

**PA13-1**

SB0200

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**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**HIGHER EDUCATION  
AND  
EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT  
PART 1  
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**2013  
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hac/gbr HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE  
February 14, 2013  
1:30 P.M.

CHAIRMEN: Senator Bye  
Representative Willis  
Representative

MEMBERS PRESENT:  
SENATORS: Boucher, Cassano

REPRESENTATIVES: Ackert, Alberts,  
Bacchiochi, Candelaria,  
Dillon, Haddad, Hurlburt,  
Janowski, Lavielle,  
LeGeyt, Maroney, McCrory,  
Sanchez, Sawyer, Sayers,  
Walker

REP. WILLIS: -- to the public hearing, the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

We are going to get under way. I apologize for people coming in and out. For those of you viewing, there is a lot happening at the Capitol, a lot of different meetings, events, so Legislators are -- it's been busy, so please understand the -- the demands on everyone's time.

With that, I would like to call Jane Ciarleglio from the Office of Higher Education.

Good afternoon. Long time no see.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: That is right. Good morning and now good afternoon.

Senator Bye, Representative Willis, and distinguished members of the Higher Education Employment Advancement Committee, thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 200, AN ACT CONCERNING HIGHER

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EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

## EDUCATION.

We really do appreciate your support of the legislation and with the addition of the substitute language, which we do understand you have copies of from the LCO, which relates to the under authorized closing of Butler Business School in Bridgeport and the Sawyer School in Hamden and Hartford. That's the reason that we're before you today.

What this act would do would authorize my office to -- to give the certificates to the students of the school because of the illegal closure.

The certificates would be given to the students in the following categories: students who finished both their didactic and externship courses of the program and are simply waiting - - were simply waiting for graduation to pick up their certificates. We will be able to send those out.

Students who have successfully completed their didactic courses study at the school and are currently in the 180 hour externship phase of the program, and students that are very close to the end of their externship about 40 hours or less; the office would be able to supervise these students.

We've got somebody who will be able to do that, because they're so close to the end really at this point, unless it's problematic it's an -- it's an issue of attendance because, you know, the students are at the end and to be able to them to complete their externship.

We've also worked closely with the accrediting agency for the school, the ACICS, who you might

understand on January 3rd revoked their accreditation, to arrange for a special accreditation period for these students who are in their externship to allow them to complete and receive their certificates so they're able to sit for the programmatic exam -- national exam.

A student may -- to take this exam must be graduated from a licensed and accredited institution to be eligible to -- to register and take the exam.

Many of these students have taken out loans for financial aid and we're assisting in those teach outs and all of them have spent dedicated, countless hours through the course of study.

This legislation eliminates the need for some students to transfer to other schools and spend more time potentially and money for a program that they have just about completed. Without this legislation the Office is unable to issue these certificates.

At this -- I would also like to publicly thank Porter and Chester, Lincoln Technical Institute, Branford Hall Career Institute, American Institute, Stone Academy and Ridley-Lowell who participated in helping the students at our information centers that we held. We held two of them so far.

The last one was Friday in Bridgeport. We had to cancel it and we're going to reschedule that to help the students at their information center and offering to teach-out students in their externship periods for no additional cost to those students, which they don't have to, which we're very appreciative of.

We also have three other bills that I think are pretty technical that we've attached testimony for, so I'm willing to answer any questions that you may have.

REP. WILLIS: Thank you, Jane, for that. And I want to thank you for all the efforts your office has put together to try to make these students whole.

Obviously this situation of the closure of a school that they were attending, Butler and Sawyer, really left them -- after extending a lot of money --

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Yep.

REP. WILLIS: -- for something that they thought was going to be a pathway to a career, being left out in the cold.

And I also --

JANE CIARLEGLIO: My staff was absolutely phenomenal. And really it -- it was heartbreaking some of these students and you'll be happy to know that at the -- at the -- out two information centers we had students that came to us in tears. They were so happy that we were going to be able to somehow facilitate their graduation.

REP. WILLIS: Wonderful. And I also want to also express my thanks to the other schools that stepped up to the plate. That is quite admirable of them to do that at -- at --

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Absolutely.

