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2017 State of the County
Address Delivered by Nassau County
Executive Edward P. Mangano

Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum
Wednesday, April 3, 2017
1:14 P.M.

1

2 A P P E A R A N C E S:

3 NORMA GONSALVES, Presiding Officer

4 RICHARD NICOLELLO, Deputy Presiding Officer

5 HOWARD KOPEL,

6 Alternate Deputy Presiding Officer

7 STEVEN RHOADS

8 DENISE FORD

9 LAURA CURRAN

10 C. WILLIAM GAYLOR III

11 VINCENT MUSCARELLA

12 ELLEN BIRNBAUM

13 LAURA SCHAEFER

14 DONALD MACKENZIE

15 KEVAN ABRAHAMS, Minority Leader

16 ROSE MARIE WALKER

17 DENNIS DUNNE

18 ARNOLD DRUCKER

19 JAMES KENNEDY

20 DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON

21 CARRIE SOLAGES

22 SIELA BYNOE

23 MICHAEL PULITZER,

24 Clerk of the Legislature

25

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2 CHAIRWOMAN GONSALVES: Good
3 afternoon and welcome to the State of the
4 County Address. We will begin with the
5 calling of the Nassau County Legislature to
6 order.

7 At this time, I'm going to ask
8 for Mr. Korona to call the Color Guard.

9 MR. KORONA: Good afternoon. Can
10 I ask everyone to rise? At this time I'm
11 going to present the colors for our nation's
12 veterans.

13 Detail, present the colors.
14 (Whereupon, the colors were
15 presented.)

16 CHAIRWOMAN GONSALVES: I'll ask
17 Legislator Dennis Dunne to do the Pledge of
18 Allegiance.

19 (Whereupon, the Pledge of
20 Allegiance was recited.)

21 CHAIRWOMAN GONSALVES: And former
22 Legislator Fran Becker for the National
23 Anthem.

24 MR. BECKER: Thank you, Presiding
25 Officer. In memory of our men and women who

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2 fight for our freedom around the world each
3 and every day, and for our veterans for whom
4 this building is named, please join me in
5 singing our National Anthem.

6 (Whereupon, the National Anthem
7 was sung.)

8 MR. KORONA: Detail, dismiss the
9 colors. Retire them. Thank you.

10 (Whereupon, the colors were
11 retired.)

12 CHAIRWOMAN GONSALVES: Thank you,
13 Mr. Korona. Now I'm going to ask the Clerk
14 of the County Legislature, Mr. Pulitzer, to
15 call the roll.

16 CLERK PULITZER: Good afternoon.
17 Roll call. Deputy Presiding Officer Richard
18 Nicolello?

19 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Here.

20 CLERK PULITZER: Alternate Deputy
21 Presiding Officer Howard Kopel?

22 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Here.

23 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Siela
24 Bynoe?

25 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.

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2 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator

3 Carrie Solages?

4 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Here.

5 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator

6 Denise Ford?

7 LEGISLATOR FORD: Here.

8 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Laura

9 Curran?

10 LEGISLATOR CURRAN: Here.

11 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator C.

12 William Gaylor III?

13 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Here.

14 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator

15 Vincent Muscarella?

16 LEGISLATOR MUSCARELLA: Here.

17 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Ellen

18 Birnbaum?

19 LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Here.

20 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Delia

21 DeRiggi-Whitton?

22 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:

23 Here.

24 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator James

25 Kennedy?

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2 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.

3 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Laura

4 Schaefer?

5 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Here.

6 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator

7 Dennis Dunne, Sr.?

8 LEGISLATOR DUNNE: Here.

9 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator

10 Arnold Drucker?

11 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.

12 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator

13 Rosemarie Walker?

14 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.

15 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator

16 Donald MacKenzie?

17 LEGISLATOR MACKENZIE: Here.

18 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator

19 Steven Rhoads?

20 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Present.

21 CLERK PULITZER: Minority Leader

22 Kevan Abrahams?

23 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Here.

24 CLERK PULITZER: Presiding Officer

25 Norma Gonsalves?

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2 CHAIRWOMAN GONSALVES: Present.

3 CLERK PULITZER: We have a
4 quorum, ma'am.

5 CHAIRWOMAN GONSALVES: Thank you,
6 Mr. Pulitzer. I know we are going to have
7 to take a few minutes and I apologize
8 primarily because we are on a tight
9 schedule. I know that I'm going to get my
10 cues regarding when we're going to go live
11 and I'm going to make sure that I stand here
12 and I wait for the cue. So occupy your time
13 for three minutes.

14 Again, we are always grateful to
15 the veterans and I would like to thank the
16 Vietnam veterans who performed the ceremony
17 today. We are truly truly grateful. Let's
18 remember that this coliseum is in their
19 honor and well-deserving honor. If you took
20 a look around, you will say that this is
21 quite the State of the Art facility.

22 We're ready to go. Now, Ladies
23 and Gentlemen, the moment you've been
24 waiting for, the State of the County Address
25 2017, County Executive Edward P. Mangano.

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2 COUNTY EXECUTIVE MANGANO: All
3 right. What a great arena. The new Nassau
4 Veterans Memorial Coliseum presented BY
5 NYCB. We are very very proud to join you
6 all here today on the State of the County.

7 I would like to begin by thanking
8 Presiding Officer Norma Gonsalves. Let's
9 give her a big round of applause;

10 Minority Leader Kevan Abrahams.
11 Give him a big round of applause too. And
12 all the legislators who helped make this
13 possible.

14 Thank you for hosting this State
15 of the County Address.

16 I appreciate the presence of my
17 colleagues in government, Comptroller George
18 Maragos, Clerk, Maureen O'Connell, and
19 members of our learned judiciary. Welcome.

20 To the free players, thank you
21 for providing entertainment for our
22 audience. Weren't they great? They had the
23 opportunity to play at the new coliseum.
24 Wonderful, wonderful.

25 And, of course, Fran Becker has

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2 been waiting his entire life to sing at a
3 venue like this. Thank you, Fran, for
4 presenting our National Anthem. You were
5 great.

6 Most importantly, thank you to
7 the Vietnam Veterans of America for serving
8 as Honor Guard, for their service and
9 sacrifice, and all our veterans' service and
10 sacrifice, we wouldn't really enjoy the
11 freedoms that we enjoy here in the United
12 States of America. Let's give all our
13 veterans a big round of applause.

14 Before I begin, let me pause and
15 remember two colleagues that were very dear
16 to me and many people in this room, that,
17 unfortunately, passed away in the last year;
18 former Presiding Officer Judy Jacobs, and my
19 good friend, Legislator John Ciotti.

20 If we can have a moment of
21 silence. We miss them. We were honored by
22 their service, and they are always in our
23 memories.

24 (A moment of silence was
25 observed.)

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2 Friends and neighbors, tonight I
3 report to you that the State of our County
4 is strong. Our economy has transformed by
5 the day, adding thousands of new jobs and
6 attracting new employers.

7 In fact, 2017 kicked off with the
8 strongest job growth in more than three
9 years and our unemployment rate is
10 consistently among the lowest in the region
11 and in the state and in fact we were the
12 lowest in the state in the last statistics.

13 It's good news.

14 New housing opportunities
15 continue to open in our downtowns, and the
16 Federal government declared Nassau County
17 has effectively ended the veteran
18 homelessness.

19 Our quality of life continues to
20 advance through park enhancements,
21 infrastructure improvements, and advances at
22 the hub right here at the Coliseum.

23 More money is in the pockets of
24 our residents than that of government, as we
25 froze property taxes six out of seven years,

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2 eliminated the County home energy tax on
3 your utility bills, and we've been mindful
4 of your wallet the entire time.

5 County finances continue to
6 strengthen, and crime is at the lowest level
7 since statistics were ever recorded.

8 As you know, we live in
9 unprecedented times, with threats of
10 terrorism throughout the globe. While our
11 troops remain overseas combatting terrorism
12 and ISIS and other radical extremists, here
13 in the Homeland our police are working more
14 diligently than ever before to protect our
15 quality of life.

16 The fact remains that America
17 will always be a target as we celebrate
18 democracy, religious freedom and diversity.

19 In the past year, we have
20 witnessed terror attacks in New York City,
21 New Jersey, Minnesota, Florida and Ohio and
22 around the globe, unfolding today
23 unfortunately as well.

