

[Announcer]: Ladies and gentlemen, the Governor of Illinois, Pat Quinn, and the Honorable Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court, Justice Anne M. Burke, who will administer the Oath of Office.

[Hon. Burke]: Governor, please repeat after me. I, state your name.

[Gov. Quinn]: I, Pat Quinn.

[Hon. Burke]: Do solemnly swear.

[Gov. Quinn]: Do solemnly swear.

[Hon. Burke]: That I will support the Constitution of the United States of America.

[Gov. Quinn]: That I will support the Constitution of the United States of America.

[Hon. Burke]: ...and the Constitution of the State of Illinois.

[Gov. Quinn]: ...and the Constitution of the State of Illinois.

[Hon. Burke]: ...and the laws thereof.

[Gov. Quinn]: ...and the laws thereof.

[Hon. Burke]: ...and that I will faithfully discharge the duties.

[Gov. Quinn]: ...and that I will faithfully discharge the duties.

[Hon. Burke]: ...of the Office of Governor.

[Gov. Quinn]: ...of the Office of Governor.

[Hon. Burke]: ...to the best of my ability.

[Gov. Quinn]: ...to the best of my ability.

[Hon. Burke]: Congratulations, Governor.

[Gov. Quinn]: Thank you, Anne. Thank you.

Thank you very much.

It's a true privilege and honor to be the Governor of the great state of Illinois, the Land of Lincoln.

Our hearts are heavy today and our flags are at half mast in our state and every state of our country.

It's important, I think, on this day of reflection that we honor those who gave their lives in Arizona. They believed in democracy. There are some who are still alive and we ask God for their recovery, and we ask God to bless the mortal souls that have passed.

In the Book of Wisdom it is that the souls of the just are at the hand of God and no torment shall ever touch them. I think it is important for all of us to realize that we need to end the violence and end the silence about the violence. It is important in our democracy that we have

robust debate and people have a chance to speak, but it's always important to honor and care for our neighbor.

That's really what our country is all about. It's not a country of 308 million individuals, everyone going in their own separate ways. We are a community of shared values. We care for our neighbor. We take care of the common good. We believe in faith. We believe in hope, and we believe in love.

As St. Paul once said, love is patient, love is kind, and love never fails. It's so important that today we have that love in America and right here in Illinois.

I believe in an attitude of gratitude and I'm very, very grateful to the people of our state who elected me to be their Governor. It is an awesome responsibility, and I honor my election opponents for their commitment to democracy, for their willingness to come into the arena of democracy and compete in a contest of ideas and issues.

I honor Dan Hynes and Bill Brady and I look forward to working with all of every party.

Abraham Lincoln once said that citizens may swear allegiance to one party or another and believe with all their might in their right, but in the end, after the election has passed and before the next election, we are one people, and I believe that that is really what all of us in Illinois must embrace: we must be one people to address the challenges ahead.

When our time on earth is finished, they will not ask each of us what kind of car we drove or what kind of house we lived in or how big our bank account was. Rather, they will ask all of us what we did for our children and their children. The future will outlive all of us.

So I think it is very, very important that we honor our children and do everything we can today to make sacrifices for their future.

God blessed me with two wonderful sons, Patrick and David, and Carl Sandburg once said that the birth of a baby is God's opinion that the world should go on.

I believe all of us should take those words to heart, that our job is to make sure that we take care of our babies in every way we can, to make sure they have a decent future.

I thank my sons for their love and patience; I thank my mother and my late father for their love and patience. My mother was born before women had the right to vote in America. She has seen in her life, a blessed life, great progress in our country: the emergence of women in not only politics, business, in every part of our life in Illinois. I thank my mother for her devotion and for her commitment.

Like my father, [she] believed in education. Education is the strongest force in our land for equal opportunity. We must thank our teachers, our parents, certainly, and all of those who have taught us along the way. I've been blessed, as many here, with great, great teachers. We thank them for sacrificing some of their present in order to help our future.

