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## Governor Chris Christie's 2016 State of the State Address As Prepared for Delivery

Tuesday, January 12, 2016

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### Governor Chris Christie's 2016 State of the State Address As Prepared for Delivery

Trenton, New Jersey  
January 12, 2016

Lt. Governor, Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Legislators, friends – and my fellow New Jerseyans:

This is the sixth time I have delivered my annual report on the condition of our state, as required by the Constitution of New Jersey.

Before my first visit to this chamber as Governor, I received a number of warnings from across our state's political class.

I was warned not to come here and waste my time talking about real reform.

I was told to under promise as a way to over deliver – or at least break even.

I was warned by the chattering class not to pick battles with special interests – only to pick the fights I could definitely win.

And no matter what, I was told not to raise expectations of actual governing – because New Jersey was basically ungovernable.

When I arrived here, what did I find?

New Jersey was broke, economically depressed and failing. Decades of bad governing had turned our state into an economic basket case. We had grown zero net private sector jobs in eight years. Zero. We were dead in the water.

In the eight years before I became Governor, this state had 115 tax and fee increases. We were one of the most heavily taxed states in the nation.

Jobs and businesses were fleeing. Unemployment was nearly at 10 percent.

Crime was running rampant in our cities. A growing achievement gap threatened thousands of students with a lifetime of reduced opportunities.

The same people who told me not to try had of course decided to stop trying themselves years before. I stood here and promised we would bring real change to this city.

Well here we are. Six years later.

The state of New Jersey is strong and growing stronger every day. And everyone who said that New Jersey is ungovernable was wrong.

In 2015, our economic recovery went from strong to stronger. We achieved the best private sector job creation in New Jersey in fifteen years. After creating no jobs for eight years, we've created 224,000 new jobs in our six years. Our

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unemployment rate has fallen to 5.3 percent, the lowest it's been since 2008. Home sales continued to recover in 2015, rising by nearly 14 percent over the year before, and the number of construction permits issued is 10 percent higher than 2014 – at the highest level since 2006. Last year foreclosures fell by 20 percent – with declines in every single county in our state.

On our watch, New Jersey has pulled back from the economic brink.

We've brought discipline back to our public finances too. We've now achieved six consecutive balanced budgets with no new taxes. Our discretionary spending for fiscal year 2016 is \$2.3 billion below 2008 levels.

We've shown that smaller government is better government. We've shrunk the size of government while delivering better and more efficient public services. There are now nearly 10,000 fewer state employees than when I took office.

Property taxes were increasing seven percent a year for a decade before we arrived. The last half decade, on our watch and under our 2% cap, have averaged 1.9%. With more reform, we could do even better.

That's how we've achieved historic levels of state investment in our schools system, with more than \$12.8 billion in funding for our schools this year. That's how we've continued to make progress with revitalizing schools in some of our lowest achieving districts in Newark, Camden and Asbury Park.

At the same time we reformed teacher tenure rules, greatly expanded charter schools, established Renaissance schools under the Urban Hope Act and now have seen two years in a row of graduation rate increases in what was once the worst school district in New Jersey.

We've continued to make progress towards building safer, stronger communities, strengthening law enforcement and keeping violent offenders off the streets - while also helping to build the conditions for long term peace in our communities. From 2011 to 2014, crime in New Jersey fell 20 percent and incarceration fell nearly 10 percent. In Camden, once the most violent city in America, the murder rate has dropped 52% in the three years since, with the Mayor, we transformed the police force.

And one of the achievements that I'm proudest of – we've helped thousands of people whose lives have been devastated by drugs to get the help they need. Instead of prosecuting a failed war on drugs - a war on our own citizens – we've classified drug addiction as the illness it truly is, and worked to treat and rehabilitate some of the most vulnerable members of our society. Last year alone I signed ten new laws to address this issue, and today we're going to talk about the next steps we need to take to continue making progress.

All these achievements are more than points on a scorecard. These are lives saved and communities transformed.

Every single one of these accomplishments means another child will be able to reach their full potential in school and in life.

It means another mother and father able to find fulfilling employment, and provide for their family.

It means more hardworking business owners are able to bring growth and jobs to their communities, and new life and energy to Main Street.

It means towns and neighborhoods where you actually feel safe walking down the street, and feel proud to make that street your home – and a place where we can raise a new generation, and create a new future for New Jersey.