24 We have also experienced the
25 deadly targeting of police officers in

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2 Louisiana and Texas. While fortunately
3 there have been no known credible threats to
4 our great county, we must remember our
5 neighbor to the west, New York City,
6 continues to be a high value target for
7 those who wish to do us harm.

8 Accordingly, we have changed the
9 way in which we police our great county. I
10 thank the Legislature for supporting my
11 public safety initiatives, which bolster the
12 police force by hiring 150 additional police
13 officers, 911 operators, ambulance medical
14 technicians and special units, so God bless
15 our police and all those who serve.

16 Special units are becoming
17 ever-demanding. In fact, over the past
18 year, we have sworn in the largest number of
19 police recruit graduates in more than 20
20 years.

21 This increase in force provides
22 our police department a greater ability to
23 intensify police patrols throughout local
24 communities, assign officers to special
25 crime prevention units, such as those

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2 combatting gangs and drugs. And to, most
3 importantly now, protect large public
4 assemblies as we have seen in the
5 Presidential Debate and other assemblies and
6 races that we have throughout the county.

7 Residents should take comfort in
8 these actions, but remain vigilant and,
9 remember, if you see something, say
10 something.

11 Several months ago, the Police
12 Department and I launched a new
13 state-of-the-art school security program to
14 help save countless lives in the event of an
15 active shooter. This program provides
16 school officials with a free, direct link
17 from their cell phones to the Police
18 Communications Bureau and alerts area first
19 responders to the situation.

20 The system provides police with
21 critical intelligence, including floor
22 plans, the ability to control remote door
23 locks, and view live footage from
24 closed-circuit security cameras so that
25 responding officers receive real-time

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2 intelligence. While we hope that this
3 system is never needed, we are prepared
4 should a tragedy strike here in our county.

5 Each month, more schools are
6 coming online with the police department and
7 the program will be offered to Jewish
8 Community Centers and houses of worship in
9 the months ahead.

10 Last year, I called upon the
11 public to help us in protecting our homeland
12 by reporting suspicious social media
13 activity to police. I thank the residents
14 who took this initiative seriously and
15 texted a tip through the Crime Stoppers app
16 on their phones or tablets. Let's hear it
17 for our citizens, sure.

18 Rest assured, federal, state and
19 local enforcement agencies continue to
20 vigilantly work 24/7 to keep our county and
21 nation safe. Our enhanced Anti-Terror
22 Police Training Exercises and high-powered
23 rifles came into use at Long Island Rail
24 Road Stations in September when bombs
25 exploded in Manhattan and Seaside Park, New

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2 Jersey.

3 In the coming weeks, I will
4 unveil a new Civil Defense initiative.
5 Residents will have an opportunity to attend
6 a two-hour training that includes
7 information on active shooter situations,
8 heroin awareness, crime prevention and
9 homeland security.

10 When complete, graduates of the
11 program will be provided access to a Virtual
12 Neighborhood Watch that includes live crime
13 data, awareness bulletins, a blog within
14 their precinct, and the ability to provide
15 direct tips or concerns to our crime
16 analysts. It is a great program. I think
17 it's going to be good.

18 I have long said that the public
19 is our most important partner and this will
20 give them an opportunity to further engage
21 in keeping our county safe.

22 Friends, I am truly proud of the
23 Nassau County Police Department for their
24 commitment to protecting us. In fact, major
25 crime is down by 27 percent since I took

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2 office, including a 50 percent decrease in
3 residential burglaries, a 46 percent
4 reduction in stolen vehicles, and a 37
5 percent decrease in robberies.

6 I attribute this success to the
7 brave men and women of the Police Department
8 and our investment in assets; from
9 intelligence-led policing models to
10 advancements in technology, such as
11 computers in patrol cars; license plate
12 readers; and our Shot Spotter system, we
13 have made Nassau county a much safer
14 community.

15 In fact, it's one of the safest,
16 large communities in the United States of
17 America and that's something to be proud of.

18 The countywide success in
19 reducing crime is also due to community
20 programs, such as our Gun Buy-Back Program
21 which has taken nearly 4,500 illegal
22 firearms off our streets.

23 Over the past eight years, the
24 Legislature and I have worked in a
25 bipartisan manner to invest significant

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2 resources in the Police Department to keep
3 our neighborhoods safe.

4 We have also assisted the
5 Freeport Police Department with license
6 plate readers and the City of Long Beach
7 Police Department with a Shot Spotter
8 system.

9 Together, we've invested in new
10 Precinct houses, including the 1st Precinct
11 in Baldwin, which opened earlier this year
12 with the support of hundreds of community
13 members. We accomplished this in a
14 cost-effective manner, cancelling prior
15 plans to rent, and saving taxpayers \$16
16 million in the process.

17 Friends, our brave first
18 responders, both police, emergency medical
19 technicians and volunteer firefighters,
20 emergency workers all, take on the battles
21 required to preserve our quality of life.

22 This is also the case when it
23 comes to the war on drugs. Yes, thank you
24 for being here. It's a scary and
25 frightening battle which is tragically

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2 destroying families and taking too many
3 lives.

4 In my own hometown, I have
5 personally witnessed the destruction heroin
6 abuse brought to my friends and their
7 families. The faces of those suffering with
8 addiction are probably not what you would
9 expect. No one is immune; no community is
10 exempt; and, sadly, this plague can be found
11 in more homes than you could ever imagine.

12 In fact, an intern, in our own
13 County government, who helped volunteer his
14 time to help others with drug abuse,
15 tragically relapsed and lost his battle to
16 addiction. His name, Garrett Kassler. He
17 helped us launch a recovery program that has
18 helped save countless lives.

19 His mother joins us here today,
20 Lisa. We want you to know, Lisa, how
21 appreciative we are of Garrett's service to
22 our county and the impact that he has made
23 and his legacy will live on through the many
24 people that he has touched, many of them who
25 are here today. We will never forget him

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2 and we will never stop fighting for families
3 impacted by addiction. Thank you, thank
4 you.

5 Really, the credit goes to the
6 people that are here that are making the
7 difference.

8 I'd be remiss if I did not
9 mention my wife Linda in this regard for her
10 dedicated efforts to supporting and
11 assisting families affected by addiction.
12 She works tirelessly with many others to
13 make a difference and be able to let those
14 that have an addiction know that there are
15 paths for them.

16 While many have chosen to avoid
17 talking about this subject, my
18 administration has brought the issue of
19 addiction to the forefront. Nothing is more
20 important than keeping families whole
21 through effective recovery programs.

22 Together with the District
23 Attorney, Police Department, Department of
24 Human Services and community partners, my
25 administration is combatting this growing

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2 epidemic. We credit our success to a
3 comprehensive strategy of awareness,
4 education, enforcement, and treatment.

5 With respect to awareness, the
6 Heroin Prevention Task Force, they do a
7 great job, let's give them a round of
8 applause, and my administration continue to
9 empower family and loved ones with the tools
10 needed to identify drug use and find help.

11 Our police department visits
12 students countywide to speak of the dangers
13 of drugs. We hosted a "Schools in the Know"
14 workshop for administrators and nurses
15 providing them with personal stories of
16 addiction and recovery, early detection
17 techniques, information on current drug
18 trends, and training to administer the
19 overdose reversal agent known as Narcan.

20 We are very very proud of the
21 training efforts my administration has
22 provided, training thousands and thousands
23 of residents who have saved countless lives.
24 Next month, we'll be hosting "Colleges in
25 the Know" Workshop to discuss addiction on

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2 local campuses.

3 In total, we have trained nearly
4 8,000 citizens to administer this
5 life-saving overdose reversal agent giving
6 people a second chance at life.

7 We know of at least 50 residents
8 whose lives were saved because of those
9 training sessions, and that's 50 more
10 families that remain whole and have an
11 opportunity for that addicted person to
12 reach their maximum potential.

13 With respect to enforcement,
14 Nassau and Suffolk counties joined forces
15 for the first time on March 1st last year on
16 this subject.

17 The State Police, FBI, and DEA
18 joined our collaborative efforts to combine
19 resources and track down the sources of
20 fatal heroin overdoses. Each and every
21 overdose is now tracked to find its source.

22 Together, more than 200 drug
23 dealers have been arrested. The task force
24 has conducted 12 search warrants, seized
25 over 10 guns, 5,000 glassine envelopes of

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2 heroin and over 10,000 Xanax pills, so they
3 are working hard.

