

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

JOURNAL OF THE HOUSE.



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024.

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Wednesday, January 17, 2024.

Met according to adjournment at a quarter before six o'clock P.M., in an Informal Session, with Mr. Donato of Medford in the Chair (having been appointed by the Speaker, under authority conferred by Rule 5, to perform the duties of the Chair).

At the request of the Chair (Mr. Donato), the members, guests and employees joined with him in reciting the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Pledge of
allegiance.

Pursuant to assignment, at a quarter past six o'clock P.M, the two branches met in

JOINT SESSION

In the Chamber of the House of Representatives, for the purpose of receiving such communication as Her Excellency Maura T. Healey, Governor of the Commonwealth, may be pleased to make relative to the concerns of the Commonwealth; and were called to order by the Honorable Karen E. Spilka, President of the Senate.

Joint Session
of the two
branches.

Order Adopted.

On motion of Ms. Creem,—

Ordered, That a committee be appointed to consist of members of the Senate and House of Representatives to wait upon Her Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the Constitutional officers, members of the Executive Council and other distinguished guests of the Governor and inform them that the two branches are now in Convention and request the honor of their presence.

Notification
of Lieutenant-
Governor,
Constitutional
officers, et al.

Senators Lovely, Mark, Rausch, Timilty, Durant and Fattman were appointed on the part of the Senate; and Representatives Balsler of Newton, Farley-Bouvier of Pittsfield, Owens of Watertown, Worrell of Boston, Kushmerek of Fitchburg, Howard of Lowell, Philips of Sharon, Barrows of Mansfield, Kane of Shrewsbury and Xiarhos of Barnstable were appointed on the part of the House.

Subsequently, Ms. Lovely, for the committee, reported that Her Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor, the Constitutional officers, the Executive Council and distinguished guests would immediately attend upon the convention.

Shortly thereafter, Her Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, Kimberly L. Driscoll, the Constitutional officers, members of the Executive Council, members of the Supreme Judicial Court, and distinguished guests entered the Chamber under the escort of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Invocation.

The President in the Chair, then introduced Reverend Clyde D. Talley, Senior Pastor, Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church, Worcester, who delivered the following Invocation:

Invocation.

I would like to first thank Governor Maura Healey for this opportunity. Let us pray. Father I come before you to ask for your presence in this place. I thank you for giving us a Governor who didn't hesitate to break the glass ceiling because she truly cares about the people she serves and she ran for this office because she wanted to make a difference. Her achieving this office is a reminder that all things are possible. And while she has broken barriers, we also know that she cannot do this job, this assignment by herself. So I ask that you watch over our Governor Healey and Lieutenant Governor Driscoll as they lead this state to the next level. We ask that you bless and give them and their administration the wisdom, knowledge, insight, discernment, and ability to carry out the objectives that have set for our state.

We ask that you also surround our Governor with the people and resources that will help her to achieve the goals and objectives that she has set for the people of Massachusetts. Father we are asking for your help in these specific areas:

Climate & Clean Energy – Have things come together to where we will be a world leader in combating the climate crisis and to have a clean energy economy.

Affordable & Abundant Housing – Lord we know that we have a crisis with affordable housing. Bring forth the people and resources needed to help make Affordable Housing happen. There are so many families that need affordable housing so they can afford to live here in our state and not leave to get affordable housing elsewhere.

High-quality Education – Provide this administration the wisdom, financial, and physical resources need to help rebuild our education system so that every resident who lives in this state has access to quality education from early education to higher education.

We also need Safe & Reliable Transportation to help people get to where they need to go to do what they need to do. Provide the resources and direction that is needed to accomplish this objective.

Lord we also ask that you break down the walls or the barriers that hold people back from achieving the American dream. Provide the path that we need to take to help make Massachusetts a more affordable state where people no matter who they are don't feel a need to leave this state to survive or to be successful.

Lord we ask that you bless our Governor, Lieutenant Governor and their cabinet and staff members to be the best that they can be. Bless their coming in and their going out. May you bless their work and help them to accomplish the objectives that have been set for the state. Put a hedge of protection around them and keep them in your care. Let this state be a role model that other states will want to follow. And I also ask that our Governor and Lieutenant Governor serve more than 1 term as there is a lot to accomplish and we need them at the helm to get this done with your help.

