

Governor Phil Murphy

# REMARKS: Remarks by Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way

09/8/2023

## Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Good morning.

There are no words that can adequately express what I am feeling at this moment.

But let me start by simply saying: thank you, Governor Murphy. Thank you for placing your trust in me to serve as the third Lieutenant Governor of the greatest state in or nation. And I say that, of course, without an ounce of bias.

And, just as importantly, I would like to thank every single one of our state's nine-point-three million residents.

You see, ever since I was first elected to public office—as a Freeholder for Passaic County, which I am proud to call my home—I have been on the journey of a lifetime.

In every single position I have held—from my days as a state judge, to my current role as Secretary of State—the people of New Jersey have honored me with the opportunity to serve.

You have placed your faith in me.

And in doing so, you have allowed me to join Governor Murphy in building a stronger, fairer state for every New Jerseyan, especially our neighbors who—like my own, late parents—work every day to keep our state and country moving forward.

And on that note, I would like to take this chance to thank several individuals without whom there would be no me.

First, as I mentioned: my Mother Rosa and Father Robert—who are here with us today in spirit.

They taught me to always work hard. To be tough, yet respectful. And, to just be present as I dedicate myself to enriching my community.



And that is a lesson I am reminded of every day by my husband, Charles, who is here with me today.

Charles, you have always coached me up to be the best version of myself. And you have shared with me the blessing of raising the best four children I could ever ask for.

To Fallon, Farrah, Faythe, and Fiona: I am grateful for *many* things in this life—but the four of you are the greatest gift of all.

Finally, I want to thank one more person who, like my parents, is here with us in spirit.

And that is our late Lieutenant Governor, Sheila Oliver.

To me, Sheila was more than a trusted colleague. She was a cherished friend, a mentor, and a role model to me and the countless other Black women who have chosen a career in public service.

And now, as Lieutenant Governor, I will have the solemn honor of building upon Sheila's towering legacy.

So, here is my promise to the people of New Jersey: Like Sheila, I will dedicate every day of my life to fighting for the forgotten families of our state.

I will do everything in my power to bring the down the cost of living, so no parent will have to suffer the indignity of choosing between putting food on the table or keeping a roof over their child's head.

I will protect our fundamental freedoms—so every resident of our state can make their own health care decisions, or access affordable higher education, or simply, marry who they love and live as who they are in their hearts.

And, of course, I will work to ensure that New Jersey remains the best—and safest—state to raise a family.

Over the past five-plus years, I have had the distinct privilege of serving as New Jersey's 34<sup>th</sup> Secretary of State. And my top priority, since day one, has been making our democracy healthy and accessible for all of our residents.

Well, together, we have exceeded our wildest expectations. Together, we inspired a record number of New Jerseyans to turn out and vote—like we saw in the last Presidential election. And, together, we have strengthened our electoral system—and made our democratic process more open to every eligible voter.

So, we have made historic progress - but, our work is far from over.

That is why I am so excited to assume the role of Lieutenant Governor *and* continue in my role as Secretary of State. I know our greatest accomplishments are yet to come.

So, while today marks a new beginning for the Garden State... we will be guided by the same New Jersey values that have guided us since the very beginning: Freedom. Fairness. And equal justice for all.

Thank you.

# Governor Phil Murphy

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