

PRESIDENT HARMON:

The following Senators are appointed to the Committee of Escort for the Governor: Senators Ellman, Guzmán, Preston, Erica Harriss, and Lewis. Will those Senators please come forward to escort the Governor from the Chamber. Will the Senators appointed

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to the Committee of Escort for members of the Judiciary, Senators Cervantes, Collins', Joyce, Wilcox, and Sally Turner, please return to the front aisle to escort the distinguished members of the Judiciary from the Chamber. It is the intention of the Chair to begin organizing the Senate of the 104th General Assembly. Will Members and guests please remain for a moment in the Chamber as we have further business to conduct. Mr. Secretary, Communications.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

I have a letter dated January 8th, 2025. Dear Secretary Anderson, pursuant to Rule 3-5(c), of the 103rd General Assembly, I hereby appoint Senator Kimberly A. Lightford as Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Assignments. In addition, I hereby appoint Senator Bill Cunningham, Vice Chair, Laura Murphy, and Senator Omar Aquino, as Members of the Senate Committee on Assignments. These appointments will expire upon adjournment of the Senate Committee on Assignments. If you have any questions regarding these appointments, please contact my Chief of Staff, Ashley Jenkins Jordan, at your convenience. Sincerely, Don Harmon, Senate President. I have another letter dated January 8th, 2023. Dear Mr. Secretary, pursuant -- 2025. Excuse me. Pursuant to the Temporary Senate Rules of the 104th General Assembly, I hereby appoint Senator Neil Anderson to serve as Minority Spokesperson of the Senate Committee on Assignments. And Senator Sally Turner to serve as a Member of the Committee. These appointments are effective immediately. Sincerely, John F. Curran, Illinois Senate Republican Leader.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Mr. Secretary, Resolutions.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

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Senate Resolution 1, offered by Senator Doris Turner. Senate Resolution 2, offered by Senator Cunningham. And Senate Resolution 3, offered by Senator Glowiak Hilton. They are all substantive.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Thank you, Mr. Secretary. The Senate will stand at ease for a few minutes to allow our guests to exit the Chamber. Thank you all for joining us today. Thank you for being a part of this ceremony. Members we do have work to do, so please do not leave the Senate Floor. The Committee on Assignments will meet immediately in the President's Anteroom. Members, please remain in the Chamber as we have further business to conduct. The Senate will stand at ease. Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate, will our Members please be at their desks? We have just a little bit of business to conduct before we send you off to greet your guests and celebrate the day. Mr. Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Senator Lightford, Chair of the Committee on Assignments, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Be Approved for Consideration - Senate Resolutions 1, 2 and 3. Signed, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford, Chair.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. The Senate Calendar has been printed and distributed to the Members desks. On the Calendar is Senate Resolution No. 1. Mr. Secretary, please read the resolution.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Senate Resolution 1, offered by Senator Doris Turner, Resolved by the Senate of the 104th General Assembly of the State of Illinois, that the following officers are hereby elected for

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the term of the 104th General Assembly: Tim Anderson, Secretary of the Senate. Scott Kaiser, Assistant Secretary of the Senate. Claricel "Joe" Dominguez, Sergeant at Arms. Dirk Eilers, Assistant Sergeant at Arms.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Senator Doris Turner, to explain the resolution.

SENATOR DORIS TURNER:

Thank you, Mr. President. Senate Resolution No. 1 elects the officers of the 104th General Assembly: Tim Anderson, Secretary of the Senate. Scott Kaiser, Assistant Secretary of the Senate. Joe Dominguez, Sergeant at Arms. And Dirk Eilers, Assistant Sergeant at Arms.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Thank you. Senator Turner has moved for the adoption of Senate Resolution No. 1. Is there any discussion? Seeing none. The question is, shall the Senate adopt Senate Resolution No. 1. All those in favor will signify by voting Aye. Those opposed will vote Nay. Mr. Secretary, please call the roll.

