

**Remarks of Attorney General Maura Healey  
2<sup>nd</sup> Inauguration and Swearing-In  
Emerson Colonial Theatre, Boston, MA  
Wednesday, January 16, 2018  
*As Prepared for Delivery***

Thank you all so much.

Thank you to my friend, Mark Barden, and to everyone who is here today, including:

- My partners in government
- Members of the Judiciary
- Members of the Clergy
- Local officials, representatives from our police and fire departments
- The incredible young people from the Boston Children's Chorus
- My family and friends
  - Including Cece, Elsa, and Finn – Thank you for reminding us that the pledge you led, and the oath I took, is a promise to your generation.
  - To my mom, I'm so glad you're here today. You've always made everything possible for all of us, through good times and bad. Thank you.
- Thank you to the volunteers who worked so hard to make today possible.
- To my predecessors, Martha Coakley, Tom Reilly and Jim Shannon.
- My colleagues, the women and men of the Attorney General's Office. You are the hardest working and most dedicated public servants I know.
- And, of course, thank you to the People of Massachusetts.

I'm so grateful to serve as your Attorney General.

Four years ago, I said that the Attorney General's job is to be the People's Lawyer.

And that's what I, that's what we, have tried to be.

We were tested by new challenges and confronted some old divisions.

Change doesn't come easily, and sometimes progress is slow.

But we know that when we work as one . . .

When we harness our drive and determination . . .

There's nothing we can't do.

As I reflect, we accomplished more than we ever thought possible.

Working together, we made responding to the opioid crisis our top priority, and we sent a message to every family and every community in this state that we stand with you.

We took on some of the biggest companies in the world – from Purdue to Exxon to Facebook.

In the last two years, \$1.3 billion recovered or saved for our state and our residents.

We created a Community Engagement Division, which took the work of our office into our neighborhoods.

We created Advisory Committees on Race and Equity, Labor and Disability Rights and New Americans. Many of you folks are here today – thank you.

We worked with communities of color to expand opportunity and equality across this state.

To truly address disparities and barriers, you need a voice in every discussion and a seat at every table.

We trained high school students to stand against teen violence with our Game Change program, supported by the New England Patriots.

Thank you to the Kraft Family, and to Mary Dunne and Malcolm Astley for their support, in memory of their daughter Lauren.

We took on one of the most important issues we face: how to make sure students can go to college without going bankrupt.

We secured new protections for transgender people in this state – working with families like the LeMays and the Talbots – and we said yes on civil rights by saying Yes on 3.

We protected our air, water, and our planet from dangerous toxins, deep-pocketed polluters, and Scott Pruitt.

We prosecuted fraud and corruption, took down drug cartels, and went after human traffickers.

And we went to court to defend our interests and our values – and we won.

We kept corporate money out of our elections – because dark money has no place in politics.

We ended family separation at the border.

Court after court declared that Dreamers are Americans.

The Affordable Care Act remains the law of the land.

And we beat the NRA when they sued us – because in Massachusetts, we know that strong gun laws save lives.

We did all that and more – and we did it together.

Thank you to every Mayor and local official who worked with us.

To every member of the Legislature who time and again took the tough votes to get things done.

To every organizer who worked to make their community better.

And let me take a moment to recognize our partners in law enforcement and first responders, and everyone who puts their lives on the line to keep us safe.

On the opioid crisis . . . on defending our gun laws . . . on making our communities safer and our state better, I have no better partner.

To our police chiefs and police officers, thank you.

And to every single Assistant Attorney General, investigator, paralegal, victim advocate, administrative assistant, State Police trooper and member of the staff in our office.

A lot of times, the work you do doesn't make headlines, but you make a difference to families every day.

A single mom hounded by an illegal debt collector, who found someone to have her back.

A veteran cheated by a for-profit college, who's no longer stuck with thousands of dollars of debt.

A Brazilian immigrant in Woburn who worked at a cleaning service. Her employer didn't pay her and she was about to lose her car. Mary is here today – and that money is now in her bank account where it belongs.

A woman battling cancer named Kim, who reached out to us after the devastating Columbia Gas explosions. She had already paid the rent when she lost her heat, and couldn't afford her medication. Our team got her a refund from Columbia Gas and made sure she could continue her treatment.

A few stories of thousands we could tell.

To my team: Thank you for making those stories possible.

Today these stories serve as an affirmation – a rededication to the work ahead.

I understand why some are losing faith in our government and our politics.

Why people worry that government just isn't there for them.

To them I say:

We'll stand for something better.

Here in Massachusetts, we've been doing that for a long time.

We rebelled against an empire so that we could enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Abolitionists met right up the road at the Park Street church.

Suffragists marched in our streets.

In our own time, people across our state – many in this room – organized and advocated and made us the first state to declare that health care is a right, not a privilege . . . and that you can marry the person you love.

This is Massachusetts

We defend our values and work to build a shared future – even when it's not easy or politically convenient.

In tough times . . . in dark hours . . . the country looks to us to lead.

Some of you know I used to play basketball [let's be honest, at this point, all of you know that].