That's why it's so important that we remember the words of Jacqueline Kennedy that my mother and father took to heart. She said once that if you bungle raising your children, nothing else in life matters.

It's important in Illinois, and in every part of our country, that we not bungle raising our children. We must be devoted to childhood education, to kindergarten through 12th grade, to community college, to four-year university. We have to have a commitment to lifelong education, and I thank my mom and dad for that commitment.

I thank also my brothers, Tom and John, for their faith in me. I haven't won every election, I've lost a few along the way, and there is a saying, one day a peacock, the next day a feather duster. I've been there.

But my brothers never lost faith in me. They were always there with their families, with their children, with my cousins, and I have many, many cousins, our extended family is large indeed, and I thank them for being here today.

Our family, the Quinns, came from another place more than a hundred years ago, to Illinois, as immigrants.

We came not just to build a new country but to really build a new life. We believed in the dream of America, in the opportunity for all who come to our country to build a better life, to build a better society. We honor our immigrants. All of us, in many ways, are immigrants, and we must today understand the importance of coming together.

For me today is a bittersweet day because my father, who died nearly three years ago, is not here. My father is my hero, along with my mother, and my father, who lived 93 years, was a great man. He believed in the ethic of service, that service to others is the rent we pay for our place on God's earth, and he lived that every day.

He had a servant's heart. He understood what Martin Luther King once said: everyone can be great because everyone can serve. I think that is so important for us to remember today. There are people here, great people, who will be sworn in to high office, but I want to be a humble Governor who's proud of our people. I'm proud of everyone in Illinois who believes in that ethic of service.

My father served in public life only once; he was a member of the United States Navy. He joined the Navy right after World War II began. He served three years, one month and 15 days. He understood that volunteering is the heart of America, the heart of Illinois, the heart of any democracy. We must have volunteers.

Earlier today at our faith service we heard the words of the great prophet Isaiah, who talked about volunteerism. He said, "Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I heard you calling in the night. I will go if you lead me, and I will hold your people in my heart."

That's what all of us must do.

My father believed in that credo, and I think all of us understand to make our state a better state we must have an ethic of service and many, many volunteers.

I think it's right and fitting at this time to honor those who are not with us today, who did heed the call of Isaiah and say, here I am, Lord. They volunteered for our military. They came forward at our most perilous times in our lives and democracy, after 9/11. They volunteered for every branch of service to go to very dangerous places and they gave their lives for us. I would say to our Gold Star parents who are here today and across Illinois that my heart is ever at your service.

There are no words in the English language, or the Spanish language, or any language, to relieve the pain of losing someone dear to you, someone you have known from the day they were born, someone who came forward and volunteered for our democracy.

And in the words of the poet [Lt. Col. John McCrae], "Short days ago" these men and women lived, "they felt dawn, they saw sunset, they loved, [and were] loved," and now they are no longer with us. And we cannot break faith with these all-American heroes. They understood how important our democracy is. They understood the words of Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, 272 words that will echo forever in American history, that it's government of the people and by the people and for the people. It shall not perish from this earth. Our service members understood that.

Those Gold Star families and their sons and daughters who ten years ago were all alive and now have passed, our faith teaches us we will see them again, and we will remember the words of the third verse of "America the Beautiful": "Oh beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife, who more than self their country loved and mercy more than life."

All of us should understand that to have a democracy it's not a spectator sport. It involves all of us, and all of us must band together for the common good. Whether you wear a military uniform or not, all of us have a duty of service, to take good care of our government.

The government belongs to us, not to politicians, not to bureaucrats, not to big corporations and big bureaucracies. It belongs to everyday people, and the people of Illinois are good and strong. We formed our governments and we will reform our government.

It is so important, I think, on this solemn day that we make a commitment to the people of Illinois that we truly believe in government of the people. It's a very, very important that we understand that democracy is a divine gift and we must treasure it and nurture it every day we are alive.