REP. WILLIS: -- no cost or charge to the students.

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I do want to say to the members of our committee that after this public hearing is over we will be voting on this bill. It is imperative that we act as soon as possible to get this legislation on the floor to correct this injustice that has been done to these students.

So any questions for -- for Jane?

Yes, Representative Candelaria.

REP. CANDELARIA: Hello, Jane.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Hello.

REP. CANDELARIA: Quick question. How about those students that have -- that have -- or were halfway completed through their coursework? Anything going to be done with those students at all?

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Well, the students have -- have a -- an option at this point. They can transfer to another one of the schools that, you know, have similar programs. If they do that though, they will be responsible for their financial, you know, their loans that they've taken out. And it's possible, because the curriculums may not match that that will cost them additional money.

They can also, however, have their loans forgiven because the school went out of business. So that that's certainly an option for them and perhaps some of the, you know, we're working with Charter Oak, who's also been very helpful, to try to assess some of the classes that -- that they've taken and maybe they'll be able to transfer some credits into

other institutions, even public schools.

You know, there -- it's -- there's -- we're, -- we're -- it's a case-by-case scenario depending on where the student was and what -- what they've taken.

So yes, we're -- we're really giving individual help to these students.

REP. CANDELARIA: To ensure that this doesn't happen in the future, because I -- I have some concerns with other schools -- similar schools and this state because I've gotten a lot of calls from students.

The issues and regarding completing the externship after one year of completing their coursework and they still cannot get an externship.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: I would urge you, if you have those cases, please have them contact our office. You know, they can go to our website, file a complaint. We try to investigate those as soon as possible, because it's very, very important for, you know, sometimes the institutions will just need a little nudge to make sure that those placements are made and --

REP. CANDELARIA: And my -- I guess my last question is, what can we do in the future to foresee a school that is in trouble and they might close their doors? What can we do?

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Well, what we're learning -- what we think happened here and we're looking at some of the other private occupational schools. With the fed -- the federal government had some changes with the ability to benefit rule, which for people who are Title IV schools, which of

course you know is the ability to distribute student financial aid and to take out loans through the fed.

You know, the ability to benefit rule change you had to have a high school diploma or a GED at -- after July 1st of this past year to be able to enroll in these schools.

So what I think happened with -- with Butler Sawyer was that was very, very difficult for them to enroll as many students as they had been, because they did not have their GEDs or their high school diplomas. So we're trying to look pretty closely at what's happening there, but it's -- it's -- you know, it took some time because until June 30th they were able to enroll students that had neither.

So we're just -- we just have to, you know, watch it carefully.

REP. CANDELARIA: So at the end of the day it was a money making business? It wasn't about the student's education?

JANE CIARLEGLIO: In some -- in some cases --

REP. CANDELARIA: That's my statement.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: -- and, okay. In some cases, other's say there are very good institutions out there who -- it's -- it's an option for some students that, you know --

REP. CANDELARIA: Well, thank you. Thank you so much and thank you for the work that you do.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Thank you.

REP. WILLIS: Representative McCrory, did you have a

question, or you just --

REP. MCCRORY: Actually, through you Madam Chair. He addressed my question concern about, you know, going forward.

REP. WILLIS: Oh, he -- he is so thorough and competent Legislator.

REP. MCCRORY: Bright minds think alike.

REP. WILLIS: Yes.

REP. MCCRORY: I (inaudible).

REP. WILLIS: Jane -- oh, go ahead, Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER: (Inaudible)

REP. WILLIS: No, no, I always let you go first. Yes.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you so much for being here. I believe that the previous questioner was expressing some concerns I think of all of us here on the committee. And given that there has been an increase in private educational institutions like Butler that are doing more online courses, in fact, it's becoming a national trend. Are -- are you following that trend in your office and also trying to create some additional safeguards to that -- their process of approval that would take into consideration some of the problems that are occurring here as they grow in both popularity and in -- in numbers.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Well, remember the private occupational schools do not offer degrees. They're not degree granting. They're -- and --

and to be honest, I don't think any of the current private occupational schools in Connecticut offer any online, so there is that little bit of a difference.