4 We will continue to aggressively
5 hunt down drug thugs and remove them from
6 our streets.

7 Together, we are overcoming the
8 stigma of drug abuse in families and in
9 societies and that is the point and that's
10 what you need to know to get out of this
11 circle of addiction.

12 All you should know is you are
13 not alone. The only shame in addiction is
14 not seeking help when help is available.
15 Help can be found at the County's
16 residential crisis center in Freeport, where
17 professionals are at the ready to assist
18 those who have just been revived from an
19 overdose or are in eminent danger of abusing
20 drugs.

21 Help can also be found at St.
22 Bernard's Church in Levittown. I know that
23 some of those good people are here with us.
24 That support group meets weekly and we also
25 have a program at Nassau County's Opiate

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2 Treatment Center on the grounds of NUMC. In
3 other words, we have a program at NUMC as
4 well.

5 And, in fact, we have a resource
6 table here today available in the lobby if
7 anybody wants to bring home any additional
8 information on this subject.

9 Treatment is available for those
10 who need it and that's the point. We
11 continue to promote its availability at a
12 free Drug Treatment Forum and Resource Fair
13 just a few months ago.

14 Our County's a "Shot at Life
15 Program" offers counseling to those with
16 addiction, along with critical injections of
17 Naltrexone, a medication that caps receptors
18 in the brain, cutting drug cravings and
19 blocking their euphoric effects.

20 It's a good program. Together,
21 programs such as these are saving the lives
22 of sons, daughters, husbands, wives,
23 friends, and there is a path for you.

24 While there is much more work to
25 be done, I thank all those who have worked

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2 with my administration to combat the heroin
3 epidemic and congratulate them as we are all
4 a model. Your hard work has resulted in a
5 wonderful model that others should look at
6 because it is making a difference and there
7 is a path, and the path for each individual
8 is not necessarily the same path but We have
9 good people that can help guide you.

10 Just as our first responders have
11 fulfilled their commitment each day toward
12 protecting the public, my administration has
13 kept its commitment to support them.

14 Simply put, when we make
15 promises, we keep them!

16 Eight years ago, we began with an
17 ambitious plan to transform our county for
18 your benefit. While there has always been
19 enough criticism to go around. We can
20 proudly state that we succeeded in our plans
21 and kept our word by fulfilling the pledges
22 we made then.

23 Thank you, thank you.

24 For example, today I deliver this
25 State of the County Address from the New

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2 Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum presented
3 by NYCB. What a great place it is.

4 Thank you, thank you.

5 As you well know, I pledged to
6 jump start the previous efforts to improve
7 the Coliseum and build a new economy on this
8 property. We succeeded.

9 In just two days, the new Nassau
10 Veterans Memorial Coliseum will officially
11 host its first major star performance
12 because we've had Freight and we had the
13 Uniondale Choir the other day, but the first
14 official star studded performance will be
15 Long Island's own Billy Joel. And Billy
16 will be followed by hundreds of world-class
17 performances and events.

18 There is something for everyone
19 to enjoy in the new coliseum. Acts like
20 Marc Anthony, Bruno Mars, Barry Manilow and
21 Stevie Nicks; rock bands; Def Leppard,
22 Metallica and Tony Award-winning icon Idina
23 Menzel, as well as sporting events and
24 family shows are booked to perform at the
25 new Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum.

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2 And the good news, no taxpayer
3 dollars were used for transformation of this
4 arena. That's amazing.

5 \$165 million dollars plus was
6 invested privately, private funds, to create
7 this wonderful coliseum.

8 This public-private partnership
9 was a huge win for our community, as we now
10 have a world-class arena and have shed
11 millions of dollars in expenses formerly
12 paid by taxpayers.

13 So, in the past, in the old
14 Coliseum, for all those years, you paid the
15 utility bill, you paid for the seats, the
16 scoreboard, paving the parking lot, that all
17 came out of your pocket. No more. No more.

18 Now, we simply receive a check
19 for \$4.4 million in gross each year at
20 minimum, at minimum. We get 8 percent of the
21 gross revenue of \$4.4 million a year, which
22 will help us keep taxes down and provide
23 opportunities for employment.

24 April 5th's grand opening of the
25 new Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum will

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2 be a celebration, really, for all of Long
3 Islanders.

4 While the New Nassau Veterans
5 Memorial Coliseum transformed our County, we
6 now have an opportunity to showcase a new
7 arena here for a team known as the New York
8 Islanders.

9 So we definitely prescribed as if
10 you build it, they will come, so we built
11 it, it's up to them to come.

12 But I suspect our fans will
13 remind them what a beautiful facility we
14 really do have here.

15 As you know, I have met with
16 officials from Barclays and the Islanders;
17 and I strongly believe now there is a path
18 for the Islanders to return to home, where
19 the best sight lines in the NHL still
20 remain.

21 Together with modern amenities
22 for fans and athletes, room to add seats to
23 accommodate the Islanders' needs, I believe
24 Nassau County has positioned itself for
25 serious consideration by the team.

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2 When you factor in the support of
3 Long Island fans, I believe we are an
4 attractive option for the New York
5 Islanders.

6 But, on this property, a lot more
7 work continues, much more than the Coliseum
8 itself. New housing opportunities are being
9 discussed for the surrounding Plaza, along
10 with restaurants, retail, and other family
11 entertainment options.

12 I look forward to unveiling those
13 details in the near future. Our vision for
14 the Coliseum property is much more than a
15 sports-entertainment destination.

16 Joining the arena and plaza is a
17 new state-of-the-art, \$140-million cancer
18 care center. Yes. That's great.

19 Memorial Sloan Kettering recently
20 broke ground for this new first-class cancer
21 treatment and clinical research center.
22 This outpatient treatment facility will
23 offer critical care to those fighting cancer
24 without the wear and tear of traveling to
25 Manhattan, while employing 250 people with

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2 an average salary of \$150,000 a year, that
3 is a great addition to our county and a
4 great anchor for our vision to create an
5 innovation center there. This is great news
6 for residents, as well, who struggle with
7 cancer and have the fight of cancer, as well
8 provide opportunity for those that wish to
9 continue to work in the health care
10 industry.

11 It is a great win for us, again,
12 we said if we built it, they will come. We
13 didn't even finish the Coliseum and we have
14 already attracted Memorial Sloan Kettering
15 and that who is building in the parking lot
16 there as you enter.

17 Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer
18 Center is only the beginning of our vision
19 to establish the Hub as an Innovation
20 Center. Together with new lab space at
21 Winthrop University Hospital, a new Primary
22 Medical Care Center at NUMC and the new
23 Hofstra-Northwell School of Medicine,
24 Nassau's healthcare industry will continue
25 to grow and my administration seeks to make

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2 the Nassau Hub a Center for Innovation in
3 the areas of healthcare and perhaps homeland
4 defense as well.

5 To support our vision, Governor
6 Cuomo and our State Senate delegation
7 announced plans to invest \$88 million in the
8 Hub. These funds will be used to create the
9 foundation needed for a Innovation Center by
10 freeing up even more land here through
11 structured parking.

12 Additional State funds will be
13 used to help connect the Coliseum site with
14 surrounding properties for the use of
15 pedestrian bridges.

16 So I want thank Long Island
17 Association President Kevin Law for his
18 support of this vision and their commitment
19 to continue to support our vision for growth
20 here on Long Island. Let's give Kevin and
21 LIA a big round of applause, they've been
22 great partners.

23 Together, we can attract billions
24 of dollars in private investment and create
25 thousands of new, permanent jobs to

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2 complement existing educational
3 institutions, financial companies, research
4 and development, and the Coliseum.

5 Nassau's Hub should, and can,
6 provide daily economic activity, improve our
7 quality of life and create a job-generating
8 economic engine for millennials and
9 generations to come, we are well on our way
10 now.

11 When the private sector succeeds,
12 our economy succeeds. And to save taxpayer
13 dollars, I have formed cost-cutting
14 partnerships with the private sector that
15 are saving you hundreds of millions of
16 dollars while providing the services our
17 County delivers by improving the services
18 our county delivers.

19 Successes include more than \$233
20 million in savings through a public-private
21 partnership with United Water for the
22 operation and maintenance of wastewater
23 facilities.

24 We are saving \$30 million a year
25 through a public-private partnership for

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2 Nassau County's bus system. Millions in
3 utility and capital improvement savings were
4 achieved through public-private partnership
5 to transform this Nassau Veterans Memorial
6 Coliseum.

7 Old Bethpage Village Restoration
8 was enhanced through a public-private
9 partnership to build the Museum of American
10 Armor on the property.