But more than that – we've achieved a victory for a different kind of politics.

Instead of accepting the cynicism and mediocrity of inaction here in New Jersey, we've shown what it means to achieve policies of consequence, principle and compromise.

Instead of hiding from our problems or pretending they don't exist, we've confronted them openly. More often than not, we've done it together, as Republicans and Democrats. We don't agree on everything, but we don't have to – as long as we keep talking to each other and trying to do the right thing.

Instead of slick soundbites, we've governed through hard conversations. I've certainly had plenty of them with many of you in this room. And I intend to have more today. Those conversations haven't always won me friends, but it was never about that. The only thing I've ever tried to win is a better deal for all the people of New Jersey.

Instead of going for the quick fixes or the easy solutions, we've gone for hard solutions and a long term revolution in the way we run our state. This is what it means to be a Governor; to be a real leader. It's the difference between talking a big game and attacking problems head-on and being responsible for achieving solutions. No matter how unpopular – the test is simple – is it right for New Jersey. In the way we teach our children. In the way we care for the most vulnerable members of our society. In the way we keep our streets safe, build better neighborhoods and grow stronger businesses.

Year after year, the results tell us that this approach works.

We turned an economic calamity into six years of growth - and slashed unemployment nearly in half.

We went from a massive budget deficit into six balanced budgets in a row, without raising taxes.

We passed tax reform and simplified our tax code for small businesses.

We passed criminal justice reform, with statewide expansion of mandatory drug courts and reform of our bail system to give non-violent offenders a chance to become productive members of society again.

We passed education reform and reformed teacher tenure for the first time in more than a century to do what's right for students, parents and educators, particularly in our cities and urban areas that needed the most help.

And we passed landmark pension and health benefit reforms with bipartisan support – generating savings of more than \$120 billion for New Jersey taxpayers. In fact, the 2016 fiscal year budget provides a \$1.3 billion payment to the state pension fund, which is the largest pension contribution in the history of our state. Unlike what you hear from the selfish public sector union leadership, by June we will have contributed \$4.4 billion to the pension, more than the last five Governors combined.

So here in New Jersey, we've achieved historic reforms and our state has never been better prepared to face the future. We've proved New Jersey can be governed and leaders who step up and take risks can make the biggest difference for the people we represent. We still have more to do and, please, let us not take steps backwards after all this hard work.

Now in Washington, that's not true. All we're going to hear about the big challenges that we face today as a nation is a lot of hot air from Congress and the White House. The state of the union isn't a call to action, it's a fantasy wish list by a President who has failed us. It's the world as he wishes it was; not the real world his failed leadership has left to all Americans.

For the last six years, we've done something different in New Jersey. A lot of people in this room have shown the courage to set aside partisan differences and achieve real progress. To all those who have chosen to reach out across the aisle – thank you. Thank you for everything you've done for our state.

Now we face a truly dangerous moment. We've got elections for a new Governor and the entire Legislature less than two years away. So now all of you have a choice. Do we keep working to get things done and to move New Jersey forward? Or are we going to pander to special interests, and send New Jersey back to the bad old days? Unfortunately, we see signs of this already. Signs of fiscal irresponsibility to pander to a cynical leadership of a narrow constituency. We can't let this happen.

We need to keep making progress as a state; we've got to hold each other to a higher standard today.

Will you support practical, common sense ideas that the vast majority of people believe in and need us to do; or will you go for short-sighted, politically motivated, fiscally reckless policies which will destroy our state? In the process, we will drive citizens out of New Jersey.

How will we drive citizens from our state? What irresponsible policies am I talking about? Let me be very clear about the course you may pursue and the cost to our state and our citizens.

You have begun the pursuit of a constitutional amendment to guarantee pension payments over all other types of state spending. Ahead of funding for our hospitals. Ahead of support for our colleges and universities. Ahead of taking care of people with disabilities. Ahead of paying for Medicaid. Ahead of rebuilding our roads and bridges. Ahead of jailing criminals. Ahead of replenishing our beaches. Ahead of feeding the most needy. Ahead of protecting our children from abuse. Ahead of helping children with autism and funding cancer research. Ahead of paying for homeland security for New Jersey's mass transit system. How can I say that?

