

REMARKS-CASPER R. TAYLOR, JR.
SPEAKER MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
JANUARY 10, 1996

THANK YOU. GOVERNOR GLENDENING, DISTINGUISHED
FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS, FRIENDS. MY FELLOW
COLLEAGUES OF THIS GREAT HOUSE LET ME BEGIN BY
CONGRATULATING YOU FOR ELECTING ELIJAH CUMMINGS AS OUR
SPEAKER PRO TEM. HE IS AN OUTSTANDING FRIEND AND ADVISOR
TO ME PERSONALLY. AND ALL OF US HAVE WITNESSED HIS ABILITY
TO LEAD THIS HOUSE IN SESSION. HE IS A BRIDGE BUILDER AND I
AM PROUD OF HIM.

THANK YOU FOR AGAIN ELECTING ME SPEAKER OF THE
HISTORIC AND GREAT MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES. I HOPE
AND PRAY THAT I FULFILL THIS SINGULAR HONOR AND EXPRESSION
OF TRUST. I CAN PROMISE YOU THAT NO ONE WILL WORK HARDER
TO CREATE THE LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC POLICY WHICH WILL BE
FASHIONED BY THIS HOUSE OVER THE NEXT 90 DAYS. WE ENDED
LAST APRIL ON A NOTE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMON SENSE IN

LAW MAKING. I TRUST WE CAN USE SOME OF PHILIP HOWARD'S THOUGHTS AS EXPRESSED IN THE DEATH OF COMMON SENSE AS WE GRAPPLE WITH COMMON SENSE THIS WINTER.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR HAS MADE. WHEN I GREETED YOU THIS TIME LAST YEAR, MANY OF YOU WERE NEW TO THE LEGISLATURE. AS I SAID AT SINE DIE LAST APRIL, THE FRESHMAN CLASS MORE THAN DISTINGUISHED ITSELF IN THE 1995 SESSION -- YOU DEMONSTRATED THAT NEW MEMBERS ARE EQUALLY THOUGHTFUL AND DISTINGUISHED IN THIS BODY. I SUSPECT YOU FELT AS YOU LEFT HERE LAST APRIL, THAT THIS 1996 SESSION MIGHT BE AN EASIER ONE BECAUSE EXPERIENCE HAD TAUGHT YOU SOMETHING. BUT THE PUBLIC ARENA HAS BECOME MUCH LESS SEDATE SINCE APRIL.

* ESCALATING JUVENILE VIOLENCE AND THE CONTINUED DIMINISHMENT OF THE ROLE OF FATHERHOOD IS FUNDAMENTALLY DESTROYING OUR SOCIAL CONTRACT.

* WE HAVE WITNESSED THE SO-CALLED "REVOLUTION"
OCCURRING SOME 50 MILES FROM HERE IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL
WHERE THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES IS SEEKING TO
REDEFINE THE FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONSHIP IN WAYS THAT WILL
PROFOUNDLY AFFECT OUR PEOPLE AND OUR STATE.

* MARYLAND'S ECONOMY APPEARS TO HAVE SOFTENED,
CAUSING A DECREASE IN OUR REVENUES THAT WILL AFFECT NOT
ONLY BUSINESSES AND JOBS IN OUR STATE, BUT WILL ALSO IMPACT
OUR STATE BUDGET.

* NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES HAVE BEEN CREATED
BY THE DECISION OF NEW BUSINESS ENTERPRISES TO MOVE INTO
OUR STATE . . . ENTERPRISES SUCH AS THE WASHINGTON REDSKINS,
THE CLEVELAND BROWNS, AND THE GALLO BIOMEDICAL INSTITUTE.

* MAJOR COMPANIES CONTINUE TO DOWNSIZE OR RESTRUCTURE
CREATING JOB LOSS AND ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY FOR
HARDWORKING PEOPLE ACROSS THIS COUNTRY AND IN MARYLAND.

TODAY, WE MUST MAKE A PLEDGE TO EACH OTHER AND TO THE PEOPLE OF MARYLAND. WHILE WE WILL FULLY DEBATE THE ISSUES, WE WILL AVOID THE DIVISIVENESS, THE GRIDLOCK, PARTISANSHIP, AND THE RANCOROUS DEBATE THAT HAS LED TO A CRISIS AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL. WE MUST NOT LET PARTY, GEOGRAPHY, REGION OR ANY OTHER DEMOGRAPHICS OR SPECIAL INTEREST DIVIDE US, OR TO PARALYZE US. WHO TAKES CREDIT FOR THIS--WHO GETS THE APPLAUSE FOR THAT--WHO GETS BLAMED FOR SOMETHING ELSE--WE ARE SIMPLY NOT GOING TO PLAY THAT GAME IN THIS CHAMBER. AS BENJAMIN DISRAELI OBSERVED, "IT IS MUCH EASIER TO BE CRITICAL THAN CORRECT". DURING MY YEARS IN THIS HOUSE, WE HAVE ALWAYS SET AN EXAMPLE AS A PRODUCTIVE, HARDWORKING AND RESPONSIBLE LEGISLATIVE BODY; AND I KNOW THIS SESSION WILL BE NO EXCEPTION.