11 The Museum offers a permanent
12 living classroom for a new generation of
13 Americans to appreciate the battlefield
14 sacrifices our veterans have made on their
15 behalf. And we are very proud of them.

16 One more big round of applause
17 for all those who have served and continue
18 to serve. Please visit the museum, it's
19 wonderful.

20 New athletic fields at Mitchel
21 Athletic Complex constructed in
22 public-private partnership with Molloy
23 College without taxpayer dollars are open
24 for use by our residents as well.

25 The NY Cosmo's practice field, a

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2 new soccer field at Mitchel Athletic Complex
3 was also constructed without taxpayer
4 dollars and open for use by our residents.

5 The use of private sector dollars
6 has resulted in public improvements while
7 saving you money, that simple.

8 Nassau County leads the nation in
9 these public-private partnerships.

10 Over the past seven and a half
11 years, my administration has kept its
12 pledge. We've remained mindful of the
13 economic times in which we live.

14 County government on average made
15 up 19 percent of your total tax bill in
16 2009. Today, it makes up on average 16
17 percent of your total tax bill in 2017.
18 That's a real decline despite increasing
19 costs related to employee health insurance
20 and pensions as of late.

21 Let me tell you how we
22 accomplished that. In addition to having a
23 great team, while many neighboring
24 municipalities increased property taxes by
25 double-digits since 2010, we froze property

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2 taxes for six out of seven years, not bad.

3 This unprecedented record of
4 holding property taxes down hasn't been
5 easy, but we did get it done.

6 Combined with the elimination of
7 the County Home Energy Tax and a 20 percent
8 reduction in the size of government, more
9 money is in our residents' wallets than in
10 the pocket of government.

11 In cooperation with the
12 Legislature and NIFA, we have been improving
13 our finances by addressing decades of
14 non-structural fiscal policies with
15 systematic reforms rather than just
16 burdening homeowners with enormous tax
17 increases to address these problems of the
18 past. It's a real tough job to do.

19 My administration reduced the
20 size of government by 1,700 positions, which
21 reduces costs by \$154 million for this
22 generation and future generations.

23 In doing so, we also consolidated
24 10 departments into four, saving taxpayers
25 \$4 million annually.

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2 From reducing copy machines to
3 reducing our automotive fleet, in overall
4 energy costs, we have cut millions and
5 millions of dollars.

6 In collaboration with NIFA, we
7 entered into new labor agreements that save
8 hundreds of millions of dollars by
9 implementing new salary structures and by
10 requiring new employees to contribute to
11 healthcare and pension costs while reforming
12 work roles.

13 We now pay employee termination
14 costs from operating funds, no longer
15 relying on Nassau's historic route of
16 borrowing for these costs.

17 We also established a Litigation
18 Fund to cover costs of judgments and
19 settlements from operating surpluses
20 generated each year while limiting bonding
21 to extraordinary litigation only.

22 By tightening our belt, we
23 produced budgetary surpluses which has
24 increased our Reserve Fund from \$60 million,
25 when I took office, to \$160 million plus.

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2 And, again, this exceeds the 4 percent or
3 \$120 million goal set forth by the County's
4 Fund Balance Reserve Policy. So we're way
5 above that.

6 Together with NIFA, we have
7 strengthened our county finances and
8 eliminated the annual borrowing associated
9 with our assessment system.

10 While you may read of problems
11 plaguing Nassau County for the past 30
12 years, the number one cause is our
13 assessment system which has saddled
14 taxpayers with way over a billion dollars in
15 debt.

16 Let me tell you about this
17 billion-dollar albatross. For decades, the
18 county borrowed on average, \$100 million a
19 year, and that's how they approached the
20 problem.

21 We've changed that. Together
22 with the County Legislature, my
23 administration implemented reforms which
24 successfully slowed down this debt
25 accumulation.

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2 In 2017, we are proud to say the
3 County will no longer borrow for this
4 purpose, that's a major achievement. This
5 is a major success that saves over \$32
6 million in interest costs alone.

7 That said, you want fix the whole
8 system and we have been trying, the courts
9 have ruled that I do not have the
10 jurisdiction to make the necessary
11 legislative reforms needed to reform this
12 system.

13 We went to court, we came up with
14 this solution, and unfortunately the court
15 said that Nassau County does not have the
16 jurisdiction to correct this albatross.

17 Archaic laws in New York State
18 must be updated by the New York State
19 Legislature, that is our choice.

20 It's time for Albany lawmakers
21 now to address this issue. State laws must
22 be amended if we are to fix the County's
23 finances structurally and reoccurring once
24 and for all.

25 Let me remind you that assessment

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2 does not raise not more one dime, not a
3 dime, it simply divides the amount of
4 municipality collects are asked for from
5 their residents, that's what it does. It
6 divides it. So it doesn't generate any
7 money, but yet it generates significant
8 costs.

9 That is because primarily Nassau
10 County is treated differently than any other
11 county in the state when it comes to
12 assessment.

13 Nassau County collects or,
14 really, what it does is apportion how the
15 property taxes are collected on behalf of
16 all schools and other local governments and
17 then those local governments receive those
18 dollars.

19 However, when a property owner
20 grieves their assessment and a refund is
21 due, the County refunds all the other
22 municipalities shared.

23 So, to make it very simple, out
24 of every dollar that you pay in your taxes
25 Nassau County receives 16 cents.

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2 Now when there is an error and
3 the grieving comes, we pay back 600 percent
4 more than that 16 cents. We pay back the
5 entire dollar and, when I say "we," I mean
6 you. That's how it goes because there is no
7 magic dollars. And that has hurt our
8 economy, our housing values, and our growth
9 opportunities.

10 So today, a household or business
11 stay afloat if you refunded 600 percent more
12 money than you received in the first place.
13 Clearly, that answer is no.

14 So this is what it has cost the
15 county, on average, \$100 million a year,
16 which the County has borrowed for. It
17 accounts for half our debt load and is a sad
18 state that should be corrected legislatively
19 in Albany.

20 And, to address these costs
21 though, because we never give up, when we
22 get a lemon, we make lemonade in this
23 administration, we found other ways to stem
24 the debt accumulation. That's good news for
25 every resident here. And that's what we

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2 were able to do.

3 So to address this cost, we
4 implemented a successful Residential
5 Assessment Program to curtail or save 20 to
6 \$30 million a year in annual waste. That's
7 20 to 30 million a year you don't have to
8 refund by correcting those assessments
9 before the roll becomes final.

10 We also established a Commercial
11 Disputed Assessment Fund. Which is
12 beginning this year -- this has the
13 potential to drastically reduce what is the
14 lion share of the problem, which are
15 commercial tax refunds, makeup about 70 to
16 80 percent of the problem. This fund will
17 help save tens of millions of dollars.

18 This is important as Nassau
19 County's \$100 million problem again is
20 mainly caused by these commercial property
21 grievances.

22 In fact, it has created
23 substantial inequities in neighborhoods
24 without a commercial tax base. So I don't
25 know how a lot of people can't see this, but

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2 if you live in a community where you do not
3 have a substantial or sizeable commercial
4 property tax base, you do not receive and
5 your school district does not receive the
6 benefit of those tax dollars.

7 But when this \$100 million bill
8 comes around, you all pay it back and spread
9 out amongst everybody. So you're paying
10 without the benefit and that creates in my
11 opinion the true inequity in the system.

12 So, again, we are going to
13 continue to institute this program, and I'm
14 sure they're going to have people fight
15 against this progress but it must
16 necessarily take place.

17 So our reforms help reduce these
18 inequities, because if you don't have to pay
19 out the money, then it doesn't get spread
20 and it doesn't create inequity. And that's
21 what we're able to do locally.

22 But, again, to truly fix this
23 system, we have proffered this legislation
24 since 2011 on ways to fix the assessment
25 system and ways you can do it that we have

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2 proffered were due to study of other law
3 assessing jurisdictions that do not have
4 these problems. So they are grounded in
5 good thought and should have a weighty
6 consideration by the state.

7 So, again, ask any resident what
8 their number one gripe is and that is when
9 they get their tax bill.

10 Taxes are high in our county and
11 in our country but in particular in New York
12 and that's what we have been addressing here
13 in the county by not raising taxes and
14 finding creative ways to help our county
15 move forward, deliver services, without
16 taxing our residents. We have been largely
17 successful in that realm.