Because none of that spending is guaranteed by the Constitution. All of those issues; education, health care, crime, our environment, support for the poor, protection for our children would be subject to elimination to pay for the pensions of 800,000 current and former public employees. The health, welfare, security and success of the other 8.1 million New Jerseyans become second class concerns; pensions reign supreme. 8.1 million New Jerseyans would become second class citizens. Public pensioners would be a special class of citizens whose retirement is protected above all other public concerns. Protected from recession. Protected from natural disaster. All of that would be in line behind union negotiated pensions – way behind.

If you say no, never – that you would never eliminate that spending to pay for pensions. Never hurt people with disabilities to protect pensions. Never deprive our students to protect pensions. Never diminish health care to protect pensions. Never let criminals leave prison early to protect pensions. Never let our roads and bridges crumble and fall to protect pensions. Never let people go hungry – never let children fall into abuse.

Then, there is only one road you can travel down to avoid the brutal spending cuts that will deprive New Jerseyans of all those things and more. Unfortunately it is a road many of you have traveled down before. Now I will tell New Jerseyans what that road will look like for them.

To pay for this constitutional amendment and not savage the lives of all New Jerseyans, needy and hopeful, hardworking and retired, you must impose a massive tax increase on New Jersey citizens. How massive? It will require \$3 billion to pay for your amendment.

I want to ask each of you who voted for this amendment just 24 hours ago – who are you going to steal this money from in New Jersey? Please don't say millionaires; don't further insult the intelligence of New Jerseyans. Your millionaires tax raises only \$600 million.

Where do you get the other \$2.4 billion? Get ready New Jersey because there is only two ways to do it. You must increase the sales tax from 7% to 10%. A 10% sales tax in New Jersey is unconscionable. It will kill New Jersey retailers and store owners. It will disproportionately hurt New Jersey's middle class and the poor.

You say you would never do that? Well, then, only one option left – raise the income tax 23% on all 3.7 million New Jerseyans who pay that tax. How about that New Jersey? 23% more of your money to Trenton? To pay for pensions? Show of hands in this room from those of you who voted for this amendment. 10% sales tax? 23%

increase in the income tax? New Jersey is watching – let them see now, well in advance, how you are going to take their money from them to repay your union bosses.

This is the truth of your choice and you know it. To pay for gold plated pensions and platinum health benefits for a chosen, constitutionally protected few. To give the teacher who works for 30 years and pays only a total of \$126,000 for his pension and health insurance over his entire career for a total of \$2.4 million in return? Is that fair? Is that right? Are you going to tell New Jersey the truth about your vote yesterday?

The NJEA alone has given the Democratic party \$30 million in donations to their campaigns and PACs over the last two years. Are we supposed to believe those donations and your vote to make them the only constitutionally protected recipients of taxpayer money in New Jersey are not connected? \$30 million from the NJEA for you in return for \$3 billion in tax increases for all New Jerseyans: what a deal.

We must tell New Jersey the truth. This is the road to ruin. Our non-partisan commission put forward an alternative that would avoid this calamity for our state and this injustice for our taxpayers. Stop this before it's too late. We cannot deny funding for health care, education, criminal justice, the poor, our environment, our children and our infrastructure to pander to pensioners. We cannot soak every taxpayer for the benefit of the privileged few. I will lead Republicans and Independents to say no to this outrage – will legislative Democrats join us? And if you won't, how will you explain this to our fellow citizens? You can count on the fact that I will – because I just did.

New Jersey is counting on all of us to make good things happen and to stop the bad ones in their tracks. So let's talk now about the other priorities we need to focus on for the year ahead. Let's roll up our sleeves again and put the public interest ahead of special interests and the status quo.

There are three other big challenges that I want us to work together on this year, and that will allow us to continue delivering dramatic results for New Jersey.

First, we need to continue our work to help the most vulnerable members of our society.

I believe we have what it takes to deliver a legacy of greatness for our state. And the true measure of greatness is found in the strength of our compassion.

Today, I'm asking you to join me in doubling down on our state's fight against drug addiction.

There are few things that I've worked on harder as Governor or that I believe in as strongly as this. Drug addiction, just like cancer, is an illness. It can strike anyone, from any station in life. We're talking about people who could be my son or daughter – people who could be your kids, your husbands and wives. There but for the grace of God go each and every one of us.

Addiction is an illness and is something we can beat.

If we give people the tools and support they need to overcome this disease – and if we choose to free people from the stigma of addiction, and recognize this as the public health challenge it truly is - we can help people to reclaim their lives. We can find the true measure of our compassion.

