

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor's Weekly Radio Message Celebrates "The Promise of America"

Gov. Christie Whitman provides a weekly radio message to radio stations throughout the state. Each week, the message focuses on a different concern or event of interest to New Jerseyans.

This week the Governor celebrates the "promise of America." She discusses the hundreds of thousands of immigrants who came to America, fleeing persecution and hardship and seeking a better life. Many chose New Jersey as their home. The Governor encourages the citizens of New Jersey to appreciate each other's diversity and to celebrate the "promise of America" this 4th of July: a promise of hope and opportunity.

Attached is the text of the message.

The radio message can be accessed by calling the Governor's actuality line at 609-292-3249. It will be available today, beginning at noon, and will run through the weekend

Governor's Weekly Radio Message "The Promise of America" July 2, 1998

This is July 4th weekend, and I'm sure many of you will be spending time with family and friends celebrating the anniversary of American independence.

On this date, more than 220 years ago, our Founding Fathers signed the Declaration of Independence. Ever since, the 4th of July has been a day of inspiration and renewal, a day to remind us that our country is as great as its people.

It's also a time to reflect on "The Promise of America." I wonder if many of us today fully appreciate the meaning of those words or how much they have to do with New Jersey.

This Spring, the Supreme Court held that New Jersey holds proper claim to most of Ellis Island, the gateway for millions who came to this great country seeking freedom and independence. But no matter who owns the larger share of Ellis Island, it is truly America's island, the doorway to "The Promise of America."

Seeking the "promise of America," hundreds of thousands of immigrants came to these shores, past the Statue of Liberty, through the gates of Ellis Island. Fleeing persecution, potato famines, and pogroms, people seeking a better life came to America. Many of them chose New Jersey as their home.

With 100 languages spoken here, each day gives us endless opportunities to appreciate these different cultures and the richness they bring to our lives. Whether it's food or music, literature or art, sports or science, people from countries around the world have contributed to New Jersey and New Jersey has given back.

From Woodrow Wilson to Millicent Fenwick, Thomas Edison to Albert Einstein, Frank Sinatra to Bruce Springsteen, Walt Whitman to Joyce Carol Oates, Jersey Joe Walcott to Althea Gibson, New Jersey can point to leaders in every field of endeavor.

Of course, we must continue to build on the "promise of America." And the "promise of New Jersey." We must continue to ensure that this is always the land of hope and opportunity.

We in New Jersey have always held a great deal of that promise of the American dream. It is both our history and our gift to the future. We were, and are, the first stop for many seeking a brighter future. Let us remember that duty as we hold out a hand to one another.

We may not all look alike, or talk alike, or think alike, but we are all seeking the "promise of America." Together, we can get there faster. And there's no better way to reach for America's promise than joining in a July 4th celebration - wherever you live in this great state.