18 The number two gripe was, with
19 respect assessment, was a property owner
20 would grieve their assessment, then the
21 following year the county would change the
22 assessment again unilaterally and they have
23 to grieve again and go on and on and on.

24 So we stopped this along with the
25 legislature by instituting a freeze, and

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2 that freeze was intended to be four years.
3 I didn't dream up that freeze. I studied
4 New York office of Real Property Services,
5 they had a lot of information on this and
6 large tax assessing jurisdictions such as
7 this county, it was really recommended that
8 you have a cyclical assessment and not an
9 annual reassessment.

10 Annual reassessment reserved for
11 smaller assessing jurisdictions that have
12 that ability and more like homes and what
13 not, I can go on forever on it.

14 But, anyway, anyway, this reform
15 that we have put forward is frustrating that
16 it hasn't taken place. But nevertheless, we
17 intended a four year freeze. And our
18 intended plan clearly was to maintain it for
19 four years.

20 Unfortunately, Hurricane Sandy
21 strikes and creates many many unanticipated
22 values with respect to home values.
23 Revaluing the damaged homes would've created
24 a major shift in certain communities to the
25 point where school districts would not have

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2 been able to sustain their budgets.

3 So, instead, the freeze had to
4 continue and we filled those gaps by
5 protecting the people with damaged homes
6 through funds made available through federal
7 and state reimbursement programs and we left
8 the other properties frozen.

9 So, what has this done? It helps
10 serve the purpose of protecting communities.
11 The ill effect is not reassessing after four
12 years leads to variations in values and
13 Newsday did a big thing on this, which some
14 of it is entirely correct in the sense that
15 it does create shifts in a sense when it
16 doesn't allow you to update. And we just
17 could not do that.

18 So, again, an unintended
19 consequence due to Hurricane Sandy that we
20 sought to avoid, but the major issue and
21 good news for our residents is, you will
22 always have the opportunity to grieve your
23 taxes each and every year, which many many
24 residents do.

25 So, again, we will move forward

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2 with this reevaluation in 2018. I know this
3 is a terribly complex subject, but it is a
4 very important one, but in 2018 the
5 reevaluation will now resume.

6 Remember, who thought it would
7 take this long for people with Sandy damaged
8 homes to have their homes repaired. Still
9 some being repaired today. So it took much
10 longer than anticipated. But the good news
11 is we'll move forward with the reevaluation.

12 However, history does indicate
13 that grievances will continue regardless.
14 One, because you have the absolute right to
15 grieve each and every year, no one can take
16 that away from you. Constitutionally, you
17 have that ability to do that. And, just as
18 they do in all other taxing jurisdictions,
19 grievances are common.

20 We here in Nassau County are
21 unique because we run around the entire
22 county and tell everybody grieve your taxes,
23 grieve your taxes, grieve your taxes. So we
24 have more grievances.

25 But the grievances will continue

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2 even under the re-val because it is
3 impossible, impossible for anyone, the best
4 assessor in the world will never get every
5 single property right, and the system
6 provides you to object to that and that's
7 exactly what'll happen when we move forward.

8 Not to mention assessment in of
9 itself while treated as a science here in
10 the County due to the state legislation is
11 really an art. What that means is, two or
12 three assessors assessing your home will
13 likely come out with a different property
14 value albeit in a range.

15 All of those would be considered
16 correct if you went for financing or
17 anywhere else, and they should be considered
18 correct for our county purposes as well and
19 save all your taxpayers billions of dollars
20 over the term. So, anyway, one of our
21 reforms as we go forward.

22 Nevertheless, the Department of
23 Assessment and I continue to promote
24 fairness and equity by making homeowners
25 aware of their right to challenge their

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2 assessment. That we know.

3 Nassau County is the only county
4 in the state to offer you though, an
5 opportunity to grieve your assessment on the
6 internet. And we've posted a step-by-step
7 video to help you do this if you believe
8 your home is unfairly assessed.

9 The county's assessment system is
10 also one of the most transparent in the
11 state, detail property, and tax information
12 is posted on our website and tentative
13 assessment disclosure notices are provided
14 for all homeowners annually.

15 So, while challenges remain, they
16 will not serve as an obstacle to maintaining
17 our quality of life which has been enhanced
18 by the policies of this administration and
19 in fact has saved everyone a boat-load of
20 money.

21 Overall, economic indicators are
22 on the rise. Great news, right?

23 After losing private sector jobs
24 for many, many, many, many years, good
25 middle class jobs are returning and our

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2 population is expanding while neighboring
3 counties have decreased.

4 And, you have to understand, our
5 population has been decreasing or certainly
6 growing much much slower than our neighbors
7 and this year it has increased more than our
8 neighbors, some of them gone down. And that
9 is good news when people want to move to
10 Nassau County.

11 Other good news, if you happen to
12 be a homeowner, is your property values have
13 increased, and we have constantly led the
14 region with the lowest unemployment rate
15 which really tells you that there is a lot
16 of job opportunities here in our County.

17 To build upon this success and
18 protect middle-class families we've held the
19 line, okay, six out of seven years, if
20 anyone has missed that in the last three or
21 four times, but our low crime rate combined
22 with quality of life and economic policies
23 contributed to our success and attracting
24 and retaining local employers.

25 I'm very very proud of my

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2 economic develop team in this regard. We
3 have worked very very hard. We've created
4 more than 25,000 new jobs and employment
5 opportunities, a partnership with the Nassau
6 Council Chambers of Commerce, they're a
7 great group protecting small businesses, and
8 the Association For a Better Long Island.

9 We have focused on job creation
10 by aggressively soliciting companies to
11 establish their headquarters here and that
12 has been our success.

13 Recent success stories include;
14 Vengo Labs, a father and son started
15 business relocated to Nassau County. This
16 innovative company featured on Shark Tank
17 that creates high tech vending machines.

18 We have many many others, Bagels
19 by Bell moved in, an iconic Brooklyn Bagel
20 shop. They have 72 jobs though, and great
21 bagels and bialys. The best bialy in the
22 nation, by the way. They won, in the
23 nation, right here in Oceanside.

24 Amazon will open the customer
25 fulfillment center in Bethpage creating

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2 hundreds of jobs.

3 We took an under performing
4 building in Westbury and transformed it into
5 a telecommunications hub with 89 good jobs.

6 And over the past several years
7 we've attracted a number of headquarters
8 from New York City to move right here to
9 Nassau County to make brick and mortar
10 investments in our county and they include
11 Display Technologies, New York Vanity,
12 Supreme Screw, used to what I'm getting. I
13 have a lot of practice in that particular
14 area. But I'm still here, but I'm chugging
15 along. We all know where.

16 But we have other companies here
17 besides my favorite, Hain Celestial, R-Best
18 Produce, they own the Uncle Giuseppe chain,
19 great food there. They moved into Port
20 Washington. Jesco Lighting, Aqua Enerviva.

21 And the point there is, these
22 companies making brick and mortar
23 investments tend to stay here and grow here
24 and it's really good policy. We love it.

25 My economic development team is

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2 also focused on retaining quality employees
3 which is of course we want to help those
4 that have been paying the taxes and
5 struggling through the hard times. We don't
6 want them to leave. We want them to help
7 grow, grow here, and we have done very very
8 well, we have retained thousands of jobs and
9 new employment opportunities to helping many
10 many businesses here in the county including
11 New York Community Bank, Publisher's
12 Clearing House, Dealertrack Technologies,
13 Long Island Fire Door, The Slant Fin Corp,
14 Nassau Candy, DesignaTronics, P&L
15 Development, and WAC Lighting, to name a
16 few.

17 All these companies recorded to
18 leave our great state and we kept them right
19 here in Nassau County. That's good news and
20 it's better news if you happen to work
21 there.

22 Our team connects businesses with
23 addition federal state and utility based
24 incentive programs creating global incentive
25 packages that make Nassau County an

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2 attractive place to do business.

3 To help these companies and
4 others find qualified candidates for their
5 workforce, my administration has hosted both
6 job preparation workshops, job fairs, and
7 actively connects employers with pools of
8 unemployed residents through an innovative
9 collaboration with the department of Social
10 Services.

11 My administration has also
12 created Nassau Works, a free application for
13 your smart phone, it's a great way to find a
14 job, check it out, it's free.

15 An area of enormous growth again,
16 we're very proud of it, the County's film
17 and TV industry continues to grow. In what
18 we're building is that people said, the
19 experts said would never be able to be used
20 or if they were able to be used, it would be
21 so costly no one would to reuse them.