Over the last few years we've made a lot of progress. We've led the nation in developing programs that help people to get clean and get back to work, and since 2012 we've enacted more than a dozen laws to address the drug epidemic. In 2013 we brought in the drug court program to provide mandatory treatment to first-time, non-violent, non-dealing drug offenders. We integrated employment services with treatment, to help offenders get training and find jobs.

In 2014, we launched a statewide program to help reduce the number of heroin-related deaths by training and equipping first responders to administer the antidote Narcan to overdose victims. Narcan has now been administered more than 7,500 times through this program – and we've achieved the first decline in overdose deaths in our state in four years.

And last July, we instituted a single point of entry for people to gain access to treatment, and more than 30,000 calls have already been made by people looking to connect with drug treatment programs. Not dozens of calls to try to find help; just one call, to one place. Now that's the way government should work for those in need.

Now we have a chance to go further, and allow more of our citizens to get the help they need.

Today I'm announcing an expansion of one of our most promising anti-addiction efforts, the Recovery Coach Program.

This month, the Department of Human Services is launching a treatment intervention pilot program in hard-hit counties for people recovering from drug overdoses. The specialists leading these interventions are often in recovery themselves, and they're deployed to emergency rooms so they can provide guidance, support and referrals for treatment. With the benefit of their own experiences on the path to recovery, these recovery coaches can step in at the moment when victims of drug use are often at their most vulnerable and when support is most needed.

We know intervention can change lives. And today, in this room we have an extraordinary example – John Brogan.

John is 38 and a father of three. For many years, John was sadly a victim of drugs. He overdosed on heroin over and over and was reversed four times with Narcan. He came close to death. And it wasn't until he found support through a 12-step program that he was able to break the curse of addiction.

John has been clean for five years now, and he's dedicated his life to helping other victims escape from drugs. Today, John is a recovery coach, and he's going to work with the State's Recovery Coach Program as it moves forward. When

an overdose victim wakes up and reaches out for support, John is there for them.

We're going to help John and all our other coaches to continue delivering life-changing interventions, by providing \$1.7 million to expand the Recovery Coach Program to an additional six counties in New Jersey.

John, please stand up – thank you for your courage. Thank you for helping us to reclaim lives.

To reclaim more lives, four years ago I also stood in this chamber and called for us to fundamentally change the way we treat nonviolent criminals who are in the thralls of the disease of addiction.

Through the reforms we delivered, like mandatory drug court, we have a smaller prison population today.

Today, this smaller population gives me the ability and opportunity to announce something extraordinarily exciting and unique across our country. We are closing a traditional state prison. Yes, our population is down enough that we have closed Mid-State Prison. Today, it stands empty as testimony to this Administration's work in reducing crime and recidivism. So what do we do with Mid-State? I propose today that we re-open Mid-State as a fully dedicated, certified drug abuse treatment facility for New Jersey prison inmates.

The victims of addiction deserve treatment, whether they're in the community or incarcerated. If we can break the cycle of addiction anywhere, we should break it.

So I've directed Commissioner Lanigan of the Department of Corrections and Commissioner Connolly of the Department of Human Services to implement the first licensed substance abuse treatment program at the Mid-State Correctional Facility. Next year it will re-open for its new mission. We are doing this because every life is a precious gift from God. Again, we must give all our citizens the chance to reclaim their lives.

Completion of a licensed treatment program will also allow inmates to be eligible for help upon release, providing an important safety net for offenders transitioning back into the community. The program is yet another way to reduce recidivism and helps all of our people to become productive members of society again.

Enhanced access to care is time and time again one of the most critical issues raised as I've traveled around the state speaking with providers, victims and their families. This is true in fighting drug addiction, and it's true in helping all those affected by mental illness.

Today, I'm very proud to announce a historic financial commitment of more than \$100 million to increase access to care for mental health and substance use.

We're going to provide more competitive reimbursement rates for services and providers.

As demand for services continues to grow, we also need to widen access. Increased reimbursement rates will help improve critical services and provide more treatment capacity. The investment we're making will change lives and get more people into treatment earlier, instead of the emergency room or prison later. It's the fiscally responsible thing to do – and it's the morally right thing to do.

