

Governor Phil Murphy

First Lady Tammy Murphy Delivers Remarks at Harriet Tubman Monument Unveiling in Newark, NJ

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March 9, 2023 Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Good morning, everyone!

It was an honor to be here last June at the dedication of this park, and now I am grateful to be back again to witness the unveiling of the Harriet Tubman monument.

I want to thank Mayor Ras Baraka for welcoming us to Newark as well as for his leadership and partnership. I also want to recognize Senator Teresa Ruiz, the legendary Queen Latifah, all of today's special guests-- most especially little Jua who is gracing us today, and my dear friend and founder of Audible, Don Katz.

There are many brilliant voices with us today, who I know will speak powerfully about the legacy that Harriet Tubman has left us as Americans. To those testimonies, I would like to add this: there is nothing to be gained from hiding from our history. There is nothing patriotic in looking away from our nation's original sin.

On the contrary, it is only through facing the truth together that we can find a way forward. And, there is always a way forward. This statue reminds us of that truth -- as does the partnership between the city of Newark and Audible in sharing the story of Harriet Tubman's life and work and Newark's role in Black liberation.

The power and importance of storytelling is something shared by every culture around the world. It is how we learn, share, and inspire. And I am incredibly proud that in New Jersey, we are lifting stories like this one up -- here through Audible's incredibly innovative approach -- and in our public education system through the expansion of AP level African American studies courses in our high schools. My husband was here in Newark to share that announcement with Mayor Baraka just last month!

There is no question that we have work to do to build a New Jersey that offers opportunity equally to every community, but we are on the path forward through ethical and progressive public policy as well as through a powerful cultural movement.

Likewise, Audible has shown us that good corporate citizenship is not only possible, but tangible. And today, I am grateful to be reminded and inspired by the story of one of the many trailblazers who risked everything to set us on this path of progress.

I want to thank all those who worked to bring all aspects of this project to life. I have no doubt that this statue and the story it tells will inspire generations to come. Thank you.

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Statewide

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