22 We found a creative way to
23 utilize those buildings for County Film and
24 TV, most recently, Nassau County served as
25 backdrops for major motion pictures

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2 including The Comedian, starring Robert
3 Dinero, Harvey Patel, Edie Falco, Danny
4 Devito, and Billy Crystal.

5 Also filmed in Nassau County was
6 Rock That Body starring Scarlet Johansson,
7 Demi Moore, as well a Gypsy starring Susan
8 Sarandon. So all these stars coming through
9 here.

10 Showtime's "Homeland" also filmed
11 here as well as ABC's "Quantico." We also
12 are home to NBC's live performances in 50
13 years right here at Grumman Studios, the
14 Wiz, the Sound of Music, and Peter Pan all
15 filmed here in Nassau County live.

16 Most recently, I'm very proud,
17 Kevin James made Nassau County home to his
18 live-studio audience known as "Kevin Can
19 Wait." So we actually have now a regular TV
20 show with a live audience.

21 Local businesses are benefitting
22 from these ever-growing industries and we
23 will continue to devote the resources
24 necessary to sustain and expand here in
25 Nassau.

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2 Also, cyber security, an issue of
3 national concern, right? We're going to be
4 a leader in it if we aren't already. Our
5 County's poised to become a leader in this
6 emerging field as our workforce has the
7 skilled defense industry talent and
8 high-tech knowledge that supports cyber
9 security technology.

10 In May, New York Institute of
11 Technology was designated as a National
12 Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber
13 Defense Education by the National Security
14 Agency and the Department of Homeland
15 Security. Yes, big round of applause for
16 them.

17 This designation, along with the
18 County's recent purchase of the Morelli
19 Homeland Security Center, at a great buy, by
20 the way, are important steps forward in
21 plans to create a Cyber Defense Accelerator
22 at that facility.

23 Together with captains of
24 industry, we are fostering a supportive
25 environment for technology companies. Over

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2 the past year, in collaboration with
3 LaunchPad, Digital Ballpark, and our own
4 Inventors Club, we have supported their
5 growth, assisted in their recruitment
6 efforts, and showcased their products.

7 As we all know, housing is at a
8 premium on Long Island, and a larger housing
9 stock was needed in order for us to expand
10 our workforce and certainly expand our
11 economy. That's why we created an incentive
12 to convert unused office buildings,
13 dilapidated buildings, into housing
14 opportunities. And we've created more than
15 3,500 of these housing opportunities in
16 Nassau County. And that's reflective in the
17 statistics, our population grew, right?
18 People got to live somewhere. Create
19 housing, the population grows.

20 In fact, we helped transform
21 vacant and under-utilized real estate into
22 1,974 residential units near
23 transit-centers, transit oriented
24 development, we built it, including 353
25 affordable apartments for our young

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2 workforce, seniors and veterans.

3 Success can be viewed in Great
4 Neck, Great Neck Plaza, Farmingdale,
5 Hempstead, Manhasset, Mineola, New Cassel,
6 Roslyn and Westbury. Nassau County is proud
7 to assist these Villages with redevelopment
8 initiatives.

9 To further help our communities,
10 we launched a land bank, which the
11 Legislature I want to thank you for taking a
12 great interest in this, that will help
13 tackle zombie houses, by acquiring,
14 rehabilitating and getting them back into
15 the housing market. It makes sense.

16 So we do want to acknowledge and
17 thank Attorney General Eric Schneiderman for
18 his recent commitment of \$1.2 million for
19 Nassau's land banks. Let's give him a round
20 of applause. \$1.2 million is a good start.

21 Together, our initiatives are
22 assisting young families in staying on Long
23 Island while supporting the workforce of new
24 industries.

25 Housing has also been a struggle

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2 for our nation's veterans. Accordingly, I
3 pledged in 2009 to create veteran housing.
4 It's a promise we kept.

5 In 2011, we established 60 homes
6 at Mitchel Field to provide affordable
7 housing for veterans, active duty military
8 and their returning families.

9 We also partnered with Beacon
10 House to rehabilitate five two-bedroom
11 townhouses in Hempstead for their families;
12 and worked with a not-for-profit
13 organization to build a home for a returning
14 Iraq-war veteran in Hicksville. So that's
15 good news.

16 We're very very proud of the work
17 that we put into this and, in July, the
18 White House and U.S. Department of Housing
19 and Urban Development declared that Nassau
20 County effectively ended the homeless
21 veteran crisis in Nassau County. That was a
22 nice little letter to get, I have to say.

23 So what this really means is that
24 if you know of a homeless veteran, call us.
25 Along with our not-for-profit partners, we

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2 will find a solution. And that's what it
3 really means.

4 This commitment is the least we
5 can do for our veterans, who we salute for
6 their commitment to our homeland and our way
7 of life clearly.

8 Together, we have honored the
9 brave men and women who wore and wear our
10 nation's uniform.

11 At Eisenhower Park's Wall of
12 Honor, we solemnly remember those who are no
13 longer with us as well as those that still
14 are. We also remember our veterans annually
15 at our Veterans Day Service, our Gold Star
16 Families Remembrance Ceremony, our POW/MIA
17 Candlelight Recognition Ceremony. Many many
18 other ceremonies that we pause to recognize
19 our vets.

20 We proudly honor those still with
21 us and remember those who made the supreme
22 sacrifice for our nation. This year, we
23 officially welcomed home a generation who
24 was just honored by the American public upon
25 their arrival home from Vietnam.

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2 I was proud to host Long Island's
3 largest Welcome Home Ceremony and
4 demonstrate our never ending respect and
5 appreciation for the service our Vietnam
6 veterans who have served as our Color Guard
7 here today, by the way.

8 I'm proud that my administration
9 has made it a priority to enhance services
10 for our hometown heroes. From creating
11 veteran housing and ending the veteran
12 homelessness crisis, to securing record
13 benefits for our vets, I do want to
14 recognize Ralph Esposito and the Veterans
15 Service Agency because they really are
16 working very very hard and doing a great
17 job.

18 Our record includes opening a new
19 office for the Nassau Veterans Service
20 Agency in East Meadow, at Nassau University
21 Medical Center and joining in the opening of
22 a new Veterans Affairs Health Clinic at this
23 same location.

24 I'm proud to report that
25 volunteers help support their fellow

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2 veterans through our program to provide free
3 transportation to Northport VA.

4 We should give them a round
5 because these veterans take their own time
6 and travel the County pick up three or four
7 veterans and drive them out to Northport,
8 wait, and return in many many places.
9 That's really, you know, a great testament
10 to our citizens here in the County.

11 We also want to thank Westbury's
12 American Legion Post 101 for their continued
13 donation of handicap-accessible vans for
14 this service. They provide us with the
15 vans, so give them a round of applause, as
16 well as Crown Ford of Lynbrook for their
17 donation of a handicap-accessible van.

18 So it's nice that these
19 volunteers now have more appropriate
20 vehicles to pick up our veterans.

21 In the past many times they used
22 broken down county cars or their own cars.
23 Believe me, this is a welcomed asset for
24 them.

25 So, our County also helps

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2 vets-in-need by partnering with local
3 veterans to provide, and this is really the
4 UVO that we always partner with to do our
5 Stand Downs, provide free toiletries, meals,
6 counseling, and really provide a forum to
7 tell the veterans the services they have
8 earned.

9 So I do want to thank the UVO for
10 all their hard work and all our veterans
11 that come together and make that possible.

12 To assist those injured while
13 serving our nation, we enhanced
14 opportunities for Disabled Veteran-Owned
15 Businesses to further participate in county
16 government. We also hosted events in our
17 park system to support, and I love these
18 things, America Vet dogs and Paws of War;
19 two not-for-profit organizations that raise
20 money to provide specially-trained guide and
21 service dogs to disabled veterans or those
22 that have returned and are suffering from
23 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Very
24 effective program if you want to tune into
25 that program. Excellent.

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2 In fact, our parks system serves
3 as home to many events in which we honor our
4 veterans as you all know.

5 When I took office, I made a
6 commitment to improving our parks systems
7 for veterans, but also for families and
8 seniors and those that are differently
9 abled.

10 After many years of neglect, my
11 administration is proud to have kept our
12 promise by transforming our park system into
13 a vibrant destination for our children and
14 our families. I do want recognize my Chief
15 Deputy Rob Walker who worked very hard in
16 the park system. I'm very proud of him and
17 the work that we're going to showcase here
18 today.