For someone going through a mental health crisis, they're going to get better care in a treatment facility, not in a prison. We've already trained 2,500 first responders in nine counties on how to recognize and deal with difficult situations, so they can then decide whether it makes more sense to direct someone for treatment. Now we'll pay to train more. By expanding our training program we can help more people to get help faster. Another way to prove we believe every life is precious.

And to really make progress, we also need to provide access to better coordinated care.

Nearly two years ago I commissioned Rutgers University to analyze the characteristics of our most expensive Medicaid patients. What they found was totally clear. Within the top 1 percent of the most-expensive Medicaid patients, more than 86 percent have a mental illness, substance abuse issue, or both. If we can help people get access to coordinated care for their physical conditions, mental health and addiction issues, we can deliver more effective treatment and lower the long-term cost to the state.

To do this we're going to increase funding for three regional Accountable Care Organizations which are working to identify high-cost patients and coordinate their treatment for physical and behavioral health. Through a modest increase in funding, we can reduce unnecessary stays in hospital and avoid crowding up the ER.

So these are some of the important steps that we need to continue caring for some of New Jersey's most vulnerable people. This is a top priority for me this year, as well as for the remainder of my administration. Let's work together to save lives.

I also want us to continue getting our economic house in order. Together, we can continue to deliver the hard reforms New Jersey needs to drive new growth, jobs and investment.

Yes, we've made huge progress on the road to recovery over the last six years. But we've still got a long way to go. Decades of fiscal mismanagement and opposition from some folks in this legislature have slowed the pace of reform.

We need to make New Jersey a better place to do business. We need to get the burden of taxes and red tape off people's backs. We need to help more of our citizens to achieve the prosperity and security they deserve.

Over the last six years, we've seen the incredible benefits that flow to communities when we simplify our tax structure. When we're disciplined about the way our state functions, we can create the right economic framework in which the

middle class, businesses and communities can reach their full potential. When we reined in property taxes by putting a 2 percent hard cap and passing interest arbitration reform, we put power back in the hands of communities.

When I signed into law in 2011 more than \$2.3 billion in targeted, job-creating business tax cuts, we gave business the shot in the arm it needed to sustain the recovery and we have seen 224,000 new private sector jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in over seven years.

Now we need to take the next step, to turn recovery into sustainable long-term growth and opportunities for New Jersey.

Today, I'm calling on you to join me in abolishing the Estate Tax that penalizes the next generation and harms the long term economic future of our state.

Right now, New Jersey imposes an estate and inheritance tax.

Fourteen states currently have estate taxes, and six have inheritance taxes. But only New Jersey and Maryland have both. We're outliers. And we also have the lowest exemption threshold in the country. It makes New Jersey unfair and uncompetitive.

The estate tax isn't just something that affects the wealthy, it's penalizing middle class families who want to pass down the family home to the next generation. Our tax structure incentivizes people to move to other states as they age – and when they do, to take their businesses and capital with them. In a recent survey by the New Jersey Business & Industry Association, more than 67 percent of people said that estate and inheritance taxes influenced decisions about the future of their business and where they will live in their later years.

We need to fix this now. We need to stop punishing the next generation and hurting middle class families.

In the last six years, we've changed the face of education of New Jersey. And we've given our young people a fighting chance for the future.

We've made the largest investment in education in New Jersey's history. More than a quarter of our 2016 fiscal year budget is being spent on direct aid to our schools, and we have some of the highest per-pupil spending in the nation.

We made historic, bipartisan changes to the oldest tenure law in the nation.

We worked with teachers to bring performance-based pay to schools in Newark.

We focused aggressively on improving the lowest performing schools across our state, including intervention to turn around failing schools in Camden and passing the Urban Hope Act.

In partnership with our community colleges, we launched the College Readiness Now Program to help at-risk students graduate from high school and to get prepared to attend college. 19 community colleges partnered with more than 60 high schools across the state, serving 900 high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds. 97% of the students completing the program in Atlantic and Cape May Counties enrolled in Atlantic Cape Community College as freshmen.

And we've attracted the best charter school operators, expanding the number of charter schools in New Jersey to 89 – 39 new schools since we took office.

And it's charter schools that I want to focus on now.

Charter schools have been a resounding success for our state.

The number of students attending charter schools has nearly doubled during the course of my administration, and in districts like Newark and Camden nearly 30 percent of public school students are attending public charter schools.

What we've seen, over and over again, is young people with incredible potential being able to get the boost they need to go and achieve their full potential. Over and over again we've had examples of inspirational teachers, who thanks to the resources provided through well-run charter schools, have been able to make a huge difference for their communities and for a new generation.

Today, in this room we have an inspiring teacher who embodies everything we could wish for from our education system.

Allison Cuttler teaches math at the Uncommon Schools' North Star Academy in Newark. She's done incredible work to get more students at North Star interested in STEM subjects and careers, and she started her school's AP Computer Science class as well as their 'Girls Who Code' club. More than one quarter of African American students in New Jersey who passed the AP Computer Science exam last year came from her class, and the pass rate for her classes matches the national average. In December she received a Milken Educator Award. And today, for all her transformational work, she receives the thanks of a grateful state. Thank you Allison.

Now if we want to continue supporting people like Allison, then we need to continue improving our charter school system here in New Jersey. If we choose to keep investing in and supporting innovation in our education system, there's no reason we can't achieve many more success stories. There's no reason we can't have great schools in every community.

In November, I convened a roundtable in Newark with state and national charter school leadership. I wanted to listen and learn about what we need to do to enhance charter school growth and success in our state.

This is what I heard. Charter schools in New Jersey have been successful in spite of our regulatory environment – not because of it. We've achieved some early successes with our charter schools, but we're not making it easy for them. Instead of giving charter schools the autonomy they need to deliver great education outcomes, we're regulating them using almost all of the same regulations that apply to traditional public schools. It's not good for innovation and it's not good for attracting more innovative charter school operators to our state.

Today, I'm announcing that my administration will aggressively prioritize regulatory relief for charter schools. We're going to explore ways to create greater flexibility in the teacher certification process for charter schools and we're also going to explore ways to make it easier for charter schools to find facilities. And we will pursue the regulatory reforms we need to encourage development of more charter schools to serve our most at-risk youth, including students with autism or development delays.

Education is key to our long-term success as a state and as a country.

It's undeniable that we've made a lot of progress in New Jersey over the last six years. There are things we've achieved that can be an inspiration and model for reformers in other states and at the national level. So let's keep going forward together. There will always be naysayers, the talking heads in the media and the unabashed partisans who think only liberal Democrats achieve anything worthy of praise. I've ignored those folks my whole career and I will continue to do so. They are the same folks who I said I shouldn't be U.S. Attorney. The same ones who opposed me for Governor in 2009. The same ones who called me a one-termer. Their record speaks for itself.

This is our path forward from here. The state of New Jersey is strong. If we work together, we can make it even stronger. But we can also make it smarter, more efficient, more resourceful – and more compassionate. And if we are not careful, we can make it weaker if we give in to the selfish special interests. I will say no and I pray you will join me.

I have spent the last thirteen years of my life as US Attorney and governor of this state fighting for fairness and justice and opportunity for the people of this state. Every day I wake up and think about how to make New Jersey better, and how to make our country better. I feel so privileged to have served these last 13 years. I thank the people of New Jersey for the chances they have given me.

I believe our best days lie ahead. But if we want to win the future, then we need to face it boldly. We can't shirk from the difficult decisions and hard conversations we need to have. We can't choose to only pass the easy reforms or the ones that the media or the special interests like.

Government service is an enormous privilege and a special opportunity. Look around us. This great hall should inspire acts of sacrifice and greatness, not pettiness and self-service. We can do better by remembering who gave us these jobs – not the campaign contributors, not the folks who occupy the palaces on State Street - - the everyday heroes of New Jersey life. They work and struggle to make their lives better over the hurdles that life places before them. Let's not have those that serve in this chamber and what you do be another hurdle in their lives. Let us be the powerful who clear the hurdles for them that they cannot clear alone. We can do that by putting ourselves in their shoes; not by putting ourselves deeper in their pockets and their lives.

We must try and make things better for all, not just the monied few who roam these halls as if they own them. They think they've bought them. They're wrong – but only if we make it so. Because all of us have been blessed with the strength and resources and wisdom to do the right thing.

Let's try. Let's work hard. Let's do better than you did yesterday. Let's say what needs to be said. Let's make New Jersey a better place to live, for all our people.

I've never had a greater honor than being Governor. I will never stop fighting for those who elected me. I will never stay silent to injustices. I will never settle for less – from any of us. That is who I am because that is who New Jersey taught me to be.

Thank you and God bless you and God bless the great State of New Jersey.

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