MARYLAND HAS MUCH TO BE PROUD OF. BESIDES OUR BOUNTIFUL NATURAL RESOURCES, WE HAVE A SUPERIOR

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, AND AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM THAT IS PROVING ITSELF ACCOUNTABLE AND RESPONSIVE. EACH PART OF OUR STATE CONTRIBUTES TO THIS GREATNESS, FROM BALTIMORE TO ROCKVILLE, BEL AIR TO LEONARDTOWN, FROM OAKLAND TO OCEAN CITY. WHILE EACH OF US MUST REPRESENT OUR INDIVIDUAL JURISDICTIONS, EACH DELEGATE IN THIS CHAMBER MUST ALSO BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR OUR STATE AS A WHOLE. A GAIN FOR ONE LOCAL JURISDICTION DOES NOT MEAN A LOSS FOR ANOTHER. TOO OFTEN, WE FORGET THAT WHEN MARYLAND WINS, WE ALL WIN.

I ASK ALL OF YOU TO FOLLOW THE INCREDIBLE EXAMPLE OF OUR STATE TREASURER, LUCY MAURER. LUCY'S DECISION TO RETIRE IS ONE THAT SADDENS ALL OF US. SHE IS AN OUTSTANDING TREASURER AND TRULY DEFENDS THE POSITION OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ON THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS. SHE HAS BEEN A GREAT PROTECTOR OF THE PUBLIC FUNDS OF THIS STATE AND HAS GAINED NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR HER WORK. BUT IT IS HER LEGISLATIVE CAREER THAT SERVES AS SUCH AN IMPORTANT EXAMPLE TO ALL OF US DURING THIS SESSION. SHE EXEMPLIFIED

THE "STATEWIDE" DELEGATE, FOCUSING HER ENERGIES AND HER TALENT ON STATEWIDE PROBLEMS.

EACH OF US BRINGS DIFFERENT SKILLS AND A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS THAT THE PEOPLE HAVE SENT US HERE TO ADDRESS. I GREW UP IN A SMALL TOWN IN WESTERN MARYLAND THAT TAUGHT ME VALUES, GAVE ME A SENSE OF PURPOSE, A SENSE OF WORTH THAT MADE ME BELIEVE IN MYSELF, AND MADE ME BELIEVE THAT PROBLEMS COULD BE SOLVED, AND THAT TRUST AND TEAMWORK COULD ACCOMPLISH GREAT THINGS. I LEARNED THAT TOMORROW COULD AND WOULD BE BETTER-- NOT AUTOMATICALLY -- BUT ONLY IF WE WORK AT IT. IN THE CUMBERLAND OF MY YOUTH, THERE WERE FOUR INSTITUTIONS THAT FORMED THE BUILDING BLOCKS TO FORGE A STRONG COMMUNITY: THE FAMILY, THE SCHOOL , THE PLACE OF WORSHIP AND THE GOVERNMENT.

THE FAMILY PROVIDED BASIC PRINCIPLES, DISCIPLINE, AND A

SENSE OF VALUES. RELIGIOUS TRAINING GAVE US A MORAL FOUNDATION AND A SENSE OF OBLIGATION TO OTHERS IN THE STREETS OF OUR TOWN AND FOR OUR COUNTRY. WE LEARNED RIGHT FROM WRONG FROM OUR FAMILIES AND OUR RELIGIONS. OUR SCHOOLS TAUGHT US ABOUT THE WORLD, AND GAVE US THE SKILLS TO SUPPORT OURSELVES AND OUR COMMUNITY. GOVERNMENT PROVIDED PUBLIC ORDER AND AN ENVIRONMENT TO ENJOY LIFE AND LIVE SAFELY AMONG OTHERS.

BUT THE HOMETOWN OF MY YOUTH IS NOT THE HOMETOWN OF TODAY. THE JOB OF BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES STILL REMAINS, ALTHOUGH THE HURDLES ARE HIGHER THAN EVER PARTLY BECAUSE THE FLOOR OF ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR IS LOWER THAN EVER. THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT DO THE JOB OF THE FAMILY OR THE CHURCH, NEITHER OF WHICH HAS AS STRONG AN INFLUENCE ON OUR SOCIETY AS IT USED TO HAVE.