19 In Nassau's backyard we have
20 Eisenhower Park. We joined with the League
21 of YES in opening two new athletic fields
22 with turf designed for walkers, wheelchairs
23 and individuals with prosthetics. It's
24 beautiful. They love it. Well used.

25 Let's give that a round of

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2 applause.

3 New playgrounds were also
4 constructed in Eisenhower Park along with a
5 second playground designed specifically for
6 differently-abled children.

7 Through a public-private
8 partnership, indoor twin ice skating rinks
9 and an indoor rink known as Northwell Health
10 Ice Center opened in Eisenhower Park.

11 As you know, we built that at no
12 cost to taxpayers. Another great
13 achievement.

14 And now we host, now it hosts the
15 NY Islander practices. I don't know.
16 That's pretty close to here. I don't know.
17 Sounds convenient.

18 So we built it and they came and
19 it's working out very nicely there. Youth
20 hockey leagues also have the opportunity to
21 play there and of course the taxpayers
22 retrieve a few bucks each every year out of
23 their profits, so that's nice too.

24 In Hicksville, we joined with
25 local sports teams in celebrating

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2 improvements made at Cantiague Park on its
3 50th Anniversary. Can you believe it? 50
4 years Cantiague Park has been there.

5 The park now showcases new
6 athletic fields, new playground, new batting
7 cages, improved mini-golf course,
8 refurbished driving range, improvements to
9 the pool and restrooms, and a renovated
10 NHL-sized ice rink that now accommodates
11 more youth hockey teams and figure skating.

12 Wantagh Park, also under
13 construction. In November, we broke ground
14 for new athletic fields, a new community
15 center, new fishing and picnic pavilions and
16 an improved dog run.

17 And, earlier in the year, we also
18 joined with local residents and children
19 from our successful summer recreation
20 program in opening a new 18-hole mini-golf
21 course at Wantagh Park. Yes. That's nice.

22 At neighboring Cedar Creek Park
23 in Seaford, my administration installed two
24 state-of-the-art turf fields for football,
25 soccer and lacrosse.

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2 In East Rockaway, a brand new Bay
3 Park is now open to the public with athletic
4 fields, basketball courts and a first-class
5 playground and picnic pavilion.

6 It's really nice down there.
7 This park serves as home to the East
8 Rockaway Raiders, Youth Football League and
9 Cheerleaders and quite an improvement to
10 what was there prior to Hurricane Sandy.

11 In Hewlett, transformations were
12 made at Grant Park which now showcases a new
13 athletic field and a new ice rink.

14 And on the barrier island, new
15 cabanas arrived last summer at Nickerson
16 Beach and a new Pitch and Putt on the beach
17 was built by CSEA employees. Our own
18 employees built this, we are very very proud
19 of it. Let's give all our County employees
20 a big round of applause. They took great
21 pride, great great pride in building this on
22 their own and it really is beautiful.

23 Dog Runs were also opened for our
24 furry friends at Bay Park, Cedar Creek,
25 Nickerson Beach, Wantagh Park, Eisenhower

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2 Park, Christopher Morley Park, and Old
3 Bethpage Village Restoration. So we did a
4 major expansion for pet lovers there.

5 And in partnership with Valley
6 Stream, new playground equipment with
7 handicapped accessibility was added to
8 Arlington Park.

9 At Milburn Creek Park, great park
10 there, a kayak launch and boardwalk were
11 constructed, and a new South Shore Blueway
12 Trail is now open. It's great trails if you
13 like kayaking. It's made up of 22 launches
14 and landings. It offers residents and
15 visitors a new exciting and recreational
16 opportunity to explore the western bays of
17 the South Shore Estuary Reserve and
18 experience its beauty very conveniently.
19 So, I encourage you to take up kayaking.

20 Friends, we have truly taken our
21 parks back for our families and we are very
22 very proud of that accomplishment.

23 In doing so, we also reinstituted
24 Nassau's largest and most affordable Summer
25 Rec Program for our children, very

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2 successful program. It not only helps
3 families with working parents, but also
4 provides an amazing summer opportunity for
5 our children. They have a great time.

6 And while there is more work to
7 be done, there is a lot that we are very
8 much proud of in our parks system. I would
9 be remiss if I didn't mention the Nassau
10 County Empire State Games for the Physically
11 Challenged.

12 Back in 2011, New York State
13 eliminated all funds for the Games. My
14 administration, with the help of private
15 sector sponsors, stepped up to raise the
16 funds necessary to keep the Games going and
17 they are, in fact, going and going.

18 In doing so, we kept alive the
19 opportunity for these wonderful children to
20 compete with their friends from across the
21 state, share their stories and build
22 friendships that will last a lifetime.

23 It's much more than a three day
24 event because these kids train all year long
25 for that olympic type event. And that's why

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2 it's a lot more than just a three day
3 weekend. Let me tell you, when they cross
4 the finish line, all you need to do is to
5 see their smiles on their faces and their
6 tears of joy to understand we need to
7 continue to do this for those children.

8 Beyond improving our parks and
9 programs, we have also invested in our
10 overall environment. The largest project
11 has taken place at the South Shore Water
12 Reclamation Facility in Bay Park, where we
13 are investing the necessary dollars to
14 protect our waterways and surrounding
15 communities from nitrogen, probably the
16 number one environmental threat to our
17 island, nitrogen.

18 While work began to improve the
19 plant prior to Hurricane Sandy, Hurricane
20 Sandy devastated the plant and we were very
21 very successful in obtaining over \$800
22 million to restore this most important
23 facility.

24 Progress now includes new odor
25 controls, rehabilitation of generators,

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2 restoration elevation of the electrical
3 distribution system, and new berms and walls
4 surrounding the plant to protect it against
5 tidal surge. So that's good news for all of
6 our residents.

7 This work was possible thanks to
8 the support of our leaders in Congress and
9 Albany; as well as the residents that joined
10 me in Washington, D.C. to fight for these
11 funds right after Hurricane Sandy.

12 To strengthen our shoreline,
13 protect our marine life and improve our
14 environment for decades to come, it's
15 critically important to connect Bay Park to
16 an ocean outfall pipe because the only way
17 you can stop, truly stop the nitrogen, is to
18 stop dumping it in the bay.

19 So an ocean outfall pipe again
20 will ensure that treated sewage no longer
21 gets dumped into our western bays, but will
22 instead find its way to this ocean outfall
23 pipe.

24 Now, the original plan costs
25 about \$650 million which would be to

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2 construct another pipe.

3 We have been unable to achieve
4 that level of funding after significant
5 fights and struggles in Washington to try to
6 get that money from the Hurricane Sandy
7 dollars.

8 We have not been successful
9 enough, but have been successful to a point.
10 And I happy to report that we have found,
11 possibly, a less costly way to achieve this
12 same result.

13 A feasibility study is underway
14 right now as we speak to determine if an
15 existing, non-utilized underground pipeline
16 can be used to connect the Bay Park facility
17 to Cedar Creek's ocean outfall pipe.

18 So instead of building the second
19 pipe we're trying to connect it to the
20 single one that we have here in the County.

21 By the way, New Jersey, just to
22 give you an idea, has about 14 of them. We
23 have one.

24 If possible, this path would
25 achieve the success needed for our

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2 environment at a fraction of the cost.

3 We achieved a similar success on a smaller
4 scale when we kept our commitment to cleanup
5 Zach's Bay near Jones Beach, by the way,
6 that's where the sewage would be dumped,
7 treated, but dumped right where you swam.

8 We were able to work with New
9 York State and we now connected their pipe
10 to our Cedar Creek pipe and that treated
11 waste is no longer in the Bay where you
12 play. So, good news. I wish I knew as a
13 kid, ma. I mean, come on, you dumped me in
14 Zach's Bay, I'm swimming in sewage. Holy
15 Moly, no wonder why I have so many issues.

16 Well, anyway, we're cleaning, and
17 that's cleaned up now. I bring my kids
18 there although, you guys swam in it too.

19 While the project is being
20 studied, I have advanced two projects, which
21 are currently underway, to reduce the
22 nitrogen entering our bays.

23 So, look, we had to try to find a
24 way to start reducing it before this project
25 could be finished and we did find a way. We

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2 can reduce about it in half and that's good
3 news but hopefully this pipe works out.

4 So from these efforts, to the
5 preservation of land, installation of solar
6 energy and the conversion of traffic lights
7 to LED, our environmental record is one to
8 be proud of.

