

Inaugural Address by Governor Larry Hogan Jr.

As Prepared for Delivery

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State House, Annapolis

GOVERNOR LAWRENCE J. HOGAN, JR: Governor Christie, thank you for being here, thanks for your tremendous support, and for that very kind introduction.

To my wife, Yumi, my daughters and my entire family, please know that it is because of your incredible love and support that I am able to stand here today.

I am privileged and proud to have Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford by my side. He has been more than a running mate. He is a friend. I am honored to serve with him.

Governor O'Malley, thank you for your gracious cooperation during the transition and for your years of public service.

Lt. Governor Brown, thank you for your service, not only to the state, but to our nation.

To my good friends Governor Ehrlich and Lt. Governor Steele, thank you for your leadership. It was an honor to serve in your administration.

Governor Hughes and Governor Mandel, thank you for all you have done for Maryland.

Senate President Miller, Speaker Busch, and members of the Maryland General Assembly, we have great challenges ahead of us, but I look forward to working together with each and every one of you.

Comptroller Franchot, Treasurer Kopp, and Attorney General Frosh, Chief Judge Barbera and the other members of the judiciary, Senators Mikulski and Cardin and members of our Congressional Delegation, and all the local elected officials and other dignitaries, thank you all for being here for this historic occasion.

Most importantly, I want to thank the citizens from all across our state, who put

aside party politics and who came together and voted to change Maryland for the better.

I'm grateful, because I know something about putting aside partisanship in order to do the right thing.

Forty years ago, a Maryland Congressman, a Republican, sat on the House Judiciary Committee during Watergate, and the entire world was watching.

Would this man be willing to buck his own party, his own president, to do what he thought was right for the country?

Despite tremendous pressure, this statesman put aside partisanship and made the tough decision, and became the first Republican to come out for the impeachment of President Nixon.

That man was my dad, former Congressman Lawrence J. Hogan, Sr., who is here with us today.

He put aside party politics and his own personal considerations in order to do the right thing for the nation.

He taught me more about integrity in one day than most men learn in a lifetime, and I am so proud to be his son.

Ladies and gentlemen, today, we are gathered in front of our beautiful state house, which has been in service since 1772.

A few steps from where I'm standing is where General George Washington resigned his commission.

Two hundred and thirty one years ago, the Revolutionary War ended right here, inside this state house, with the ratification of the Treaty of Paris in 1784.

And just a few miles away from here, when the future of a fledgling nation was in doubt, Francis Scott Key penned the Star Spangled Banner during the War of 1812.

For Maryland, and for our nation, this is a place where great things begin, and where great things are accomplished.

Today, against this historic and majestic backdrop, Maryland once again starts a new chapter in our long, proud history.

Today's inauguration marks a new beginning for Maryland, and the limitless possibilities before us.

I am a lifelong Marylander who loves this state. Every great experience, every great memory, every great moment I have ever had in my life, has happened right here, in Maryland.

It is such an incredible honor to be standing before you today as the 62nd governor of the great state of Maryland.

I am truly humbled and deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve my fellow Marylanders, and I vow to work tirelessly every single day to prove worthy of this great honor that you have granted me.

Today, we celebrate a new beginning for Maryland, remembering our past, while striving for a better and more promising future.

The question isn't whether Maryland is a great state. The question is: What will we do, all of us, to reinvigorate this great state that we all love? What will we do to ensure that our future is better than our present or our past?

I believe that the time has come to cast aside the status quo, and to come together to build a better future for our state and all our citizens.

We must set the bar higher, and create a bolder vision of the future.

Let's create a Maryland that is thriving, growing, innovating, and is responsive to the needs of all its citizens. Let's strive to make Maryland the best place in America to work, raise a family, start a business, and even to retire.

Let us renew our sense of optimism, and make Maryland a place of unlimited promise.

Together, let's make Maryland a place that we can all be proud of again.

Today, I am reminded of those brave Marylanders who first came to this land seeking freedom and opportunity when they landed in St. Mary's City in 1634.

While the challenges facing us today are different, I know that the courage and the spirit of Marylanders is the same.

We seek the freedom to compete without the undue burden of high taxes and bureaucratic regulations, which make us less competitive. We seek opportunities to build better communities, better businesses, and better lives for ourselves, our children, and our children's children. And most of all, we cherish both the freedom and opportunity to decide our future.

And today, we celebrate that freedom and opportunity. What I envision for Maryland is not just an economic and fiscal recovery, but a rebirth of our spirit, and a renewed commitment to our common purpose.

The citizens of Maryland expect great things from us, and they deserve great things from us.

Too often, we see wedge politics and petty rhetoric used to belittle our adversaries and inflame partisan divisions. But I believe that Maryland is better than this. Our history proves that we are better than this.

