



Inaugural Address

of

Martin Joseph O'Malley

January 17, 2007

Annapolis, Maryland

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Martin Joseph O'Malley
Sixty-first Governor of Maryland

Wednesday, the Seventeenth of January

2007

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GOVERNOR MARTIN JOSEPH O'MALLEY INAUGURAL REMARKS

WEDNESDAY, THE SEVENTEENTH OF JANUARY, 2007

Thank you for coming together today to mark a new day in Maryland. And thank you for the work we will do together to make our state stronger... Stronger, together, as One Maryland.

One Maryland united by our belief in the dignity of every individual. One Maryland united by our responsibility to advance the common good. One Maryland united in our understanding that there is a unity to spirit and matter, and that what we choose to do in our own lifetimes does matter.

Today, with great humility and resolve, we gather on the steps of our historic Statehouse where, in 1783, General George Washington resigned his command of the Continental Army.

He willingly turned over his sword of command and submitted to the collective will and wisdom of the representative democracy of his neighbors and countrymen. He willingly pledged his allegiance to a system of governance whose very survival depends on our respect for one another... depends on the virtue of compromise... depends – in every generation – on our ability to find common ground to advance the common good... and depends on individual responsibility in the face of our greatest challenges.

At a time marked by great peril and great possibility, General Washington – Citizen Washington – opened another chapter of the American Revolution, here in Maryland, by choosing a better, stronger future.

PERIL AND POSSIBILITY

My friends, like Washington, we find ourselves living here in Maryland during another time marked by peril and possibility.

Some of the perils we face – budget deficits, polluted waters, drug addiction and crumbling infrastructure – are of our own recent making. Other perils, like global warming, the global economy, global terrorism, and global migration, are powered by additional forces – many of which are seemingly beyond our reach. But all of these perils demand that we take responsibility to defend and advance our common good.

We have choices to make, as One Maryland. Choices about our shared future. Choices between the perils and possibilities of our present. Already possessing the strength, we must now find, again, the will... the will to make a better, stronger future for our children and theirs.

For against the peril of terrorist threat and the incessant foreign chemical attacks of cocaine and heroin, we have the possibility of strengthening our homeland security efforts... making our port a leader... using our technology and talents to deter and prevent attack... reforming our public

safety institutions to save lives. Maryland is one of America's wealthiest states; there is no excuse for us to also be one of America's most violent and vulnerable.

As too many family paychecks are threatened by pressures of the global economy and too many manufacturing jobs head overseas, we have the possibility of building a new creative economy in Maryland, based on science, security, technology and healing – while also protecting our farmers, watermen, small towns and Maryland traditions. An economy based on the talents, skills and brainpower of the people of Maryland. We have the possibility of joining with our neighbors in the District of Columbia and Virginia to form a powerhouse regional economy capable of competing and winning on the world stage.

In the face of rising energy costs, electric bills and our addiction to foreign oil, we have the possibility not only of restoring the regulatory framework of our State government, but we also have the possibility of becoming a world leader in the development of clean and renewable energy, alternative fuels, green building technologies and cleaner burning cars.

With the Chesapeake Bay's very survival imperiled by poorly planned sprawl and a multitude of other manmade ills – from storm water runoff to broken sewer systems – we have the possibility to rescue this natural jewel... to fuse science, government and personal responsibility together to expand buffer zones, cover crops, open space and oyster beds... and to

harness the growth that is coming to rebuild our cities and towns, and preserve our quality of life and our Bay.

With our children's economic future threatened by an inadequate national system of education that is producing too few science, technology, engineering and math graduates, we have the possibility, in Maryland, to build the best system of public education in the country from K through 12 to college and beyond. Where working parents will never have to tell their children: "There is no way our family can ever afford college."

With the soaring costs of healthcare imperiling the well-being of working families and threatening the solvency of responsible small businesses throughout Maryland, we have the possibility of rolling up our sleeves to find ways to expand the affordability of healthcare coverage for our people.

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

In so many ways – healthcare, education, transportation, public safety – we live in a time framed by peril and possibility, but defined, ultimately, by the responsibility we take through our own actions to choose a better, stronger Maryland for our children and our children's children.

As of this moment, honoring your trust, I take responsibility for doing all that I can to make your government work again. I take responsibility for restoring our regulatory framework so that your government can stand up to

powerful, wealthy special interests when they try to profiteer on the backs of the working people of our state. I take responsibility for doing all that I can to make your government open, transparent and accountable. I take responsibility for never trying to divide our people by race, class, religion or region. I take responsibility for setting a tone of mutual respect inside the halls of government – and for working with leaders of both Parties to find common ground to advance the common good.

But there are things for which each of us must take responsibility, as individuals, or the work of our government will be futile. Safe neighborhoods. A strong and growing middle class. Educational opportunity. Financial fairness. Protecting God's creation. Caring for the sick. Responsibility for ourselves, our families and our neighbors. These are the things for which each of us must take responsibility.

ONE MARYLAND

As we rise as One Maryland to meet the perils and possibilities of our own times, we do so knowing that Maryland's strengths are more than equal to the challenges before us.

The decisions we make for the greater good sometimes require sacrifice. For too long in Washington – and in Annapolis – we have acted as if our people had lost the capacity to sacrifice and to make difficult choices. But “to govern is to choose.” And in order to harness opportunity and meet our

security challenges, we must choose to take responsibility for our shared future.

In our One Maryland, progress is always possible; and, together we can make real progress – as we have before – with respect for one another, with truth about ourselves and the problems we face, and faith in our ideals as a people.

And in so choosing, we can, once again, lead our country into yet another chapter of the American Revolution – a revolution based on the dignity of the individual and powered by our shared responsibility to advance the common good.

So let us begin anew in our State, where all things are possible and where progress is every citizen's responsibility. In One Maryland, where we move forward together.