



OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

Suzanne M. Bump

REMARKS OF SUZANNE M. BUMP UPON TAKING THE OATH OF OFFICE AS STATE AUDITOR January 19, 2011

Governor Patrick, Attorney General Coakley, Senator Kennedy, Mayor Balzotti and other government officials, reverend clergy, Spellman faculty, alumni and students, family, and friends, thank you for joining me today in the City of Champions and at my alma mater.

I came home to Cardinal Spellman High School because I want to honor those dedicated teachers and administrators, mostly Sisters of St. Joseph, who nurtured my intellectual development and instilled the social values which have brought me to this day and to one of the highest offices in state government.

As I was preparing for today, I pulled out my yearbook from the Class of '73. We didn't put captions under the student photos in the yearbook. You know the captions I mean – "most likely to cure cancer," or "looking forward to taking over the family business," or "Hollywood, here she comes."

And, it's a good thing we didn't, because at age 17, I didn't have a clue as to what I would do with my life. I was a good student and knew I was going to college, but I didn't feel passionate about any particular subject. I hoped to be financially independent, but wasn't motivated to make money. I liked the idea of service, but wasn't interested in medicine, was too shy to teach, and felt I lacked the clinical detachment required for social work.

I know some of you must be struggling with the same thing - asking, "how do I find my place in the world of work, especially when it changes so fast?" Or even more basically, "how do I support myself and a family in an economy which is so unforgiving?"

It can be a daunting experience, but with a great foundation, the possibilities are endless.

Spellman gave me that great foundation.

First, it helped develop my intellectual abilities -- my capacity to inquire, to analyze, to articulate, to visualize.

Second, it showed me how to inject values of compassion, acceptance, responsibility, and justice into my daily life.

Third, it nurtured my desire and my ability to be of service to others.

These gifts from Spellman gave me the confidence to seek out opportunities in my community and in the professional world and to learn about myself and my options. I was an intern and a volunteer; I worked in different jobs; I continued my education. These

experiences, in turn, became the stepping stones that led me to build a career in politics, law and government that I could not have foreseen – not at age 17, or even 27.

Spellman didn't train me for a specific career. It didn't steer me toward elective office in general, never mind the specific position of State Auditor. It did however give my future a wide horizon, and it gave me the tools to fashion a career that combines my instincts to solve problems with a deep desire to help others.

So I approach the obligations of the public office I assume today with great gratitude to the people and the traditions of Cardinal Spellman High School.

And I am humbled to join the ranks of other Spellman alumni who have dedicated their professional careers to public service. Not just Senator Tom Kennedy, but leaders like retired Justice Mark Lawton, Clerk of Court Robert Creedon, Justice Michael Creedon, former County Commissioner Patricia Lawton, and many more.

They have set a high bar for those who take an oath of office, as I have today to serve the taxpayers of the Commonwealth as State Auditor.

Ensuring that state government stays true to the people of the Commonwealth and that public monies are properly accounted for and lawfully spent is the essential role of the State Auditor.

Each of us has the right to expect efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency from our government. It is the Auditor's responsibility as the state's fiscal watchdog to identify policies, systems or operations that are wasteful, fraudulent, or outdated, and bring them into the light of day.

We all have legitimate questions about whether and how effectively government is meeting the public's needs. I intend to use the knowledge and leadership skills I have gained over decades of public service to make our government work better.

Making government work better. That will be my priority as your State Auditor.

In these days when we are all being asked to do more with less, I will turn my eye first on the Auditor's office itself - to be sure our own operations and employees are performing at the highest levels of effectiveness and accountability to the public.

I also pledge to use the office in bold new ways, to keep government responsive to its citizens, to leverage technology and the Internet, to give you greater access to the

work of the office and to track the government reforms that our audits indicate are needed. And, as I am today, I will be found often in communities across the state, listening as well as speaking, in order to carry on the public dialogue that is essential to self-governance.

So, Governor Patrick, General Coakley, I am thrilled to be joining you today in committing myself to serve the people of the Commonwealth.

I thank all those who made this day possible – my staff, my supporters, my friend, Senator Kennedy.

But most particularly I thank all who have made my journey possible – my family, especially my mother and my husband, and Cardinal Spellman High School.

In closing, I want to emphasize to the classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 that self-discovery is a continuous learning experience, a process, not a destination.

Don't worry if today or even tomorrow you don't know where your feet will take you. Take it from me, what you learn here will help you travel further than you ever imagined.

###