From my basketball days, I know what makes a great team.

The best team isn't the one with the fastest players or the tallest players.

It's the team that is willing to go above and beyond – that isn't intimidated by long odds.

That knows we are truly at our best when we work together, and make the people around us better.

That's the kind of team we have here in this state.

That's why, no matter what happens in Washington, we'll continue to lead.

We'll take care of each other and lift each other up.

Today, I want to mention a few specific areas where we need to focus our efforts.

**Opioids:**

The issue that will remain my top priority in this second term is confronting the opioid epidemic.

There is so much more to do, but we finally have some news to celebrate.

We are one of just a few states that did not see a rise in opioid deaths last year.

The Narcan Fund we created with the Legislature has helped our first responders administer tens of thousands of lifesaving doses.

We worked with Joanne Peterson from Learn to Cope and families across the state to break down the barriers that prevent too many people from getting the treatment they need – Joanne's here today, along with parents from our Opioid Advisory Council.

Our office's Fentanyl Strike Force partnered with local and federal law enforcement to take more than 30 million lethal doses off our streets – and just won a \$3 million grant to build on that success!

We teamed up with the GE Foundation and others to help create Project Here, a substance use prevention education program now available to every public middle school in our state.

In this second term, we'll keep investing in what works.

That starts with a simple commitment:

This is no time to throw our insurance markets into chaos . . . . make it harder to access treatment . . . or take away care from millions of Americans.

So we will protect the Affordable Care Act.

We will pull down more of the barriers that stop families from accessing the mental health and substance use treatment they need.

It shouldn't be easier to see a doctor for a broken arm than it is to see one for substance use or any mental health condition.

I promise you – we'll hold opioid makers accountable for the role they played in creating this crisis.

Last year, we were the first state to sue not just Purdue Pharma, the maker of OxyContin, but its executives and owners.

We'll do whatever it takes to hold this company accountable and get the justice our families deserve.

### **Gun Violence:**

We must continue to lead on gun violence.

Over the last four years, we worked and cried with too many parents who've had to experience the unimaginable.

People who turned their grief into action, and their loss into resolve, to protect those we can still keep safe.

Some of them are here today: Greg Gibson and Anne Marie Crotty, Monalisa Smith, Mark Barden, and Manuel and Patricia Oliver, who lost their son Joaquin at the shooting in Parkland, Florida.

In the name of their children . . . and all those we've lost . . . we say, "no more."

No more students having to interrupt math class for active shooter drills.

No more parents worried about whether their child is safe going to play on the playground or walk home from school.

No more husbands and wives worried that their spouse in uniform won't make it home from work.

This year we'll work with Mark's organization, Sandy Hook Promise, to train 140,000 young people how to stay safe and ask for help before it's too late.

And we'll continue to work with young leaders like the student organizers of March for Our Lives Boston, who are here today.

We stand with you!

### **Clean Energy and Environment:**

We must continue to lead the clean energy revolution that will protect and power the world.

Our climate is changing.

Our shoreline is eroding, our fishing communities are watching ecosystems collapse, residents from Plum Island to South Boston to the Cape are facing costs in the billions, and our federal government calls it a hoax.

In this critical moment, let us act.

We have twice as many clean energy jobs as there are coal jobs in the entire country, and we're just getting started.

My office will continue to protect the investments we've made – we won't let the federal government and the fossil fuel industry undermine our progress and wreck our planet.

We also need a bold new goal: to meet our electric power needs with renewable energy by 2050, and half or more by 2030.

To get there, we'll need a statewide comprehensive plan for electric vehicles that makes them an option for everyone.

And because we know that transportation is the leading driver of emissions, we need to adopt a regional cap-and-invest system! Let's invest in a clean and sustainable future.

Now is the time.

### **Education:**

And finally, in this next term we need to lead on education.

I've visited a lot of classrooms over the past four years.

I've learned we have incredible teachers and administrators, and the best students in the world.

But the way schools are funded in our state doesn't work.

Your zip code shouldn't determine the quality of your education.

So I'll be there – to support the efforts on Beacon Hill – and stand with our Mayors, our parents, our teachers, and most of all, our students.

Let's make the changes we need to give every student the same chance to succeed.

This is about justice . . . this is about fairness . . . and this is about our future.

### **CONCLUSION:**

I end where I began.

Our goals may be ambitious – but they are within our reach.

None of us can do this alone – but we aren't alone.

We're a team.

That's an attitude that's been with us since the founding of this state and this country.

On my first day, four years ago, there was a note on my desk from my friend and former boss Martha Coakley.

She left me some words of Abigail Adams.

Abigail Adams – a leader – who paved a path for people like Martha and me. And who reminded us that “We have too many high-sounding words, and too few actions that correspond with them.”

We live in a time of consequence.

A new generation is looking to us to lead – and in these next four years, that’s what we will do.

Working together, there’s nothing we can’t accomplish.

Humbled by your trust . . . inspired by your example . . . and resolved to continue this work with you – that is what I promise.

Let us build our shared brighter future together.

Thank you, may God bless us, God bless Massachusetts, and God bless the United States of America.