There's a difference -- and we're watching the online problem, which is a different problem that it's with a different population. So I mean, you -- you raise all, you know, excellent points and, you know, we're -- we're trying to get ahead of the curve, but --

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank -- thank you for that clarification.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Yep.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Good. I'm glad that your antennas are up on this continuing trend.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Yep.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you.

REP. WILLIS: Any other comments or questions from members of the committee?

Yes, Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, Madame Chair.

And Jane, thank you. And I think we all echo the thanks for those other institutions that stepped up and really helped through --

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Yep, absolutely.

REP. ACKERT: -- this process.

In your office, is there a certain people designated to help in these cases, like, you

mentioned there's some oversight that is done? Is there a -- and not that we want this to continue. We want to hamper, you know, help this as much as possible. Is there specifically people designated to help with this problem?

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Yes. Actually, what we do have is we have the private occupational school unit, as it were, and we do have some job sharing that is designated to private occupational school oversight.

We also, in this case, had, you know, our veteran's certification. We also had veterans enrolled in some of these programs. And then to be quite honest, what we've done is, you know, that we've taken staff away from other things because this really was, you know, an emergency situation.

So we've kind of redeployed, but yes, we do have a unit that -- that specifically, you know, does the oversight of the private occupational schools.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, Jane, and thank you for your testimony.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

REP. WILLIS: Thank you.

I have a question for you if there's no other questions from members of the committee.

Jane, did the student protection account -- was that tapped into for a situation like this?

JANE CIARLEGLIO: It -- well, there's two things. Yes, in some of the expenses that we're

incurring now through the -- for the closure and we also now set up a process for any of those students who paid privately for their education. In other words, they didn't have a loan through the Feds because the -- the Feds are going to take care of that for any loan discharged that -- that students want.

And so yes, what we're not going to start to go through the process of any of those students and they can register on our website and that will come out of the private occupational school fund account.

REP. WILLIS: If you wouldn't mind, there are some new members of our committee, could you explain to them how the student protection account works with our private occupational schools. I think that might be insightful.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Certainly.

There's a private occupational school of protection account that is set up and it's paid for -- or through the assessment and it's a formula that I -- to be perfectly honest with you, I couldn't give you right now -- that schools pay a certain percentage of their net - - their gross tuition and it goes into a fund for a certain amount of years until -- up to a certain amount. So that these schools -- all the schools that are -- that participate as a private occupational school pay into this fund and that's -- that's where our safety net is.

We also have expenses that come out of that account for the -- for the personnel that we have and in this case, for expenses due to a closure -- a sudden closure.

REP. WILLIS: So that is by statute and that is the

way that we protect our students --

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Yes.

REP. WILLIS: -- in situations like this. So that is very fortuitous.

Thank you.

Any other questions on this bill of the other testimony on your other bills?

Hearing none, thank you, Jane.

JANE CIARLEGLIO: Thank you.

REP. WILLIS: Representative Marilyn Giuliano.

Representative Lesser.

REP. LESSER: Thank you. And good afternoon, Chairwoman Willis, Chairwoman Bye, Representative LeGeyt, distinguished rank -- Vice Chairs and members of this committee.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak today in support of House Bill 5618, which would authorize bonds in support of Middlesex Community College.

I haven't done my full research, so I don't know this for sure, but I'm going to wager that most, if not all, of the members of the committee have deserving institutions of higher learning in or near their districts.

It is not my intention to pit one college against another. I know we are in an age of austerity and lot of institutions of higher learning are in need of capital support. But the Legislators who joined me in introducing

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**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
Office of Higher Education

Testimony  
by  
Jane A. Ciarleglio  
Executive Director  
before the  
Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee  
1:30 p.m. – LOB Room 1E  
February 14, 2013

Senator Bye, Representative Willis and distinguished members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 200 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION. We appreciate your support of this legislation with the addition of the substitute language, which we understand you have copies of from LCO, and your willingness to fast-track this legislation on behalf of the students.