AND SO, AS PART OF OUR EFFORT THIS SESSION, WE WILL FOCUS OUR LEGISLATIVE RESOURCES ON THE PROFOUND PROBLEM

OF JUVENILE VIOLENCE AND FATHERHOOD. JUVENILE VIOLENCE
HERE AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY IS REAL AND GROWING WORSE. IN
MARYLAND, THE JUVENILE INTAKE POPULATION INCREASED BY
NEARLY TEN PERCENT FROM 1994 OVER 1995. IN THE LAST TEN
YEARS, JUVENILE VIOLENT CRIME NATIONWIDE GREW BY A
STAGGERING 55 PERCENT. WHILE THERE ARE MANY CAUSES FOR
THIS DISTURBING TREND, UNDOUBTEDLY THEY RELATE TO THE
BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY STRUCTURE, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,
CHILD ABUSE, CHILD NEGLECT AND THE DRUG CULTURE. WE CAN
NO LONGER AFFORD A BAND-AID APPROACH TO THIS PROBLEM. WE
MUST ANALYZE THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF OUR
PUBLIC RESOURCES, INCLUDING FOSTER CARE, CHILD SUPPORT
ENFORCEMENT, ADOPTION, FAMILY PRESERVATION, AND WELFARE.
WE MUST EXAMINE THE WAY OUR COURT SYSTEMS DEAL WITH
JUVENILES, FROM INTAKE TO INCARCERATION. MOST
IMPORTANTLY, WE NEED TO TALK TO THE EXPERTS, PEOPLE FROM
AROUND THE COUNTRY WHO KNOW THE MOST ABOUT THESE
ISSUES. THAT IS WHY I HAVE ASKED THE LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP,
PARTICULARLY CHAIRMAN RAWLINGS AND CHAIRMAN VALLARIO

TO CONVENE A LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT ON THE ISSUE OF JUVENILE VIOLENCE AND THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE FAMILY AND FATHERHOOD EARLY IN THIS SESSION. WE WILL PROVIDE A FORUM TO SPARK OUR LEGISLATIVE EFFORT DURING THIS SESSION AND BEYOND TO CHANGE OUR FUNDAMENTAL CULTURE ON VIOLENCE AND FATHERHOOD.

I ALSO BELIEVE THIS SESSION MUST FOCUS ON THE ISSUE OF TAX REFORM. LAST YEAR, THE GOVERNOR, THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, AND MYSELF COMMITTED OURSELVES TO DEVELOPING A PERSONAL INCOME TAX CUT THIS SESSION. WE STATED THEN THAT FEDERAL CUTBACKS AND ECONOMIC SLOWDOWNS COULD AFFECT THE SEQUENCE AND AMOUNT OF SUCH A CUT, BUT A CUT WOULD BE OFFERED FOR CONSIDERATION THIS YEAR. CONTRARY TO RECENT NEWS REPORTS, I WILL KEEP OUR COMMITMENT OF LAST YEAR, AND WE WILL BEGIN TODAY TO DEBATE VARIOUS PROPOSALS TO REFORM OUR TAX STRUCTURE. THE GOVERNOR, THE PRESIDENT AND MYSELF HAVE CONSISTENTLY URGED THAT WE DELAY ANY FINAL DECISION UNTIL AFTER THE MARCH REVENUE ESTIMATES, BUT THE PROCESS REQUIRES US TO BEGIN THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION,

DEBATE AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY NOW.

THE HOUSE LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN WORKING ON A PACKAGE OF BILLS THAT I BELIEVE WILL BE IMPORTANT IN THE DISCUSSION THAT UNFOLDS IN THE COMING MONTHS. I HAVE DISTRIBUTED A SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENT OUTLINING AN AGENDA WHICH CAPTURES THE PUBLIC ISSUES DEALING WITH THE ECONOMY, JOBS, JUVENILE VIOLENCE AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS. I HASTEN TO ADD THAT, THESE BILLS ARE IDEAS FOR DISCUSSION AND DEBATE, NOT "TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT" PROPOSALS. THEY ARE MEANT TO FOCUS OUR EFFORTS AND STIMULATE DEBATE SO WE CAN FIND CONSENSUS AND MOVE FORWARD.

AS YOU MAY RECALL, PRESIDENT MILLER AND I HOSTED THE FIRST ELECTRONIC STATE-GOVERNMENT TOWN MEETING SEVERAL MONTHS AGO. THE HOUSE LOOKS FORWARD TO CONTINUING IT'S PARTNERSHIP WITH PRESIDENT MILLER AND THE STATE SENATE AS WE WORK TOGETHER WITH GOVERNOR GLENDENING AND HIS

ADMINISTRATION. WE DEGRADE THE PARTNERSHIP WHEN WE DIVIDE EACH OTHER AS INSIDERS OR OUTSIDERS, AS REAL PEOPLE OR UNREAL PEOPLE. GOVERNOR WE DO NOT ASK FOR YOUR EFFECTIVENESS. WE ASK FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO A CO-EQUAL PARTNERSHIP AND WE WILL BOTH BE EFFECTIVE.

IN FOUR SHORT YEARS, EACH OF US, GOD WILLING, WILL WITNESS THE NEW MILLENNIUM AS MARYLAND BEGINS A NEW CENTURY. OUR ACTIONS THIS SESSION WILL HELP TO INSURE THAT MARYLAND ENTERS THE NEW CENTURY AS A NATIONAL MODEL FOR LIFE IN AMERICA: ECONOMICALLY, ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURALLY, SOCIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY. WE WON'T ACCOMPLISH THIS BY SIMPLY PASSING LAWS. WE MUST ALSO CONTINUE TO NURTURE OUR LEADERSHIP ABILITIES, OUR COMPETITIVE SPIRIT AND OUR POSITIVE ATTITUDE.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR FRIENDSHIP, YOUR CONFIDENCE AND YOUR TRUST.