ACTING SECRETARY KAISER:

Aquino. Arellano. Balkema. Belt. Bryant. Castro. Cervantes. Chesney. Chesney. Collins. Cunningham. Curran. DeWitte. Edly-Allen. Ellman. Faraci. Feigenholtz. Feigenholtz. Fine. Fowler. Glowiak Hilton. Guzmán. Halpin. Napoleon Harris. Erica Harriss. Hastings. Holmes. Hunter. Johnson. Jones. Joyce. Koehler. Lewis. Lightford. Loughran Cappel. Martwick. McClure. McConchie. Morrison. Murphy. Peters. Plummer. Porfirio. Preston. Rezin. Rose. Simmons. Sims. Stadelman. Syverson. Tracy. Doris Turner. Sally Turner. Ventura. Villa. Villanueva. Villivalam. Walker. Wilcox and Mr. President.

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PRESIDENT HARMON:

Aye. Have all voted who wish? Mr. Secretary, have we recorded all the votes?

ACTING SECRETARY KAISER:

Senator Chesney.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 58 voting Aye, none voting No, and none voting Present. Senate Resolution No. 1, having received the required constitutional majority, is declared adopted. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Senate -- perhaps the Chair should have informed you before that roll call vote that in our return to the Senate Chamber, everything is working spectacularly well, except for the voting system. So, we will be doing these three resolutions on voice votes, and they may require roll calls. So now, continuing on the Calendar on the Order of Resolutions, is Senate Resolution 2. Mr. Secretary, please read the resolution.

ACTING SECRETARY KAISER:

Senate Resolution No. 2, offered by Senator Cunningham. Resolved by the Senate of the 104th General Assembly of the State of Illinois. That the Secretary inform the House of Representatives that the Senate has now organized by the election of a President, Secretary and other permanent officers and is now ready to proceed with the business of Session.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Senator Cunningham, to explain the resolution.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM:

Thank you, Mr. President. The Secretary -- Secretary did a pretty good job of explaining it, but Senate Resolution 2 notifies

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the House of Representatives that the Senate has organized by the election of officers and is now ready to proceed with the business of Session. I move for its adoption.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Thank you, Senator Cunningham. Senator Cunningham has moved for the adoption of Senate Resolution No. 2. Is there any discussion? Seeing none. The question is, shall Senate Resolution 2 pass. All those in favor say Aye. Opposed, Nay. In the opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it, and the resolution is adopted. Now, on the Order of Resolutions, is Senate Resolution No. 3. Mr. Secretary, please read the resolution.

ACTING SECRETARY KAISER:

Senate Resolution No. 3, offered by Senator Glowiak Hilton. Whereas, it is necessary that Senators should be conversant with the business transcribed and transacted by the Senate each day in order that they may be understandingly on all matters. Therefore, Be it Resolved by the Senate of the 104th General Assembly of the State of Illinois that the Secretary shall prepare each day an exact transcript of the Journal, and furnished same to the Legislative Printing Unit, which shall have copies there of printed at once.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Senator Glowiak Hilton, to elaborate on the resolution, as necessary. Senator.

SENATOR GLOWIAK HILTON:

Thank you, Mr. President. I move that Senate Resolution 3 direct the Secretary of the Senate to prepare the Senate Journal and to furnish it to the Legislative Printing Unit to print copies.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

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Senator Glowiak Hilton has moved for the adoption of Senate Resolution No. 3. Is there any discussion? Seeing none. The question is, shall Senate Resolution 3 pass. All those in favor will say Aye. Opposed, Nay. The opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it, and the resolution is adopted. Congratulations to the officers of the Senate on your election. We're delighted to have your service for another General Assembly. Mr. Secretary, Communications.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Letter dated -- letter dated January 8th, 2025. Dear Secretary Anderson - Enclosed, please find the Senate Session Calendar for the 2025 Session of the 104th General Assembly. If you have any questions, please contact my Chief of Staff, Ashley Jenkins Jordan, at your convenience. Sincerely, Don Harmon, Senate President.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Mr. Secretary, further communications.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Letter dated January 8th, 2025. Dear Secretary Anderson - Pursuant to Rule 2-5(21) of the 104th GA. I hereby appoint Giovanni R. Randazzo, Parliamentarian of the Senate. If you have any questions regarding this appointment, please contact my Chief of Staff, Ashley Jenkins Jordan, at your convenience. Sincerely, Don Harmon, Senate President.

PRESIDENT HARMON:

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate, congratulations to all the Members of the 104th General Assembly, Illinois State Senate. Congratulations. Enjoy the day. There being no further business to come before the Senate, the Senate stands adjourned until the hour



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of 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 9th. The Senate stands adjourned.