SB 200 allows the Office of Higher Education to issue certificates to the students who were affected by the unauthorized closings of the Butler Business School in Bridgeport and the Sawyer Schools in Hamden and Hartford. These certificates will be given to students in the following categories:

1. Students who finished both their didactic and externship portions of the program and were simply waiting for the graduation ceremony to pick up their certificates.
2. Students who have successfully completed their didactic course of study at the school and are currently in the (180 hour) externship phase of the program.
3. Students that are very close to the end of their externship (40 hours or less). The Office of Higher Education may supervise these students in order for them to complete their externship.

HB 6365SB 850HB 5423HB 6364

We have also worked closely with the accrediting agency for the school, the Accrediting Commission of Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS), who revoked their accreditation on January 3, 2013, to arrange for a special accreditation period for the students who are in their externship to allow them to complete, receive their certificates and be able to sit for their programmatic exam (The National Center for Competency Testing exam). A student must be graduated from a licensed and accredited institution to be eligible to register and take the exam.

Many of these students have taken out loans for financial aid, and all of them have dedicated countless hours to their course of study. This legislation eliminates the need for some students to transfer to another school and spend more time and money for a program which they have already completed. Without this legislation, the Office of Higher Education is unable to issue certificates to these students.

In addition, this legislation allows for students who were in the process of completing his or her externship to finish through the facilitation of another school, and still attain a certificate from the Butler Business School in Bridgeport or the Sawyer Schools in Hamden and Hartford. This allows students to finish their hands-on training under the guidance of another school without asking that school to issue its own certificate and possibly charge additional tuition.

At this time I would also like to publicly thank Porter and Chester Institute, Lincoln Technical Institute, Branford Hall Career Institute, American Institute, Stone Academy, and Ridley-Lowell who participated in helping the students at our Information Session and for offering to teach-out students in their externship with no additional tuition or fees.

I have also attached testimony for three other bills on today's agenda.

We are withdrawing our testimony for House Bill 6365 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE ISSUANCE OF INITIAL TEACHER CERTIFICATES TO GRADUATES OF THE CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ROUTE TO CERTIFICATION PROGRAM due to EPAC and the new certification proposal that will be amended through this recommendation; we will revisit this next year.

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very long and distinguished career in the field of arbitration. He certainly has been one of the leader in this field in the state of Connecticut from the very beginning.

And as a neighbor, I would like to say a very special word that I am very pleased that he has decided to continue on and is accepting this position. I'm honored to stand here in support for Lee this evening.

Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, ma'am.

Will you remark further on the resolution?

If not, let me try your minds.

All those in favor of the resolution signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Opposed, nay.

The ayes have it.

The resolution is adopted.

Will the Clerk please call Senate Bill 200.

THE CLERK:

Substitute Senate Bill 200, AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUTLER SCHOOL AND THE SAWYER SCHOOL, favorable report of the joint standing committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Distinguished chair of the Higher Education Committee, Representative Willis.

REP. WILLIS (64th):

Mr. Speaker, good evening.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Good evening.

REP. WILLIS (64th):

Mr. Speaker, I move for the acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The question's on passage in concurrence, ma'am.

REP. WILLIS (64th):

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will right a wrong. When the Butler Business School and the Sawyer School, both private occupational schools, closed illegally, they left students without certificates to show for their completed class work.

This bill authorizes the Office of Higher Education to award certificates to students who have successfully completed their course of study at Butler Business and Sawyer School.

A private occupational school is required to provide 60 days' notice before closing, and they did not do that when they closed their doors in December of 2012. There are students who are nearing or have neared completion of their work, and this bill would allow the Office of Higher Ed to assist those students in completing their course work so they can take their final program exams.

These students have dealt with many obstacles, and we need this legislation so they can be awarded their degrees and go with their lives in a new career.

I move adoption.

Thank you, sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, ma'am.

The distinguished ranking member of the Higher Education Committee, Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT (17th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This bill is a very convenient and efficient

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remedy for a situation the occurred. It put certain students at severe disadvantage, no fault of their own, and I encourage my colleagues support it.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill?