All these things we ask in Jesus name.

Amen.

Order Adopted.

The President in the Chair, on motion of Ms. Spilka,—

UNCORRECTED PROOF.

Ordered, That a committee be appointed to consist of members of the Senate and the House of Representatives to wait upon Her Excellency the Governor and inform him that the two branches are now in Convention for the purpose of receiving such communication as she may be pleased to make to them, relating to the concerns of the Commonwealth.

Notification of the Governor.

Senators Brownsberger, Comerford, Feeney, Miranda, Tarr and O'Connor were appointed on the part of the Senate; and Representatives Hogan of Stow, Lewis of Framingham, Garballey of Arlington, Fluker Oakley of Boston, Scanlon of North Attleboro, Nguyen of Andover, Cruz of Salem, Ferguson of Holden, Wong of Saugus, Vaughn of Wrentham were appointed on the part of the House.

Subsequently, Mr. Tarr, for the committee, reported that Her Excellency the Governor, Maura T. Healey, would immediately attend upon the convention.

The President introduced members of the North Quincy High School Massachusetts - 841st Air Force Junior ROTC who posted the colors.

North Quincy JROTC.

National Anthem.

The President then introduced vocalists from the Monomoy Regional High School in Harwich, who sang the National Anthem.

National Anthem.

Pledge of Allegiance.

The President then introduced students from the East Boston Social Centers Sprouts early learning classroom who led the Convention in the pledge of allegiance to the flag

Pledge of allegiance.

Shortly thereafter, Her Excellency the Governor, Maura T. Healey, entered the Chamber under the escort of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

The President then introduced Her Excellency the Governor, Maura T. Healey, who thereupon addressed the Convention relative to the concerns of the Commonwealth (Senate, No. 2).

State of the Commonwealth address.

Benediction.

The President then introduced Rabbi Claudia Kreiman, Senior Rabbi, Temple Beth Zion, Brookline, and Dr. M. Faisal Khan, Director of Religious Affairs and Imam, Islamic Center of Boston, Wayland, who gave the Benediction as follows:

Benediction.

I am honored to be here today, as an American citizen, as an immigrant to this country and to this fine State.

Rabbi Claudia Kreiman: I invite us to pray:

Source of all Creation, We are grateful to be together today. We ask Your blessing for Governor Maura Healy and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll and all those who serve this wonderful State.

We ask for Your guidance as our honorable, elected representatives engage in the important work of serving the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Bless them with open hearts and minds as they strive to work together to make decisions that promote the common good.

Help them represent the rights and needs of both the individuals and the communities who have entrusted them with this great task.

And as the members of this elected body engage in the communal work laid before them, bless each and every one with keen discernment so that great strides may be made from a place of love for our fellow humans.

We stand here today, before You, and we ask that You remember us for life, instilling within us a greater love of freedom, seeking both peace and prosperity for all the inhabitants of this great Commonwealth. Teach us now and forever to celebrate our differences. Unify us to preserve and admire those differences that make us – all of us – unique and worthy.

May our elected officials act in the spirit laid forth in the Book of Proverbs (2:20), “to follow the way of the good and keep to the paths of the just.”

Bless this diverse congregation of voices, allowing hearts to be open to all, as Torah, Scripture teaches: “You shall not wrong or oppress the stranger nor ill-treat the widow or orphan” (Exodus 22:20-23).

These are very difficult times in the world which we cannot ignore. We pray that we may see the day that war and bloodshed cease, when a great peace will embrace the whole world.

Compassionate God, bless the leaders of our Commonwealth, of our nation, of all nations, with the power of compassion. Fulfill the promise conveyed in scripture: “Let love and justice flow like a mighty stream, Let peace fill the earth as the waters fill the Sea” (Amos 5:24).

God, we ask You to bestow Your blessings today upon this assembly and upon the Commonwealth it serves. Bless all the people of Massachusetts with prosperity and health, lasting joy, love, and freedom.

May all those present today be inspired to act wisely and with a generosity of spirit.

I offer this blessing, the priestly blessing to you, to all of us, in Hebrew, Spanish and English.

יברכך ה' וישמרך
יאר ה' פניו אליך ויחונך
ישא ה' פניו אליך וישם לך שלום

Que Dios los bendiga y proteja
Que Dios los ilumine y agracie
Que Dios los favorezca y les de una vida de paz y bendición y plenitud.

May Adonai bless you and protect you
May God show you kindness and be gracious to you
May God bestow favor upon you and grant you peace.
And let us say all Amen.

Dr. M. Faisal Khan: Bismillah, Alhamdulillah....

In the Holy Quran, God tell us:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

Surely, God enjoins justice, the doing of good and being generous to your friends and relatives, and forbids all that is unjust, blameworthy or oppressive. He instructs you so that perhaps you will be mindful.

Dear brothers and sisters, as we depart this wonderful ceremony today and prepare for the work to be done tomorrow, let us reflect for a moment on how what Governor Healy has so eloquently tasked us with, reflects in many ways what the Governor of all Governors asks of us all:

He tells us to be just, to be kind and to be generous. To create a state and a nation that looks after those who live within it, regardless of who they are, to take care of the poor, the sick, the aging and those left behind. He tells us to avoid aggression and oppression and we ask God, the one who listens to all prayer, that He strengthens us and aids us in achieving these objectives.

We are grateful indeed to the Almighty God that we live in a state and a nation that from its founding has aspired to these values but we're reminded every day, and indeed by the address today, that there's work to be done yet. There's work to be done here in Massachusetts, there's work to be done in the broader United States and there's work to be done around the world especially around what we can aspire to be and around our common humanity

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ

(6:98)

It is He who has created you from a single soul

Whether you wear the cross, the Yamaka or the Hijab, brothers and sisters, there is no daylight between us. We're all created as one. We arrive and we leave as we were and in between that time, our aim God tells us, is to be the best of who we can be. Indeed we pray that as individuals, as family members, as leaders of small towns or big cities and of the state government itself, that He gives us the fortitude to be the best of who we can be.

We're reminded that service to our neighbors, to our environment, to our oceans and to earth, is service to the Almighty Himself. We pray to Him that He eases these tasks for us, that He opens the path for us to do what is right, no matter how difficult it may be.

We're told, brothers and sisters, that if we save one life it is as if we have saved the whole of humanity and so by the privilege granted to us of being citizens of this great state and this great nation, we ask Dear God to let us be the ones who call for and try to end war where it may be raging, protect innocent life suffering under oppression, end the cycle of violence especially on those most vulnerable amongst us and bring our medical knowledge to the elimination of disease and the fight on poverty.

We pray to Almighty God to make us the best of who we can be so as to overcome our differences, be they black, white or brown, be they blue or red, left or right, so that we may work for the betterment of all, work to eliminate homelessness, alleviate mental hardship, increase wellness and to help those who may be caught in the web of addiction to opioids, to alcohol or to any substance, and work to end hate in all of its forms - race, gender, antisemitic or Islamophobic.

We pray to the God of all knowledge, to inspire our leaders – from those serving in our capital to those in the many cities and towns of the Commonwealth. Grant them and us wisdom and we ask that in our duties we have Your help; in difficulty, Your counsel; in peril, Your protection; and in sorrow, Your peace.

May we leave this chamber with Gods peace, may we walk in His path and may we and our families always be under the umbrella of His protection. Ameen ya Rubbul Alameen.

The President in the Chair, then introduced Duly Noted A Capella from University of Massachusetts Amherst who performed Valerie.

Duly Noted
A Capella.

The President in the Chair, Her Excellency the Governor, Maura T. Healey, Her Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the Constitutional officers, the members of the

UNCORRECTED PROOF.

Executive Council and members of the Supreme Judicial Court then withdrew from the Chamber under the escort of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

At sixteen minutes after eight o'clock P.M., on motion of Mr. Gomez, the Convention was dissolved; and the Senate withdrew from the Joint Session, under the escort of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Order.

Mr. Donato of Medford being in the Chair,—

On motion of Mr. Mariano of Quincy,—

Ordered, That when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet tomorrow at eleven o'clock A.M.

Next
sitting.

At eighteen minutes after eight o'clock P.M., on motion of Mr. Jones of North Reading (Mr. Donato of Medford being in the Chair), the House adjourned, to meet the following day at eleven o'clock A.M., in an Informal Session.