It is only when the partisan shouting stops that we can hear each other's voices and concerns.

I am prepared to create an environment of trust and cooperation, where the best ideas rise to the top based upon their merit, regardless of which side of the political debate they come from.

No problem faces us that hard work, honesty, and courage cannot solve if we work together.

Ladies and gentlemen, we can improve the tone in Annapolis, and we will. And we can move toward a common-sense, solutions-based government. The problems we face are great, but so is our resolve to fix them.

President Kennedy once said, "Let us not seek the Republican answer, or the Democratic answer, but the right answer."

In that spirit, let us sit down together and come up with real, bipartisan, common sense solutions to the serious problems that face us. That's what the people of

Maryland voted for, it's what they want, and it's what they deserve.

The history of our great state is rich and deep, and our commitment to freedom and justice has always been our strength.

In 1649, the Maryland Toleration Act, one of the first laws that granted different faiths the right to freely worship, was enacted. Since then, over the many years, Maryland has blossomed into a state wonderfully defined by our vibrant culture of racial, ethnic, and religious diversity.

In our hearts, Marylanders are hard-wired for inclusiveness. It's who we are, it's our founding principle, it's part of our identity, and it is our greatest strength.

Our culture of tolerance and mutual respect must also extend to those with whom we happen to differ on politics.

Today is not the beginning of an era of divided government. Today is the beginning of a new spirit of bipartisan cooperation in Annapolis.

There is so much that unites us: a love of our state, a commitment to fairness, and a desire to be economically strong and successful.

And to those who would divide us, or drive us to the extremes of either political party, I remind you that Maryland has been called "a state of middle temperament." Our politics need that middle temperament as well.

The politics that have divided our nation need not divide our state.

In the days ahead, I ask all Marylanders to seek that middle ground, where we can all stand together.

I recognize that the events of 2014 stirred strong feelings throughout the nation. But in keeping with the moderate tradition of Maryland, we expressed our passions in a positive, open, respectful, and civil way, as concerned neighbors.

It's one of the many reasons I am proud to be a Marylander.

Our greatest challenge has always been reaching the high expectations set for us by our founders. That is why we will always keep trying, always keep growing, and why we shall never fail.

In the end, it isn't about politics; it's about citizenship, and the ability to understand the difference – that is what it means to be a Marylander.

Maryland's greatness is in her goodness. Partisanship should never denigrate the unique legacy entrusted to us by our founders.

To all my friends across the aisle, I assure you that partisanship will never play a role in my decision-making. Everything we do will be guided by four common-sense principles.

First: Fiscal responsibility.

Our state government must provide essential services, yet still live within its means. We must run our state government more efficiently and more cost effectively.

Second: Economic growth.

Maryland has an educated workforce, world-class universities and colleges, great community colleges, and public schools.

We have our beautiful Chesapeake Bay, the Port of Baltimore, and a great location in the heart of the Mid-Atlantic region. We must leverage these amazing assets to transform Maryland into a place where businesses can flourish and create more jobs and opportunities for our citizens.

Starting today let me say loudly and clearly: Maryland is open for business.

Third: Reform.

We must improve our state government's ability to be more responsive to, and to better serve and represent all of our citizens.

Fourth: Fairness.

We must restore a sense of fairness and balance for Maryland's hardworking and beleaguered taxpayers, in order to rebuild our forgotten middle class.

We must get the state government off our backs, and out of our pockets, so that we can grow the private sector, put people back to work, and turn our economy around.

Ladies and gentlemen, we can accomplish these things, and together we will. This is our chance to build a government that works for the people, and not the other way around.

To accomplish these objectives will require leadership. I'm not talking about any one leader. It will take many, all of us, working together, rolling up our sleeves, acting with mutual respect, and doing our jobs for the people of Maryland.

It will require listening, education, and bold actions. And it will take the courage to do things differently.

A commitment to doing things differently will be challenging. But it will be worth it. We're worth it. And more importantly, Maryland is worth it.

One hundred years from now, I want Marylanders to say, "This was when Maryland's renaissance began."

Ladies and gentlemen, I stand before you today, full of hope, hope for our great state, hope for our people, and hope for our future.

I want Maryland's future, to be brighter than it's present, and brighter than it's past.

It can be, and it will be.

Before my father cast his vote on the impeachment committee, 40 years ago, he quoted President Lincoln, who said, "We cannot escape history."

And, we cannot escape our future – it's out there, waiting for us.

Let us show our fellow Marylanders that government can work, that we can work together, that change is possible, and that Maryland can live up to the promise of our founders.

Let us always act worthy of the great task entrusted to us, to renew and advance our great state.

Let us appeal to the better angels of our nature so that we can achieve the great and shining promise of Maryland.

Ladies and gentlemen, we can change Maryland for the better. And together, we

will.

Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the great state of Maryland.