

Farewell Address
Governor Larry Hogan
January 10, 2023
Remarks As Prepared/Embargoed Until Delivery

My fellow Marylanders:

This is the final time that I will have the privilege of addressing the people of this great state as your governor.

240 years ago, right here in this Old Senate Chamber of our historic State House, General George Washington relinquished command of the Continental Forces, fulfilling what he called “an indispensable duty” to formally hand over power, and “commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God.”

It was here, in this very chamber, that the Revolutionary War ended with the ratification of the Treaty of Paris, making this very State House our nation’s first peacetime capitol.

Next week, we will add yet another important chapter to our state’s history with the inauguration of Maryland’s first Black governor and first Indian-American lieutenant governor.

I ask all Marylanders to join me in wishing Governor-elect Moore, Lieutenant Governor-elect Miller, and their administration much continued success in the years ahead.

With this peaceful transition, we prove once again—here in this hallowed place—that our nation’s founding principles still prevail.

Tonight, I am overcome with gratitude for my great partner and friend, Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford, for Maryland’s amazing First Lady—my beautiful wife Yumi—and my entire family, the members of my Cabinet, our governor’s office staff, and every single member of the Hogan-Rutherford administration for their eight years of dedication, and for their incredible contributions and accomplishments.

Most of all, I am grateful to all of you—the people of Maryland—for your heartfelt support and, in times of personal challenges, for your countless prayers.

The honor of serving as your governor is second only to the honor of being your fellow Marylander. I can tell you that there has not been a single day—good or bad—when I was not grateful for the privilege, and I am so proud of all that we accomplished together in our mission to change Maryland for the better.

We faced the daunting task of turning our economy completely around, putting people back to work, and making our state open for business again—and that’s exactly what we did.

We changed the entire mission of state government to be unabashedly pro-jobs and pro-business. We eliminated or rewrote thousands of job-killing regulations. We cut taxes eight years in a row by \$4.7 billion, putting all of that money back into the pockets of hardworking Maryland families, small businesses, and retirees, and we turned a \$5.1 billion deficit into the largest surplus in state history.

We ushered in the biggest economic turnaround in America, and we are leaving the state in a far better fiscal position than ever before in history.

We made record investments in education eight years in a row to better prepare our children for the opportunities of the future.

We funded Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts at historic levels.

We made generational investments in both roads and transit, and in our ports and airports.

We addressed the digital divide, and strengthened our cyber defenses.

We protected the health care coverage of Marylanders, and provided lower insurance rates for the first time in a decade.

We took unprecedented actions to protect those who protect us—our police, firefighters, and first responders—and we provided unwavering support for our National Guard, active duty military, and our veterans.

In the face of unforeseen challenges, we rose to meet them with strength and resolve.

When the worst violence in 47 years erupted in Baltimore City, we allowed for peaceful protests, but we immediately stopped the violence. And when a once-in-a-century global pandemic upended lives and livelihoods, we marshaled a nation-leading health and economic recovery.

These past eight years have been a time of great accomplishment for our state. To put it simply—we did exactly what we said we would do, and I can honestly say that I finish my second term with no regrets.

But, as always in our democracy, there is some work that remains unfinished.

Homicides and violent crime continue to surge in Baltimore City. More must be done to get the most violent criminals off the streets.

And while our administration led the fight for more accountability in the local school systems, more must be done to raise academic standards and to root out corruption and mismanagement to ensure that every child in Maryland has access to a world-class education, regardless of what neighborhood they happen to grow up in.

I call on leaders in both political parties to heed the will of the overwhelming majority of Marylanders and take urgent action to address these challenges.

As I reflect on these consequential years in the history of our state, I am grateful not just for all that we have accomplished, but for the way we accomplished it.

On that snowy day eight years ago when I stood on the steps of this State House to be sworn in as governor, I warned about the wedge politics and petty rhetoric being used to belittle adversaries and to inflame partisan divisions in America. I vowed that day that the politics that have divided our nation need not divide our state.

I'm proud to say that we kept that promise.

Together, we lived up to Maryland's heritage as a state of middle temperament, and we enacted bipartisan, common sense solutions by advancing the best ideas, regardless of which side of the political aisle they came from.

While divisiveness and dysfunction continue to paralyze Washington, just up the road from our nation's capital—here in Maryland—we have already shown a better path forward.

In his farewell address as he completed his second term, President Washington warned Americans that left unchecked, partisanship would foster “a spirit of revenge” and lead to the “ruins of liberty.”

He said that “The common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.”

He was right, which is why I believe that more leaders in Maryland and across America must stand against the extremes and with the majority of the people.

We can't let fringes and factions get in the way of getting things done and solving the serious problems.

In Maryland, we have proven that this is still possible. Our story should be a beacon of hope for the nation, which seems more bitterly divided than ever.

America truly is at a critical turning point—one in which the very fate of our democracy could be at stake. All of the performative politics and angry, false rhetoric threaten not just to divide us politically, but to tear our country apart.

Toxic politics will not restore America. Only real leadership will do that.

We must reject and overcome fear and hatred in our politics and in our society, and we must work to rebuild the bonds of trust and respect among Americans.

I recognize that this is a tall task, but we have already achieved the impossible.

Tonight, in this sacred place, where the great experiment of American democracy was literally born, I will proudly say that my faith in this country and my optimism for her future has never wavered. And that's because of you—the people of Maryland—who I have had the good fortune to meet at ballgames, businesses and schools, downtowns and Main Streets.

I wish that all Marylanders and all Americans could see what I've been able to see up close every single day over these past eight years—that deep down, there truly is far more than unites us than divides us.

So one last time, from the bottom of my heart, thank you and farewell.

Serving you has been the honor of a lifetime. Together, we truly have changed Maryland for the better.

May God continue to bless the great State of Maryland and the United States of America.