9 It is my hope that Nassau County
10 will continue along our path of success in
11 transforming the way in which we protect our
12 environment.

13 Government and corporate leaders
14 of the past decades really never imagined
15 the environmental impact that they would
16 leave behind. Mainly because they didn't
17 know.

18 Parts of our great Island served
19 as a dumping ground for significant
20 contamination mostly and largely from the
21 defense industry.

22 Years ago, all spent chemicals
23 were simply dumped onto the ground and
24 leached into the water supply.

25 And they've affected our drinking

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2 water which you've all ready about for many
3 many years and many many solutions have been
4 advanced to try to clean up our water and
5 we'll continue to do that as a number one
6 priority.

7 This contamination has now spread
8 from the middle of our island through
9 approaching the Atlantic Ocean on our south
10 shore through a series of plumes in our
11 aquifer.

12 With assistance from local water
13 districts, as well as the Towns of Oyster
14 Bay and Hempstead, we continue to apply the
15 pressure on the State and Federal
16 governments to ensure the safety of our
17 residents and our drinking water.

18 I'm very happy that the governor
19 got a very strong clean energy bill on his
20 budget and more happy that he directed the
21 State Department of Environmental
22 Conservation to undertake an immediate
23 investigation to access.

24 Whether there is another maybe
25 state of the art expedited cleanup process

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2 available, and you can never give up trying,
3 so we hope that this one will result in a
4 quicker cleanup. I commend the Governor for
5 his attention to this critical issue as well
6 as protecting our drinking water here.

7 On a separate front, we are also
8 working with the Department of Environmental
9 Conservation and the Army Corps of Engineers
10 to strengthen our seven-mile barrier island.

11 As you know it took a major hit
12 in Hurricane Sandy and now we finally having
13 new dunes to new berms and jetties are
14 underway. This infrastructure will protect
15 our shoreline and the communities of Point
16 Lookout, Lido Beach, Long Beach, Atlantic
17 Beach and East Atlantic Beach.

18 Government infrastructure on Long
19 Island, and throughout our State, quite
20 frankly, is reaching the end of its useful
21 life in many many areas. It's 60 years of
22 age.

23 This is a challenge that we have
24 to face and improve. Fortunately here,
25 we've improved our wastewater treatment and

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2 other ares that needed it so we are ahead of
3 the curve. But when entering office in
4 2010, I made a pledge to take care of this
5 infrastructure and we are working on it.

6 While the largest project takes
7 place at Bay Park and certainly here at the
8 Coliseum, was another example of an aging
9 facility. Other work is underway at the
10 former Social Services Building in Garden
11 City which is being converted into a Family
12 Court.

13 You should know that Nassau
14 County has been voted the worst family court
15 facility, so judges don't get mad, judges
16 are great, facility in the state.

17 So we are building a new one in a
18 vacant social services building that sat
19 there for many many years and that's
20 underway.

21 Reinvestments have been made in
22 County roadways and street scaping projects
23 throughout the County - from North to South
24 and East to West. Many of the Legislators
25 participated in those as well.

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2 And with the assistance of Vision
3 Long Island, Complete Street initiatives are
4 being used to ensure pedestrian and bicycle
5 safety on roadways.

6 A new Crime Lab is under
7 construction in Westbury and construction
8 will begin later this year for a new Police
9 Training Academy at Nassau Community
10 College. Yes, beautiful great work.

11 The new First Precinct building
12 is now open, the Fourth Precinct and Eighth
13 Community Police Centers are under
14 construction.

15 The Bayville Bridge continues to
16 undergo repairs and the final phase of West
17 Shore Road reconstruction is ongoing.

18 And we have and continue to build
19 better, smarter and stronger than ever
20 before while enhancing the quality of life
21 throughout our communities.

22 Friends, our vision for Nassau
23 County eight years ago has quickly become a
24 reality.

25 We have transformed the Nassau

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2 Veterans Memorial Coliseum and laid a path
3 for the Islanders return.

4 We have transformed our economy
5 by attracting 25,000 new jobs and new
6 employers - consistently achieving the
7 lowest unemployment rate in the region and
8 in the state in many cases, many months.

9 A new world-class healthcare
10 center is being built to treat residents in
11 their battle with cancer, and our healthcare
12 industry is on the rise as we establish an
13 Innovation Center at the Hub.

14 New industries have emerged in
15 cyber security and television and film
16 production.

17 To support these emerging
18 industries and new employers, we have
19 transformed vacant commercial real estate
20 into 3,500 new housing opportunities for
21 young families.

22 Nassau County is the place to be
23 as our quality of life is second to none.
24 We kept our commitment to transform our
25 parks, and improvements we made have

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2 resulted in some of America's finest parks
3 and recreational facilities.

4 As you know, our quality of life
5 would not be possible, if not for dedicated
6 police officers, volunteer firefighters and
7 Emergency Medical Technicians and emergency
8 workers we have here.

9 Let's give them a big round of
10 applause.

11 We have fulfilled our commitment
12 to them through recruitment and retention
13 programs, bolstering training initiatives
14 and by providing them with the latest
15 equipment to aid in their response to
16 emergencies.

17 These brave men and women have
18 transformed our neighborhoods, and we have
19 achieved the lowest crime rate since
20 statistics were ever recorded.

21 Major crime down 27 percent since
22 I took office.

23 Together, we have renewed our war
24 on drugs by transforming the way in which we
25 combat addiction. Through awareness,

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2 education, enforcement and treatment, we
3 have put the programs in place to keep our
4 families whole.

5 With families and seniors always
6 on our minds, we kept our commitment to hold
7 the line on property taxes by freezing them
8 six out of seven years.

9 We pledged to repeal the home
10 energy tax and we did that. We kept our
11 promise and eliminated the tax.

12 We committed to reducing the size
13 of government, and we succeeded by
14 eliminating hundreds of millions of dollars
15 in waste.

16 We formed public-private
17 partnerships to save you millions more, and
18 succeeded in private sector investments in
19 our parks, museums and entertainment venues.

20 We saved millions more through
21 labor concessions and have strengthened the
22 county's finances more than any prior
23 administration.

24 While the assessment system will
25 continue to plague County finances, just as

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2 it has for the last three decades.

3 We reduced the burden through
4 local reforms and have put Albany on notice
5 that they must act to end Nassau's fiscal
6 challenges in that area.

7 With your support, we have
8 upgraded our wastewater facilities and
9 strengthened shorelines while protecting
10 marine life.

11 We have transformed county
12 infrastructure through investments in
13 roadways, downtowns and police precincts.

14 We have kept our commitment to
15 our veterans by honoring their sacrifice and
16 serving them better than ever before.

17 There is much to be proud of
18 here, and our residents have much to look
19 forward to.

20 Our collective efforts have been
21 locally and nationally recognized.

22 We have earned awards for government
23 performance, efficiencies, public-private
24 partnerships, safer roadways,
25 transit-oriented housing, environmental

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2 improvements, excellence in public health,
3 and for our work in combatting the heroin
4 epidemic.

5 Friends, my administration has
6 succeeded in making Nassau County a better
7 place to live, work and raise a family.

8 Together, we have tackled the
9 status quo and defied the critics, who in
10 the name of politics sometimes seek to hold
11 back our county or define it with some mud.

12 I say to you, we have a great
13 county here. You only need to travel
14 elsewhere to understand the beauty that this
15 county offers, the opportunity, the
16 diversity and the ability to reach your
17 maximum potential. It doesn't happen
18 everywhere, but it happens right here. I
19 tell you that much.

20 I want to sincerely thank, and
21 ask all my staff that is here to rise and be
22 recognized. I've been blessed with a great
23 time of hard-working individuals that each
24 and every day come to work to make Nassau
25 County a better place to live work and raise

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2 a family.

3 I truly thank you for allowing me
4 the opportunity to serve as your County
5 Executive. The future will be right.

6 May God Bless you, Nassau County,
7 the State of New York and these United
8 States of America.

9 Thank you very much.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, FRANK GRAY, a Shorthand Reporter and
Notary Public in and for the State of New
York, do hereby stated:

THAT I attended at the time and place
above mentioned and took stenographic record
of the proceedings in the above-entitled
matter;

THAT the foregoing transcript is a true
and accurate transcript of the same and the
whole thereof, according to the best of my
ability and belief.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set
my hand this 13th day of April, 2017.

FRANK GRAY