If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Have all the members have voted? Have all the members voted?

If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally.

And the Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Mr. Speaker, Senate Bill 200 in concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number voting 135

Necessary for passage	68
Those voting Yea	135
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	16

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The bill is passed in concurrence with the  
Senate.

Representative Holder-Winfield.

REP. HOLDER-WINFIELD (94th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would move for a suspension of our rules and an immediate transmittal of Senate Bill 200 and Senate Bill 801 to the Governor.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The question is on suspension of the rules for the immediate transmittal of the two mentioned bills to the Governor. Is there objection? Is there objection?

Hearing none, so ordered.

Representative Holder-Winfield.

REP. HOLDER-WINFIELD (94th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker -- sorry about that.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask for a suspension of our  
rules for the immediate consideration of Senate Joint

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Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On Calendar Page 9, Number 42, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 200 AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUTLER SCHOOL AND THE SAWYER SCHOOL, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE:

Thank you, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is on acceptance and passage. Please proceed, ma'am.

SENATOR BYE:

Thank you, Madam President. This bill comes to us because of a situation that occurred when the Butler Sawyer School closed and many students had done the work that they needed to do in order to take their certificate exams, but because the school closed it could not issue them those certificates.

So what this bill proposed to do is to allow our Office for Higher Ed to validate the students' work to allow them to take the exam so they can get those important certificates. They put in the time and they deserve the degrees, and this particular school did not give the 60 days' notice so there could be proper planning.

So it's a really important bill for students who put in hundreds of hours of work. Thank you, Madam President.

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THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Will you remark? Senator  
Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Madam President. I rise to support  
the motion by the good Chairman of the Higher  
Education Committee. This is very much needed  
now for some students that have completed their  
work and unfortunately the marketplace did not  
support the school itself, but these students did  
do the work and they deserve their diplomas and I  
think we should move expeditiously for it. Thank  
you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Ayala.

SENATOR AYALA:

Thank you. A question, through you to the Chair.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR AYALA:

Senator, my question is, this is a bill that  
affects students in, a lot of students in the  
City of Bridgeport and throughout the region as  
well.

What exactly would be the process by which they  
could go to get this certification?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE:

Thank you, Madam President. Through you to  
Senator Ayala. They would have to go to the

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State Office of Higher Education and document the hours they spent in classes and internships that they've met the requirements to get the certificate that Butler Sawyer did not provide them.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Ayala.

SENATOR AYALA:

Another question, through you, Madam Chair.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR AYALA:

And in getting the documentation to certify that time and effort and the work that was done at the Butler business school, that information would be readily available through whom?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE:

Through you, Madam President. The Office of Higher Education will work with the students to enable them to show the work that they completed, and they also have, I'm sure, some of the records from the school as it exists. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Ayala.

SENATOR AYALE:

Thank you. One more question.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR AYALA:

Through you, Madam Chair, is there a timeframe by which these students have to act to ensure that they get proper certification?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE:

Through you, Madam President, the bill simply says that the Office of Higher Education is authorized to issue certificates of completion to every student who's been determined by said office to have successfully completed such student's course of study at the Butler Business School. It does not put an end date. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Ayala.

SENATOR AYALA:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to thank the good Chairwoman of Higher Ed for leading this effort. I know that a lot of constituents in my district were very concerned about this and I want to applaud that effort. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark? Will you remark? If not, at this time, Mr. Clerk, will you call for a Roll Call Vote on the bill and the machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

There is an immediate Roll Call Vote in the Senate.

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Immediate Roll Call Vote in the Senate. Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Have all Members voted? Have all Members voted? The machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Substitute Senate Bill 200.  
Total Number Voting 35  
Necessary for passage 18  
Those voting Yea 35  
Those voting Nay 0  
Those absent and not voting 1

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, would move for immediate transmittal to the House of Senate Bill 200.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes, thank you, Madam President. Also, to clarify. I wanted to renew in case I didn't mention it previously, move for suspension for immediate transmittal to the House of all of the items on the Second Consent Calendar that might require House action.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY: