

Exhibit 2

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE SESSION

OCTOBER 21, 2025

Transcribed by:

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1 PRESIDENT HUNT: The Senate will come
2 to order. The sergeant-at-arms will close the
3 doors, members will go to their seats, members
4 and guests of the gallery will please silence
5 all electronic devices.

6 Leading the Senate in prayer is Senator
7 Julie Mayfield of Buncombe county. All members
8 and guests in the gallery will please stand.

9 SENATOR MAYFIELD: Good morning. For
10 those of you who were here five years ago, you
11 don't need to worry that I'm going to read
12 something similar to what I did then.

13 You all probably all know that a couple
14 of weekends ago was the first anniversary of
15 Helene. This is a poem written by a resident of
16 Swannanoa, and I wanted to share it with you.
17 It's about coming together just not after the
18 storm but in a larger sense as well.

19 One year later, our scarred earth is
20 blooming green. What if humanity did the same,
21 rewilding the love that flooded our broken
22 landscape after the hurricane.

23 What if it sprawled unruly across the
24 whole aching world. God love poured tender from
25 laboring hands.

1 What if the incentive was not to keep
2 but to share what we have, to nourish one
3 another and live inside that well spring of
4 care.

5 What if people bound together like they
6 did after the storm, with shovels and muscle and
7 problem-solving and purposeful hearts, where
8 heroes wore muck boots and went searching for
9 need and gave freely to fill it no matter who or
10 what it was. And after the many hard hours of
11 work well spent, all of us sharing, cooking,
12 serving and together breaking bread.

13 What if the tendrils of care, roots
14 that we planted in her wake with our tears and
15 our loved ones and our hopes that the storm
16 stole away grew into the earth and knit together
17 to mend this place into a world where we say
18 neighbor's names like a prayer, where we
19 outstretch our arms and welcome who isn't yet
20 there, where no wind or water or rain could
21 break what was born here, when we pulled our
22 neighbors to safety and tended our collective
23 grief.

24 Helene, who and what you took will
25 never be forgot. We move through our days with

1 loss etched in our palms and a longing and a
2 will for a world where it doesn't take disaster
3 for love to bloom wild and overcome what it is
4 that divides us. A love louder than thunder, a
5 love that transcends our dollars and our
6 politics and our headlines, love more powerful
7 than a river, love more powerful than a
8 hurricane, stronger than the biggest storm, love
9 that honors who has gone and prepares us for
10 what is to come.

11 May love carry our community as we
12 forge ahead, and may it serve the people and the
13 places that still most ache with need, and may
14 we never forget what we learned from the storm.
15 What we have is each other here in this wild
16 world.

17 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Berger is
18 recognized for a motion.

19 SENATOR BERGER: Thank you,
20 Madam President.

21 The journal of October 20, 2025, has
22 been examined and is found to be correct. I
23 move that we dispense with the reading of the
24 journal and that it stand approved as written.

25 PRESIDENT HUNT: Without objection, the

1 journal for October 20, 2025, stands approved as
2 written.

3 Leaves of absence are requested and,
4 without objection, are granted for Senators
5 Burgin, Britt, Rabon, and Sawyer.

6 Introduction of bills, the clerk will
7 read.

8 THE CLERK: Senate Bill 777 by
9 Senator Daniel, a bill to be entitled An Act to
10 Appoint Persons to Various Public Offices by the
11 General Assembly upon the Recommendations of the
12 President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the
13 Speaker of the House of Representatives and To
14 Make Corrections to Previous Appointments.

15 Senate Joint Resolution 778 by
16 Senator Daniel, a Joint Resolution Further
17 Amending Resolution 2025-8 as amended by
18 Resolution 2025-11.

19 PRESIDENT HUNT: We'll now go to the
20 calendar. Third reading roll call,
21 Senate Bill 249.

22 SENATOR DANIEL: Madam President.

23 PRESIDENT HUNT: Excuse me.

24 Senator Daniel, for what purpose do you
25 rise?

1 SENATOR DANIEL: Motions.

2 PRESIDENT HUNT: Proceed with your
3 motions.

4 SENATOR DANIEL: Move that all messages
5 from the Senate today be sent to the House by
6 special message and that Senate Joint
7 Resolution 777, General Assembly appointments
8 that was filed yesterday and read in, move that
9 it be referred to today's floor calendar.

10 PRESIDENT HUNT: Without objection, so
11 ordered.

12 Senator Grafstein, for what purpose do
13 you rise?

14 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Thank you,
15 Madam President.

16 I ask to be recognized for an
17 announcement out of order.

18 PRESIDENT HUNT: You are recognized for
19 an announcement.

20 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Thank you,
21 Madam President.

22 Members, as we've all heard from many
23 of our constituents across the state, folks who
24 are providers and beneficiaries of Medicaid are
25 really suffering and concerned about the issues

1 around the lack of approval of additional
2 funding for the rebase.

3 Senate Bill 403, which was sent back to
4 us in September by the House, has Medicaid
5 rebase in an amount that we've already agreed on
6 and approved in this body. It has some other
7 provisions that we would want to address, but
8 what we are going to do or what I'm going to be
9 doing under Rule 47 is circulating a discharge
10 petition so that we can bring that bill to the
11 floor and we can get some action on Medicaid
12 rebase for people who need that.

13 And so, Madam President, as you know
14 under Rule 47 after ten days sitting in
15 committee, a discharge petition can be filed to
16 bring a bill to the floor. We're going to ask
17 members to support that so that we can address
18 the needs of our constituents and get that
19 Medicaid rebase back before us. So I would ask
20 that the clerk prepare the petition for
21 circulation.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: The clerk has the form
23 for you to circulate.

24 All right. Senate Bill 249, the clerk
25 will read.

1 THE CLERK: Senate Bill 249, Realign
2 Congressional Districts 2025.

3 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Hise is
4 recognized to explain the bill.

5 SENATOR HISE: Thank you,
6 Madam President.

7 A few other things I want to mention
8 following yesterday's spirited discussion of
9 this bill.

10 We heard a lot of revisionist history
11 yesterday about how, quote, unquote, Texas
12 started this, and I just wanted to point that
13 nothing could be further from the truth.

14 The history of these so-called
15 gerrymander wars goes back way before Texas in
16 the preceding decennial census cycle. States
17 such as Illinois, California, Massachusetts, and
18 New York employed partisan gerrymander to
19 systematically deny Republican seats in the
20 US Congress, despite each state having
21 statistically significant proportion of
22 Republican votes.

23 Illinois has only three of 17
24 congressman seats held by Republican even though
25 43.5 percent of the state vote went to

1 President Trump. And New York where more than
2 40 percent of the electorate backed Trump and
3 Democrat members hold 19 of the 26 congressional
4 seats. New Mexico, Connecticut, and
5 Massachusetts send only Democrats to congress,
6 notwithstanding that Republican candidates
7 received a considerable percentage of the vote
8 in each state in both 2020 and 2024. In 2024,
9 46 percent, 42 percent, 36 percent,
10 notwithstanding the fact that one third of the
11 overall population votes Republican in the last
12 seven presidential elections.

13 Massachusetts has not sent a Republican
14 to congress in 30 years. Even though roughly
15 one third of California's voters supported
16 Donald Trump in the two presidential,
17 Republicans hold only 9 of the state's 52
18 congressional votes.

19 Members, it is incumbent upon us to
20 react to this environment, to respond to this
21 environment and not let these tactics that have
22 happened in blue states dominate the control of
23 congress.

24 One other thing I wanted to address is
25 there were comments on the floor yesterday

1 claiming specifically that I and we had lied
2 about the use of racial data in the creation of
3 the maps. I will again completely state that
4 there was no racial data used in these maps and
5 in fact that is a verifiable fact. The computer
6 can produce what the dataset included, what it
7 included since it's been uploaded as well as
8 what was accessed and reported for those maps.
9 And so that is all produced as part of the
10 packet that we generally have to produce for
11 court after this and will do so as soon as are
12 at that point.

13 There's even been claims that I or
14 others were offered some sort of endorsement or
15 those type of things, a claim that is made
16 completely without fact and made completely out
17 of whole cloth. There is no one that has any
18 evidence whatsoever that that occurred, and I
19 will equivocally say I have been offered nothing
20 for the purpose of doing this map or for drawing
21 this map.

22 Members, we saw a lot come through
23 yesterday, a few amendments and others that
24 really emphasized what this entire conversation
25 is about. It is about the balance of power.

1 There was an amendment offered yesterday to
2 change the maps, to draw the maps to an outcome
3 that was more favorable for the Democrats.

4 The proposal for the map for this
5 committee to -- amendment for this body to
6 consider wasn't to not draw or to others. It
7 was simply to draw in a favorable more
8 conditional to the Democrat outcome. And so
9 this is where we're at this day.

10 The purpose of this map was to pick up
11 a Republican seat. We've stated that over and
12 over again. I think there's been a real attempt
13 to try to say because that's the only legal
14 strategy left to say that it was done for other
15 reasons, it was done for racial or done for
16 others, and that simply doesn't hold any water.

17 We designed these maps, we came up with
18 these maps for the purpose of rebalancing this
19 nation, rebalancing congress and making sure
20 that North Carolina is as optimized as the other
21 blue states were when they created their
22 districts.

23 Thank you, Madam President. I'd be
24 happy to answer any question.

25 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Mayfield, for

1 what purpose do you rise?

2 SENATOR MAYFIELD: To speak on the
3 bill.

4 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor to
5 speak on the bill.

6 SENATOR MAYFIELD: Thank you.

7 Senator Hise, I appreciate that
8 recitation of statistics about the Democratic
9 representation from other states. Here's what I
10 would say about that: That's just regular old
11 gerrymandering. That's just regular old
12 gerrymandering that is constitutional in our
13 country because of a Republican-led US Supreme
14 Court.

15 We do it. We are -- North Carolina. I
16 don't have to tell you all of this. Your names
17 have been on the lawsuits that have gone to the
18 US Supreme Court. We are ground zero for
19 political gerrymandering in this country.

20 So it's legal here. It's legal around
21 the country. So people are going to do it,
22 right. We do it. Red states do it. Blue
23 states do it. I think it's terrible. I think
24 it should all be banned. I think it should
25 be -- political gerrymandering should be

1 unconstitutional everywhere under the
2 US Constitution, under every state constitution,
3 but that is not where we are, and that's not
4 where we are because of Republicans, not because
5 of Democrats.

6 So this that we are doing today is
7 fundamentally different than just regular old
8 political gerrymandering. That is the order of
9 the day, regular old political gerrymandering.

10 What is happening today is, as I said
11 yesterday morning, a response to a call from a
12 president who has demanded fealty from members
13 of his party who control legislatures across
14 this country. That is where this began.
15 Nowhere else. Nowhere else. It began with our
16 president who -- and I get that you don't --
17 that he doesn't want to lose the ability to
18 advance his agenda. That's totally politics.

19 What is different here is mid-decade
20 redistricting at the request of an authoritarian
21 president. And what is different here is that
22 state legislatures run by Republicans across the
23 country are bowing to that request. It is
24 wrong, and you know it. You all know it.

25 So, again, I say to blame this on

1 California or Massachusetts or Illinois or
2 anything else is a fiction, and everybody in
3 here in this room knows it, and anybody who
4 continues to say that it's the blue states that
5 are responsible for what is happening here
6 simply looks foolish. You know it's not true.

7 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Everitt, for
8 what purpose do you rise?

9 SENATOR EVERITT: Speak on the bill.

10 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor to
11 speak on the bill.

12 SENATOR EVERITT: Thank you,
13 Madam President.

14 Two quick things. The amendment
15 yesterday to draw a different map was not more
16 fair to the Democrats. It was more fair to the
17 people of North Carolina. It was more
18 representative of the people of North Carolina.
19 That is who it was more fair to.

20 And the second issue is no one
21 suggested yesterday that Senator Hise was being
22 offered anything for these maps. No one made
23 that suggestion. We know where the offer was
24 made.

25 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Chaudhuri, for

1 what purpose do you rise?

2 SENATOR CHAUDHURI: Speak on the bill.

3 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor to
4 speak on the bill.

5 SENATOR CHAUDHURI: I'll be very brief,
6 Madam President.

7 I just want to use Massachusetts as an
8 example that was cited by Senator Hise. A
9 couple of differences to point out in the
10 process. Number one is, yes, Senator Hise is
11 correct that Democrats did approve the bill, but
12 number one, the maps that were drawn in
13 Massachusetts were not deemed partisan.

14 Number two, a majority of Republicans
15 voted for that map.

16 And lastly, Madam President, it was a
17 Republican governor that signed that
18 congressional redistricting map into law.

19 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Smith, for
20 what purpose do you rise?

21 REPRESENTATIVE SMITH: I would like to
22 speak to the bill.

23 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor to
24 speak to the bill.

25 REPRESENTATIVE SMITH: Thank you so

1 much.

2 I first want to go back and repeat some
3 things that I remember my peer
4 Senator Applewhite saying because when we were
5 in the elections committee, all we continued to
6 hear was I drew the map, I drew the map, I drew
7 the map. Now I'm hearing we drew the map, and I
8 don't know who the we is because the Democrats
9 were not included.

10 I'm looking at what we're talking about
11 now and going off what other states are doing,
12 and they set a precedent. Well, they also set a
13 precedent to pass a budget that it doesn't look
14 like we're willing to do.

15 We're spending so much time now wanting
16 to follow our peers. Let's pass a budget. We
17 have people who are hurting, and these people
18 are people that you represent, unless you don't
19 care.

20 When we go back to talking about we're
21 not using anything racial, we're just going to
22 move black people, but it's not racial. We're
23 going to go to the Black Belt and make all of
24 these suggestions to get a map. We could have
25 made moves any other place, but we specifically

1 chose that section in eastern North Carolina.
2 Oh, it just so happened to be that it was the
3 Black Belt, but it's nothing racial.

4 So we can change words, we can talk
5 around words, we can move them around and say
6 all those things. People know the truth. They
7 know what's happening right here. It is their
8 job to elect us and not our job to feel like who
9 we want to represent.

10 So I encourage all of us to make sure
11 that we continue to vote no on this. I know
12 some of you are feeling pressure because you're
13 often put on the line about how you can vote.
14 I'm glad I don't have anybody who has to tell me
15 what I have to do. Thank you.

16 PRESIDENT HUNT: Is there further
17 discussion or debate?

18 Senator Garrett, for what purpose do
19 you rise?

20 SENATOR GARRETT: To send forward an
21 amendment.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: Send forth your
23 amendment. The clerk will read.

24 THE CLERK: Senator Garrett moves to
25 amend the bill.

1 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Garrett is
2 recognized to explain the amendment.

3 SENATOR GARRETT: Thank you,
4 Madam President.

5 Colleagues, this is a pretty
6 straightforward and simple amendment that would
7 put before the voters a constitutional amendment
8 to establish a nonpartisan redistricting
9 commission, giving the people the voice and the
10 ability to choose their elected representatives,
11 not the other way around. I encourage your
12 support.

13 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Hise, for what
14 purpose do you rise?

15 SENATOR HISE: To move that Amendment 6
16 do lie upon the table.

17 SENATOR DANIEL: Second.

18 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Hise moves
19 that Amendment 6 do lay upon the table, seconded
20 by Senator Daniel.

21 This is a non-debatable motion. The
22 question before the body is the motion to lay
23 Amendment Number 6 to Senate Bill 249 on the
24 table.

25 All in favor will vote aye, all opposed

1 will vote no. Five seconds will be allowed for
2 voting, and the clerk will record the vote.

3 Senator Chaudhuri, no.

4 26 having voted in the affirmative, 20
5 in the negative, Amendment Number 6 will lay
6 upon the table, and we are back on the bill.

7 Senator Garrett, for what purpose do
8 you rise?

9 SENATOR GARRETT: To speak to the bill,
10 Madam President.

11 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor to
12 speak to the bill.

13 SENATOR GARRETT: Thank you.

14 Madam President, members of this body,
15 to the people of North Carolina, I stand before
16 you today at a crossroads in American history,
17 not the kind you read about later, sanitized in
18 textbooks with neat conclusions, but the raw,
19 uncertain kind, the kind where the choices we
20 make in this chamber, on this day, will echo
21 through generations yet unborn.

22 This past weekend something
23 extraordinary happened across our country.
24 While we prepare to debate redistricting behind
25 these walls, millions of Americans, from

1 New York City to Bryson city right here in
2 North Carolina, from major capitals to small
3 towns with populations in the hundreds, took to
4 the streets, more than 2,500 communities,
5 possibly the largest single day protest in
6 American history, millions of voices but one
7 message that has thundered through American
8 history since 1776: America has no kings.

9 They marched peacefully, grandmothers
10 and college students, veterans and teachers,
11 people who had never protested before standing
12 shoulder to shoulder with those who have marched
13 decades. They weren't there because they hate
14 America. They were there because they love her.

15 Today, in this chamber and with this
16 vote, we are being asked to betray them. Let me
17 tell you where we stand in the eyes of history.

18 There are moments that define nations,
19 moments when the soul of a country is tested,
20 when everything that came before, every
21 sacrifice, every principle, every promise hangs
22 in the balance. This is one of those moments.
23 Future historians will look back at 2025 and ask
24 when democracy was openly under assault, when a
25 president demanded states rig their elections,

1 when millions took to the streets begging their
2 leaders to protect their rights, what did those
3 in power do? Did they stand with the people, or
4 did they stand with the powerful? Do they honor
5 the sacrifices of those who came before, or did
6 they auction off democracy to the highest
7 bidder? Did they keep the promise, or did they
8 break the faith with every generation that bled
9 for this republic? We are living through a
10 stress test of American democracy.

11 Madam President, I fear that we are
12 failing it.

13 Let's go back to Philadelphia 1787.
14 Our founders, imperfect men, yet visionaries,
15 didn't write We the People, in order to form a
16 perfect union. They couldn't. They knew they
17 hadn't created perfection. They had just fought
18 a war to escape a king, and here they were, some
19 of them still holding human beings in bondage.
20 They knew the contradiction, and they felt its
21 weight, so they made a promise, not a guarantee,
22 not a completed work, a promise to form a more
23 perfect union, more perfect than yesterday, more
24 perfect than the generation before, more
25 democratic than the one we inherited.

1 That promise, that sacred covenant, is
2 the thread that binds every generation of
3 Americans to the next. That generational
4 promise is what makes America America. It's not
5 our geography. It's not our wealth. It's the
6 solemn vow that each generation makes to the
7 next. We will leave you an America closer to
8 its ideals than the one we inherited.

9 My parents made that promise to me,
10 their parents made it to them, and I made that
11 promise to my children, that I would fight to
12 give them a country where their voices matter,
13 where their votes count, where democracy isn't
14 just a word we teach in civics class but a
15 living, breathing reality they experience every
16 day, and that promise has been paid for in
17 blood.

18 Think about Nathan Hale, just 21 years
19 old, standing on the gallows with a noose around
20 his neck. His last words echoing across
21 history, and I quote, I only regret that I have
22 one life to lose for my country. He died so
23 that America could be born without a king.

24 Think about the thousands who froze and
25 starved at Valley Forge, men who wrapped their

1 bleeding feet in rags, who ate bark from trees,
2 who watched their friends die of disease and
3 exposure. They could have gone home, they could
4 have surrendered, but they stayed and they
5 suffered. Many of them died because they
6 believed in the promise.

7 Think about Susan B. Anthony, arrested
8 and fined for daring to vote. Think about the
9 suffragists who died before seeing the 19th
10 Amendment passed, who kept fighting for a
11 victory they would never see. The promise
12 wasn't about them, it was about the next
13 generation.

14 Think about Congressman John Lewis,
15 good trouble John Lewis, beaten nearly to death
16 on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. His skull
17 fractured, blood pouring down his face, and
18 still he got up, still he marched, still he
19 fought for decades, until the very end because
20 he understood something profound: Democracy is
21 not a spectator sport. It requires sacrifice,
22 it demands courage, and it never ever comes
23 free.

24 Every single one of them kept that
25 promise, even when it might have or did cost

1 them everything. And now we stand here in our
2 comfortable suits, in our air conditioned
3 chamber, and we're being asked will you honor
4 that promise or will you spit on their graves?
5 Because make no mistake, that is what today is
6 about. This is about whether we believe in the
7 principle that those millions of Americans stood
8 for this past weekend, that in America the
9 people choose their leaders, not the other way
10 around.

11 Democracy isn't a gift that arrived
12 complete and perfect in 1776. It's not a
13 participation trophy we get for just being
14 American. It's not a static thing frozen in
15 time requiring only our passive acceptance.

16 Democracy is alive. It breathes. It
17 bleeds. It can be wounded. It can be killed.
18 And right now it is gasping for air.

19 Democracy only lives when duly elected
20 representatives stand for the people, present
21 their visions, make their arguments, and trust
22 the voters to decide. It thrives when we
23 compete for the privilege to serve, when we earn
24 the people's trust through the quality of our
25 ideas and the strength of our character, when we

1 fight in the arena of public opinion, not in the
2 back rooms where maps get carved up.

3 Democracy dies when we politicians rig
4 the game, when we draw lines to choose our
5 voters instead of letting our voters choose us,
6 when we admit -- and let's be honest, that's
7 exactly what's happening here today -- when we
8 admit that we can't win in fair competition so
9 we'll just change the rules, when we're so
10 afraid of the people's judgment, we rig the
11 system to avoid it.

12 That's not democracy, folks. That's
13 tyranny with a prettier name. That's
14 authoritarianism in a suit and tie. And that's
15 everything these soldiers, marchers, and freedom
16 fighters died to prevent.

17 My colleagues on the other side of the
18 aisle talk about protecting the president's
19 agenda. Let me ask you something: Since when
20 did America exist to support the president's
21 agenda? I thought government was supposed to
22 serve the people. I thought elected officials
23 were supposed to represent their constituents,
24 not take orders from Washington on how to rig
25 maps. I thought we fought a revolution

1 specifically to establish that no one, not a
2 king, not a president, not anyone is above the
3 will of the people.

4 The president said he's entitled to
5 more seats. Entitled? That word should chill
6 every American to the bone. No elected official
7 is entitled to anything, anything except the
8 privilege of earning the people's trust. And if
9 you can't earn it fairly, you don't deserve it
10 at all.

11 We teach our children to compete
12 fairly, to do their homework, to practice
13 harder, to win or lose on merit, to shake hands
14 after the game, win or lose, to respect their
15 opponents and to honor the rules.

16 So what are we teaching them today? If
17 the game isn't going your way, you just change
18 the rules. Integrity is optional when power is
19 on the line.

20 What do we say to the kids that marched
21 with their parents this last weekend, the ones
22 holding signs saying we bow to no king, the ones
23 who believe -- and God bless them, they still
24 believe -- that their voices matter, that
25 democracy works, that America keeps its

1 promises.

2 Do we look them in the eye and say,
3 sorry, kid, your vote doesn't matter as much as
4 our political power.

5 This past weekend, millions of
6 Americans in the streets were screaming to be
7 heard. They were saying we see what you're
8 doing. We understand that democracy is under
9 attack. We know the difference between
10 legitimate governance and authoritarian power
11 grab. We remember what happened to countries
12 that chose strong men over self-governance. We
13 know how this story ends if we don't stop it,
14 and we refuse -- we refuse to be silent while
15 you steal the people's voice.

16 This body needs to listen. America is
17 standing up not just members of one party but
18 Americans from every walk of life, from every
19 corner of this nation who understand that once
20 you allow election rigging to become normalized,
21 once you accept that might makes right and power
22 justifies betrayal, you have crossed a line you
23 can never uncross. You are breaking something
24 that cannot easily be repaired.

25 Those marchers this past weekend,

1 they're the spiritual descendants of every
2 American whoever refused to bow. They are
3 keeping the promise, but will we? Will we honor
4 the sacrifice of every American whoever fought
5 for democracy, or will we slap them in the face
6 by trading away the very thing they died to
7 protect? When our grandchildren ask us what did
8 you do when democracy was dying, will we have an
9 answer that let's us sleep at night?

10 This is the moment, this chamber, this
11 day. History doesn't send an engraved
12 invitation letting you know when something
13 important is happening. You don't get a warning
14 label that says democracy's fate hangs in the
15 balance today. You don't get a second chance to
16 make the right choice. You just get moments
17 like this where regular people in regular places
18 make choices that ripple through time.

19 We are living in one of those moments
20 right now. Historians will write about this
21 vote. Future students will wonder how could
22 they not see what they were doing? How could
23 they not understand what they were throwing
24 away?

25 I'm here to tell you what we're doing

1 is wrong. It's a desecration on every grave at
2 Arlington, every memorial at Gettysburg, every
3 name on the Vietnam wall, every star in the Gold
4 Star mother's window, but we can still stop.
5 And let me tell you what gives me hope because
6 I'm going to end on hope. Getting close to the
7 end. You're welcome.

8 Even now, even today, I'm hopeful. And
9 I'm not naive about today's vote. I know how
10 this will end. I know democracy is going to
11 take another bullet in this chamber this
12 morning. The voice of the people will be
13 silenced once again by a pen stroke of
14 politicians who fear them.

15 But here's what keeps me going, what
16 lets me sleep at night, what gets me out of bed
17 in the morning to come back into this chamber
18 and fight again because the promise is bigger
19 than any one vote. The covenant is stronger
20 than any one betrayal. The American spirit
21 cannot be killed by a gerrymandered map.

22 Those revolutionaries at Valley Forge
23 lost battles. They froze, they starved, they
24 buried their friends in shallow graves in the
25 snow, but they won the war.

1 John Lewis had his skull fractured on
2 that bridge, but he got up, he marched again.
3 He ran for congress. He served for 33 years.
4 He fought until his last breath, and he won the
5 war.

6 But here's what authoritarians and
7 would-be kings never understand. You cannot
8 kill an idea whose time has come. Yes,
9 democracy may bleed today. Yes, this body may
10 succeed in rigging these maps. Yes, the party
11 in control might steal a few more seats, and
12 they might hold on to power for a few more
13 years.

14 You can rig the map, but you can't rig
15 the people's determination. You cannot silence
16 our votes, but -- you can silence our votes, but
17 you cannot silence our voices. You can try to
18 break our democracy, but it will not break our
19 will to restore it. The fight doesn't end
20 today. It doesn't end with this vote. It
21 doesn't end until we restore the promise, until
22 we repair what's been broken, until we leave our
23 children an America worthy of the sacrifices
24 that built it.

25 So I will keep fighting because the

1 promise is worth keeping. The covenant is worth
2 honoring. Democracy is worth defending. And
3 America, this magnificent, flawed, frustrating,
4 beautiful experiment in self-governance, America
5 is worth fighting for. Even today, especially
6 today as democracy takes another bullet, I will
7 keep that promise.

8 Thank you, Madam President. Thank you
9 to the people of North Carolina, and may God
10 give us the strength to be worthy of our time
11 and the promise that we're entrusted to keep.

12 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Chitlik, for
13 what purpose do you rise?

14 SENATOR CHITLIK: I would like to ask
15 Senator Hise a question, please.

16 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Hise, do you
17 yield?

18 SENATOR HISE: I yield.

19 PRESIDENT HUNT: He yields.

20 SENATOR CHITLIK: Thank you,
21 Senator Hise. Thank you, Madam President.

22 So one of the public reasons that
23 you've given about why this bill is so important
24 is saying that North Carolina voted for Donald
25 Trump and this is what the people want, they

1 want to implement President Trump's agenda. And
2 I agree with you, the people voted for Donald
3 Trump. I'm not here to dispute elections.

4 But if that is in fact true, why -- can
5 you help me understand why is this not an
6 independent redistricting bill if this is the
7 will of the people?

8 SENATOR HISE: Thank you, Madam
9 Chairman -- Madam President, and for the
10 question.

11 Independent districting has never been
12 part of the history of the state of
13 North Carolina. The power given to the state
14 legislature to draw districts and, conversely,
15 congress as well is given by the
16 US Constitution. I believe it is the
17 requirement of the state legislature to do so.
18 And we have never abdicated that power to any
19 type of independent commission which is, as I've
20 said before many times, I think is a fairly tale
21 anyway. And California probably proves that.
22 They create one until they want to do something
23 else and then they go back to their legislature.
24 So we don't have it and never have.

25 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Chitlik, for

1 what purpose do you rise?

2 SENATOR CHITLIK: I have a follow-up
3 question for Senator Hise, please.

4 PRESIDENT HUNT: Do you yield,
5 Senator Hise?

6 SENATOR HISE: I yield.

7 PRESIDENT HUNT: He yields.

8 SENATOR CHITLIK: Thank you,
9 Senator Hise.

10 I understand that that might be without
11 historical precedent. So let's -- I have a
12 follow-up question to this.

13 Help me understand, if North Carolina
14 voted for, say -- about 53 percent for
15 President Trump, maybe -- we can be generous,
16 maybe it was 54 on a really good day. So help
17 me understand why if 54 percent of
18 North Carolinians voted for President Trump why
19 this body believes -- or excuse me -- why you
20 because I know you are the person who drew the
21 map, so why you think that that is a mandate
22 that 79 percent of our seats should go to
23 Republicans? Help me understand that part.

24 SENATOR HISE: As I have said on
25 multiple occasions and again earlier today, when

1 other states across the country are maximizing
2 and increasing their map proportions for
3 Democrats, it is incumbent upon us not to stand
4 still and allow them to be successful, but we
5 must also maximize our maps in the state of
6 North Carolina to make sure we preserve the
7 balance of power for congress.

8 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Chitlik, for
9 what purpose do you rise?

10 SENATOR CHITLIK: I would like a moment
11 of personal privilege to speak to the bill for
12 the young people in the audience.

13 PRESIDENT HUNT: All right. You may
14 speak to the bill.

15 SENATOR CHITLIK: Thank you.

16 I've noticed that while we were
17 debating this bill we have this wonderful group
18 of it looks like high school students come in,
19 and so welcome. Thank you. You've chosen
20 -- middle school. Wow. Okay. Y'all look
21 fabulous.

22 So I just want to -- you know, I just
23 want to contextualize for you what is happening.
24 I'm sure your incredible teachers have had an
25 opportunity to brief you on the redistricting

1 that's happening today.

2 What you're seeing is not democracy,
3 it's a fallacy of democracy. We're all actors,
4 right, in this game around being able to talk
5 about the power that's happening.

6 SENATOR BERGER: Madam President.

7 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Berger, for
8 what purpose do you rise?

9 SENATOR BERGER: I believe
10 Senator Chitlik under our rules has the floor to
11 debate the bill, not to speak to an audience.

12 PRESIDENT HUNT: Yes. That's correct.
13 Senator Chitlik, please --

14 SENATOR CHITLIK: Sure. I'll debate
15 the merits of the bill. I just want to do a
16 quick summary of where we are.

17 So we had debate yesterday. We had
18 debate today.

19 SENATOR BERGER: Madam President.

20 PRESIDENT HUNT: Yes, Senator Berger.

21 SENATOR BERGER: Again, it is pursuant
22 to the rules appropriate to debate the bill. It
23 is not appropriate to speak to an audience.

24 PRESIDENT HUNT: Yes.

25 Senator Chitlik, please only debate the

1 bill. Don't speak to the audience.

2 SENATOR CHITLIK: Okay. I don't think
3 I need to debate the bill. I think that was all
4 they needed to learn. Thank you.

5 PRESIDENT HUNT: Thank you.

6 Senator Grafstein, for what purpose do
7 you rise?

8 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Madam President,
9 just to ask that the words of senator Garrett
10 that were --

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Objection.

12 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Sorry. I don't
13 know who said that.

14 I'm just asking that the words of
15 Senator Garrett be spread upon the journal.

16 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Newton, for
17 what purpose do you rise?

18 SENATOR NEWTON: I object to the
19 senator's request.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Point of order,
21 Madam President. That's amazing. That's
22 amazing.

23 PRESIDENT HUNT: All right. At this
24 time we're going to vote on the motion to spread
25 the words upon the journal of Senator Garrett.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Madam President,
2 is that a debatable motion?

3 PRESIDENT HUNT: Yes.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you. Just
5 briefly, then, Madam President.

6 What an outrage. You know, they say
7 that the truth only hurts if it should.
8 Senator Garrett spoke the truth. Those true
9 words should be spread upon the journal. I urge
10 you all, regardless of party, to show some
11 respect for your colleagues, to show some
12 respect for our state, for our country, for the
13 freedom of speech. Show some respect. Let's
14 spread these words on the journal.

15 PRESIDENT HUNT: All right. So the
16 motion is to spread the words of senator Garrett
17 on the journal.

18 All in favor of that vote yes, all
19 against it vote no. You have five seconds. The
20 clerk will record the vote.

21 20 having voted in the affirmative, 26
22 in the negative, the motion does not pass.

23 Is there further discussion or debate?

24 Hearing none, the question before the
25 Senate is the passage of Senate Bill 249 on its

1 third reading.

2 All in favor will vote aye, all opposed
3 will vote no. Five seconds will be allowed for
4 voting, and the clerk will record the vote.

5 Senator Meyer. Senator Meyer.
6 Senator Meyer.

7 25 having voted in the affirmative --
8 Senator Lee, for what purpose do you rise?

9 SENATOR LEE: Thank you,
10 Madam President. I was thinking about the
11 previous motion and not this bill. I change my
12 vote no to aye, please.

13 PRESIDENT HUNT: To an aye to the
14 previous motion or of this bill?

15 SENATOR LEE: Aye on this bill.

16 PRESIDENT HUNT: Aye on this bill.
17 Okay.

18 SENATOR MEYER: Madam President --

19 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Meyer.

20 SENATOR MEYER: -- may I be recorded as
21 voting no.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: You're a no.

23 SENATOR MEYER: Thank you.

24 PRESIDENT HUNT: Okay. 26 having voted
25 in the affirmative, 20 in the negative,

1 Senate Bill 249 passes its third reading and
2 will be sent to the House.

3 Senate Bill 777, the clerk will read.

4 THE CLERK: Senate Bill 777, General
5 Assembly Appointments.

6 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Daniel is
7 recognized to explain the bill.

8 SENATOR DANIEL: Thank you,
9 Madam President.

10 Senate Bill 777 contains appointments
11 for the president pro tem and the speaker of the
12 house. Specifically, it fills two vacancies on
13 the college of the Albemarle Board of Trustees
14 and one on the North Carolina Acupuncture
15 Licensing Board. It makes an appointment to the
16 eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf Board
17 of Trustees, and there was one technical
18 correction regarding the prior appointments
19 bill. I ask for your support.

20 PRESIDENT HUNT: Is there further
21 discussion or debate?

22 Senator Batch, for what purpose do you
23 rise?

24 SENATOR BATCH: To ask Senator Daniel a
25 question.

1 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Daniel, do you
2 yield?

3 SENATOR DANIEL: Yes.

4 PRESIDENT HUNT: He yields.

5 SENATOR BATCH: It appears that there
6 are three appointments that are previously made
7 that are now being removed. Can you tell us why
8 three individuals that we've already appointed
9 are being removed from those boards.

10 SENATOR DANIEL: No, not without doing
11 further research.

12 SENATOR BATCH: If we could take a
13 moment, Madam President.

14 PRESIDENT HUNT: I'm sorry. What was
15 your question?

16 SENATOR BATCH: If we could take a
17 recess so that Senator Daniel can research my
18 question.

19 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Daniel, can
20 you do that in a matter of few minutes or --

21 SENATOR DANIEL: Probably five minutes.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: Five minutes. We'll
23 take five minutes.

24 (At ease.)

25 PRESIDENT HUNT: The senate will come

1 back to order.

2 Senator Daniel, for what purpose do you
3 rise?

4 SENATOR DANIEL: To answer
5 Senator Batch's question.

6 So the section that Senator Batch was
7 asking about are three House appointees. My
8 understanding is -- after discussion with staff
9 and talking to Senator Batch is that those
10 appointees don't need to be appointed by
11 statute, just by letter of the speaker, and the
12 House requested this be removed from our prior
13 appointments bill.

14 PRESIDENT HUNT: Is there further
15 discussion or debate?

16 Hearing none, the question before the
17 Senate is the passage of Senate Bill 777 on its
18 second reading.

19 All in favor will vote aye, all opposed
20 will vote no. Five seconds will be allowed for
21 voting, and the clerk will record the vote.

22 Senator Jones, aye.

23 Senator Lowe. Senator Lowe. Aye.

24 Senator Newton, aye.

25 45 having voted in the affirmative, one

1 in the negative, Senate Bill 777 passes its
2 second reading and, without objection, will be
3 read a third time.

4 THE CLERK: The General Assembly of
5 North Carolina enacts.

6 PRESIDENT HUNT: Is there further
7 discussion or debate?

8 Hearing none, all in favor of the
9 passage of Senate Bill 777 on its third reading
10 will say aye.

11 SENATE MEMBERS: Aye.

12 PRESIDENT HUNT: Opposed no.

13 The ayes have it. Senate Bill 777
14 passes its third reading and will be sent to the
15 House.

16 Are there any notices and
17 announcements?

18 Senator Galey, for what purpose do you
19 rise?

20 SENATOR GALEY: A moment of personal
21 privilege.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor for
23 a moment of personal privilege.

24 SENATOR GALEY: Thank you,
25 Madam President.

1 I just -- I received on my desk a
2 firearm lock, lock it up, keep it safe. It
3 doesn't have the name of anybody on it. Rule
4 17J says that if a senator puts an item on
5 another senator's desk, then they should display
6 the name of the senator placing the item.
7 Because I don't know who to thank for
8 this and --

9 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Lowe, are you
10 trying to answer Senator Galey?

11 SENATOR LOWE: I am trying to answer
12 you. I was coming back around there, and I was
13 accosted by someone and didn't get around there
14 fast enough to talk to you personally.

15 SENATOR GALEY: Well, thank you,
16 Senator Lowe, for the gift. I appreciate that,
17 and I will -- I will route it to the person in
18 my family who will be most interested in it.
19 Thank you.

20 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Berger, for
21 what purpose do you rise?

22 SENATOR BERGER: Thank you,
23 Madam President.

24 We have a conference report that's
25 being worked on that is not prepared as of yet.

1 I would ask that the Senate stand in recess
2 until 12:00 noon.

3 PRESIDENT HUNT: The senate will stand
4 at recess until 12:00 noon.

5 (Recess.)

6 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Berger, for
7 what purpose do you rise?

8 SENATOR BERGER: A motion and an
9 announcement.

10 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor.

11 SENATOR BERGER: Thank you,
12 Madam President.

13 Members, we need to stand in recess
14 until 1:00 p.m. We are awaiting the final draft
15 of a conference report. So I would move that we
16 stand in recess until 1:00 p.m.

17 And during the recess, an announcement,
18 Republicans will caucus.

19 PRESIDENT HUNT: Without objection, so
20 ordered. Recess until 1:00.

21 (Recess.)

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senate will come back
23 to order.

24 Senator Daniel, for what purpose do you
25 rise?

1 SENATOR DANIEL: Point of order.

2 PRESIDENT HUNT: State your point of
3 order.

4 SENATOR DANIEL: Thank you,
5 Madam President.

6 Prior to recessing earlier today,
7 Senator Grafstein announced her intention to
8 circulate a discharge petition for
9 Senate Bill 403 under Rule 47B. That
10 announcement and circulation of the petition is
11 premature because it had not been ten
12 legislative days since the bill was referred to
13 the rules committee. This bill was referred to
14 the committee on the hundredth legislative day,
15 and only two legislative days have passed since
16 then. We're now on Day 102.

17 So any announcement of circulation of
18 discharge petition would be in order following
19 the tenth legislative day and would need to be
20 raised again at that time.

21 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Grafstein, for
22 what purpose do you rise?

23 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: To speak to the
24 point of order.

25 PRESIDENT HUNT: Yes. You have the

1 floor.

2 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Thank you,
3 Madam President, and thank you, Senator Daniel.

4 You're correct in the -- on the rule.
5 I'm not going to dispute you on the rule. We
6 have -- I was actually at something earlier
7 today of folks who are here to ask us to fund
8 Medicaid. Hundreds of people were there,
9 providers all over the state.

10 So the discharge petition really is an
11 effort for us to address the call from these
12 folks. I appreciate that it's out of order. We
13 will be bringing it back. My hope is that we
14 don't have to bring it back after ten
15 legislative days. Ten legislative days will be
16 beyond the November 1 timeframe when people are
17 going to start losing benefits, when people are
18 going to start losing providers.

19 So I would ask Senator Daniel as acting
20 rules chair if -- in lieu of the petition, if
21 you would bring Senate Bill 403 to the floor
22 tomorrow so that -- or today so that we can vote
23 on it and make sure that people get the benefits
24 that they are entitled to, so providers don't go
25 out of business or don't have to lay people off.

1 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Grafstein.

2 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: I would ask if
3 Senator Daniel would yield for a question.

4 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Daniel, will
5 you yield?

6 SENATOR DANIEL: I yield.

7 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Senator Daniel,
8 will you bring Senate Bill 403 to the floor as
9 acting rules chair so that we can give relief to
10 people and so that we can fund Medicaid at a
11 level the House and Senate agree on, put aside
12 differences for today, get people what they need
13 in case we don't come back before November which
14 it sounds like we're not?

15 SENATOR DANIEL: So I think,
16 Senator Grafstein, if you refer to the
17 adjournment resolution, that is not in
18 accordance with the adjournment resolution. It
19 wouldn't be eligible for this session.

20 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: I wonder if
21 Senator Daniel will yield for one more question.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Daniel, will
23 you yield?

24 SENATOR DANIEL: I'll yield.

25 PRESIDENT HUNT: He yields.

1 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Senator Daniel,
2 would you be willing to waive the rules so that
3 we can bring that bill back to the floor for
4 consideration?

5 SENATOR DANIEL: No.

6 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Madam President,
7 may I speak one more time on the --

8 SENATOR DANIEL: And it would have to
9 be -- it couldn't just be the Senate. It would
10 have to be -- like to change the adjournment
11 resolution, we would have to have the House
12 agree with us.

13 PRESIDENT HUNT: All right. So the
14 ruling is that it is only the second legislative
15 day, so that is put to bed right now on the
16 point of order.

17 SENATOR GRAFSTEIN: Thank you,
18 Madam President.

19 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Daniel, for
20 what purpose do you rise?

21 SENATOR DANIEL: Motion.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor for
23 a motion.

24 SENATOR DANIEL: If I can find it.
25 Conference report for Senate Bill 449,

1 Continuing Budget Operations Part 4 has been
2 handed in to the principal clerk. I move that
3 it be placed on today's calendar for immediate
4 consideration.

5 PRESIDENT HUNT: So ordered.

6 Senate Bill 449, the clerk will read.

7 THE CLERK: Senate Bill 449, Conference
8 Committee Substitute Continuing Budget
9 Operations Part 4.

10 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Jackson is
11 recognized to explain the conference report.

12 SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you,
13 Madam President.

14 Before I get in to explaining the
15 highlights of this bill, I want to take just a
16 few moments and thank our central staff as well
17 as pro tem staff and all those that have worked
18 on this bill. There's been a lot of time spent
19 on it behind the scenes, making sure it's
20 together and making sure the I's are dotted and
21 the T's are crossed. And we as members don't
22 always see that, and the public certainly
23 doesn't, of the time it takes to put something
24 like this together, but I would like to thank
25 all of them. And the majority of them are

1 sitting here behind me.

2 And I also -- I want to say goodbye.
3 Deborah stand up, please. Deborah Landreth,
4 this will probably be -- and she's probably
5 happy about it, y'all -- will be her last budget
6 cycle with us. She is retiring, and as after a
7 well-earned retirement coming. And I just want
8 to say thank you to you and Jennifer and all
9 those that have worked on this, but thank you,
10 Deborah, and we wish you the very best in your
11 retirement, and thank you for giving us the time
12 you've begin us. And don't be a stranger.
13 Thank you.

14 Let's give Deborah a hand, y'all.

15 [Applause.]

16 And, Deborah, just so you know, I'll
17 miss you, and we all will. And I had to go
18 ahead and say that because y'all know how
19 absent-brained I can be part of the time and I
20 got on the end of all this explaining and I
21 forgot it, so I didn't want to forget it. Try
22 to do the important things first.

23 So, Madam President, with that, I'd
24 like to explain the bill.

25 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor.

1 SENATOR JACKSON: Members, this is a
2 technical fix. These are time-sensitive issues,
3 or so we have been told and we believe them to
4 be. It is pre-negotiated between the House and
5 the Senate, and I'll just highlight briefly some
6 of the changes.

7 We have made several adjustments to
8 various Hurricane Helene programs and provisions
9 including extending the restriction on local
10 tree ordinances as well as valid development
11 approvals by one year for Helene-impacted
12 counties. We've increased the Golden LEAF loan
13 program for small businesses. Hopefully they
14 will be able to get more money out to more
15 businesses.

16 We have modified the Helene local
17 government cash flow loan programs that are
18 administered by the treasurer and modifications
19 to the Local Government Capital Grant Program
20 project set to be denied by FEMA can receive
21 grant funding prior to that without delay.

22 We are allowing the Board of Governors
23 to raise out-of-state tuition at NC Promise
24 institutions by \$1,000 a semester, and this was
25 a request by the UNC system. This balances the

1 need to keep costs down for in-state students
2 while also addressing budget concerns at the
3 North Carolina Promise campuses.

4 There is 2.1 million recurring for
5 VIPER operations of maintenance, 7.2 million
6 nonrecurring for Administrative Office of Courts
7 to implement IT improvements. It allows the SBI
8 to contract with a third party to process
9 fingerprints and criminal background checks. It
10 appropriates nearly 22 million of the biennium
11 from the IT reserve for the state budget system
12 stabilization and replacement program, and this
13 was a request from OSBM.

14 It also waives the local state plan,
15 the 2.4 percent increase for the state health
16 plan. It's going to waive that to the local
17 governments. And we are applying 25 million
18 recurring for the pay plan reserves which we put
19 in place last spring to implement staff
20 increases for the General Assembly authorized,
21 like I said earlier this year, which was last
22 spring, across various agencies, including
23 teachers, through DPI, SBI, State Highway
24 Patrol, and DPS.

25 It appropriates 7 million to the

1 Department of Transportation for ferry
2 maintenance, operations, and dry docking. And
3 it does various other things, but these are the
4 highlights.

5 And, Members, I would ask for your
6 support, and I'll be happy to entertain any
7 questions. Thank you.

8 PRESIDENT HUNT: Is there further
9 discussion or debate?

10 Hearing none -- Senator Mayfield, for
11 what purpose do you rise?

12 SENATOR MAYFIELD: To ask the bill
13 sponsor a question or the conference
14 report -- to ask Senator Jackson a question.

15 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Jackson, do
16 you yield?

17 SENATOR JACKSON: Yes, ma'am.

18 PRESIDENT HUNT: He yields.

19 SENATOR MAYFIELD: Thank you.

20 And you may or may not be able to
21 answer this, but there's a provision in the
22 conference report related to the local
23 government loan program, cash flow loan program,
24 and there's no redlining in that section so
25 it's -- I can't tell what has changed. I'm not

1 suspicious. I don't know -- but my question are
2 what are those changes there?

3 SENATOR JACKSON: Madam President, to
4 respond.

5 Senator Mayfield, I can't tell you the
6 changes. We did tweak that program some to do
7 what the county commissioner association had
8 asked us to do, so we did do that.

9 SENATOR MAYFIELD: So it was in
10 response to a request from the county
11 commissioners.

12 SENATOR JACKSON: Yes, ma'am.

13 SENATOR MAYFIELD: Great. All right.
14 Thank you so much.

15 SENATOR JACKSON: You're welcome.

16 PRESIDENT HUNT: Is there further
17 discussion or debate?

18 Hearing none, the question before the
19 body is the adoption of the conference report
20 for Senate Bill 449.

21 All in favor will vote aye, all opposed
22 will vote no. Five seconds will be allowed for
23 voting, and the clerk will report the vote.

24 46 having voted in the affirmative, 0
25 in the negative, the conference report for

1 Senate Bill 449 is adopted and the House will be
2 so notified.

3 Is there further business to come
4 before the Senate?

5 If not, Senator Berger -- Senator Hise,
6 for what purpose do you rise?

7 SENATOR HISE: A moment of personal
8 privilege.

9 PRESIDENT HUNT: Yes, you have the
10 floor.

11 SENATOR HISE: Thank you,
12 Madam President.

13 Members of the Senate, I just wanted to
14 take a moment -- hopefully this is the last day
15 in a while that we're going to be meeting -- to
16 recognize my research assistant, Leah Byers, who
17 is leaving us here in the General Assembly to go
18 be a liaison, so you'll still get to see her
19 regularly in the building and others. I'll let
20 her do the announcements where and when that is,
21 but I wanted to take the opportunity to thank
22 her for the years of work that she's given to my
23 office, put together with making sure the
24 budget -- both passed and unpassed budgets that
25 we've done have been put together and

1 appropriate and make sure were represented.

2 She's done an incredible job, and I
3 couldn't be more excited to see her moving up
4 and on. There's great things ahead for you and
5 hopefully in state government, but in any
6 direction you seem to go. And thank you for the
7 opportunity for us to work with you.

8 [Applause.]

9 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Settle, for
10 what purpose do you rise?

11 SENATOR SETTLE: A moment of personal
12 privilege, please.

13 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor.

14 SENATOR SETTLE: Thank you,
15 Madam President.

16 With all the fun we've been having in
17 here the last couple of days, I haven't had a
18 chance. I wanted to bring this up and just
19 congratulate -- in my office, my intern Liva
20 Lathem back here will be graduating from
21 North Carolina State this fall. And we found
22 out today that she has -- yesterday she has been
23 accepted and a full scholarship to Elon Law
24 School, so we're really happy about that and
25 wanted to congratulate her. Thank you.

1 [Applause.]

2 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Adcock, for
3 what purpose do you rise?

4 SENATOR ADCOCK: A moment of personal
5 privilege.

6 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor.

7 SENATOR ADCOCK: Please join me in
8 recognizing and honoring the senator to my left,
9 Senator Kandie Smith on her birthday yesterday.

10 [Applause.]

11 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Applewhite,
12 for what purpose do you rise?

13 SENATOR APPLEWHITE: A moment of
14 personal privilege.

15 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor.

16 SENATOR APPLEWHITE: Thank you -- oh, I
17 turned my own mic off.

18 Thank you, Madam President.

19 I think we all can agree that this is
20 really tough work, what we do here in the
21 Senate, many hours that we spend not in this
22 chamber preparing for to do the people's work.
23 And I just wanted to take a moment to say to my
24 Democratic colleagues how much I appreciate you
25 all. And although it's hard for all of us, it's

1 hard for us to be in the minority knowing that
2 every day we come on the floor, we're going to
3 lose. We are going to lose the battle. We are
4 going to lose the vote. But we still show up
5 every day, and we do this work. And I just
6 wanted to say thank you for that. And we still
7 laugh, and we still enjoy each other.

8 And this last two days has really been
9 a challenge for us with the redistricting bill,
10 and I just wanted to acknowledge all of the
11 floor speeches that we gave and spoke about
12 democracy. That was really important.

13 And many of you know, I love political
14 science, that's my graduate degree, and I just
15 eat this stuff up all day, but I did want to
16 really recognize Senator Garrett's comments this
17 morning, his floor speech. I enjoyed it. I
18 think that you painted an accurate historical
19 narrative. I listened to your words. I was
20 somehow at the no king marches. I was somehow
21 crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge. I somehow
22 saw the feet being wrapped at Valley Forge of
23 frozen feet, right. So thank you for your
24 words.

25 And as you were speaking, there was a

1 group of middle schoolers that came in, and I
2 watched how they were watching you. And
3 although your words were not sprinkled across
4 the journal, they were sprinkled across the
5 hearts and minds of our young people.

6 Thank you, Madam President.

7 PRESIDENT HUNT: Upon motion of
8 Senator Jarvis of Davidson and Davie county, the
9 chair is happy to extend courtesies to Lexington
10 city councilman Joe Watkins who is in the
11 gallery. Please stand and be recognized.

12 [Applause.]

13 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Murdock, for
14 what purpose does rise?

15 SENATOR MURDOCK: Point of personal
16 privilege.

17 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor for
18 a point of personal privilege.

19 SENATOR MURDOCK: A notice was sent out
20 by the clerk, but still just wanted to take the
21 time since we'll be adjourning for -- or
22 adjourning now for a few days.

23 We did unfortunately lose a former
24 colleague that was a part of my freshman class,
25 Senator Ernestine Bazemore. So she was elected

1 in 2020, joined -- or elected in 2020, joined in
2 2020, and was only with us for a short period,
3 but had to lift her up as a lot of you know that
4 are still serving had so many health challenges
5 while she was serving but would still muster up
6 a smile, ask us how we were doing, did her best
7 to represent her district. Before that, was an
8 educator, was even vice chair of the Bertie
9 county commission, was really a legend in her
10 district, had a passion and a heart for rural
11 communities, particularly healthcare access and
12 broadband.

13 So just on the Senate floor wanted to
14 acknowledge the life, legacy, and memory of the
15 late, great state Senator Ernestine Bazemore.

16 PRESIDENT HUNT: Is there further
17 business to come before the Senate?

18 Senator Garrett, for what purpose do
19 you rise?

20 SENATOR GARRETT: For a moment of
21 personal privilege.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: You have the floor.

23 SENATOR GARRETT: Colleagues, Guilford
24 county lost a true public servant on Monday.
25 Dot Kendall Kearns was the first woman to serve

1 on the Guilford County Board of Commissioners.
2 She was a member of the High Point City Council
3 and then went on to become a member of the
4 Unified Guilford County Board of Education. And
5 so I would just ask -- also a personal friend of
6 mine and served with my mother on the Board of
7 Education for 20 years -- that we adjourn in her
8 honor today.

9 PRESIDENT HUNT: Without objection, so
10 ordered.

11 Is there further business to come
12 before the Senate?

13 If not, Senator Berger is recognized
14 for a motion.

15 Senator Garrett, could you please
16 repeat the name that we are adjourning in honor
17 in memory of.

18 SENATOR GARRETT: Yes. Sorry. Dot
19 Kendall.

20 PRESIDENT HUNT: Dot Kendall.

21 SENATOR GARRETT: Kearns.

22 PRESIDENT HUNT: Hurns?

23 SENATOR GARRETT: Kearns, K-E-A-R-N-S.

24 PRESIDENT HUNT: Thank you.

25 SENATOR GARRETT: Thank you.

1 SENATOR BERGER: Thank you,
2 Madam President.

3 I move that Senate do now adjourn in
4 memory of Dot Kendall Kearns, to reconvene on
5 October 22nd -- that's tomorrow -- 2025, at
6 10:00 a.m. Members, this will be a nonvoting
7 session. There will be no further voting
8 sessions this week.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Objection,
10 Madam President, to adjourning.

11 PRESIDENT HUNT: Okay. We will have a
12 vote on whether or not to adjourn.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: May I speak to
14 the --

15 PRESIDENT HUNT: Yes.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you,
17 Madam President.

18 I appreciate the person whose honor
19 we're -- the motion is to adjourn. I'm not
20 objecting to that.

21 My objection is we have business to do.
22 I've raised several times today this issue
23 around Medicaid. I feel like I have to raise it
24 one more time. There are hundreds of people in
25 this building right now, there are thousands of

1 people across this state who are going to lose
2 access to services. There are small providers
3 across this state who are going to lose their
4 businesses if we don't do something by
5 November 1st.

6 I am objecting that we're adjourning
7 today without taking care of that very important
8 piece of business. And for that reason,
9 Madam President, I hope that we can all vote not
10 to adjourn at this time.

11 PRESIDENT HUNT: Give me a second on
12 the adjournment motion.

13 SENATOR BERGER: Madam President, I'll
14 restate the motion and see if there's a second
15 out there.

16 PRESIDENT HUNT: Senator Berger.

17 SENATOR BERGER: Members, I'll move
18 that Senate do now adjourn in memory of
19 Dot Kendall Kearns, to reconvene on
20 October 22nd, that's tomorrow, at 10:00 a.m.
21 Members, this would be a nonvoting session. No
22 further voting sessions this week.

23 SENATOR DANIEL: Second.

24 PRESIDENT HUNT: We will now have a
25 vote on the adjournment motion.

1 All in favor of adjourning will vote
2 aye, all opposed will vote no. Five seconds
3 will be allowed for voting, and the clerk will
4 record the vote.

5 Senator Everitt. Senator Everitt.
6 Senator Everitt.

7 Senator Newton. Senator Newton.
8 Senator Newton.

9 28 having voted aye, 16 having voted
10 no, the motion to adjourn passes.

11 The motion is that the Senate do now
12 adjourn to reconvene Wednesday, October 22,
13 2025, at 10:00 a.m., seconded by Senator Daniel.

14 All in favor will say aye.

15 SENATE MEMBERS: Aye.

16 PRESIDENT HUNT: Opposed no.

17 The ayes have it and the Senate stands
18 adjourned in memory and honor of Dot Kendall
19 Kearns.

20 (Adjourned.)
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Denise Myers Byrd, CSR 8340