I think it is important, very important, to remember the words of a Poet Laureate of Illinois who I heard 38 years ago almost this very day, a very special woman, and she spoke that day, and I've always remembered her words.

She said, "It is the giant hour." Gwendolyn Brooks said, "It is the giant hour and no less than gianthood will do."

Today is our giant hour and nothing less than gianthood will do for all of us in Illinois to confront our awesome challenges. They are indeed awesome.

We know very well that our government suffered an integrity crisis prior to my assuming office. It was a sad situation indeed when the people of Illinois were afraid that their government had lost faith in them, and I'm here today to say that we've restored integrity and honesty to the Office of Governor and we have replaced a government of deals with a government of ideals and I believe that that must be our principle every day that we are alive.

I believe in idealism, in reaching for the stars, in having a vision, in believing in everyday people's ability to make that vision a reality. It's so important that we at all times maintain openness and honesty in our government.

We also understand, after dealing with a serious, serious integrity crisis that harmed the fiber of our government, that we also must deal with a fiscal crisis. I'm here today to say that we will pay our bills, that we will stabilize our budget.

We will strengthen our economy. We will do that and we will do that very, very soon. I command all of both parties to work together to reach a point where I believe we can enact very quickly a sound budget, a balanced budget, that pays the bills of the stay Illinois, that pays our obligations and also makes sure that our economy is strong for today and in the future.

When all is said and done, that is our foremost mission, our top priority, to put the people of Illinois to work. I think that's so important.

The number one civil right is the right to a job. It's the best way to fight crime. It's the best way to fight poverty, and it's the best way to keep families together. A j-o-b. That's what I believe in and that's what we're going to do.

I intend to be the jobs governor, and I'm going to work night and day until our economy is back where it ought to be. About a year ago we had an unemployment rate of over 11 percent. In the past year, through the good work of many, many people we've been able to knock that unemployment rate down by about two points. We're lower than the national average.

We've had eight straight months of declining unemployment. We've had jobs created here in Illinois more than any other state in the Midwest, and that's what we want to continue to do all across our state. We want to summon the energy and the ability and the work ethic of everyday people in Illinois so we can cut our unemployment rate in half and be where we have to be with respect to prosperity.

We can do this. We can do this with a commitment to education, because jobs follow brain power. We should never forget that educating our citizens is the best way to prosperity.

We also have to understand our transportational advantages that we have in Illinois located in the middle of America. We have great roads and highways and bridges. We must make sure that they're safe and sound.

We have great, great rail systems. Every railroad in the country crisscrosses Illinois and we want to make sure they don't have bottlenecks, that they are able to transport goods and people to where they have to go. We believe in fast trains, and we will build fast trains in Illinois.

We believe in airports. We have great airports today and we will have another great airport in the south suburbs of Chicago.

We're going to make sure that we are the inland port of America, that whether the goods come from the east or the west, when they come to Illinois we will distribute those goods and we will make those goods.

We have people who know how to make everything. They understand the value of a day's hard work, and we must understand that building and making things is the heart of Illinois.

We can do this. We can take the green economy, the sustainable economy, and make sure that that's part and parcel of everything we do in Illinois. We don't want to build a building unless it's energy efficient. We don't want to lose the opportunity to make sure that we have all American energy, energy from the wind, from the sun, from biomass. We want to make sure we summon all of our energy resources in Illinois.

I look forward to working with the people of Illinois, the members of our General Assembly and the members of City Councils and County Boards across Illinois. All of these great leaders, we're on a mission to make our state the best it can be and ever will be when it comes to creating jobs. There's no better way to help the most people. There's no better way to alleviate poverty.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt once said during the Great Depression the test of our decency in our society is not whether we give more to those who have abundance, but rather what we do for those who have the least. I think it is so important in our state that we make a social justice commitment to fairness, to make sure we have fairness in our society.

A fair society is a prosperous society. Everybody in, nobody left out. That's what I believe in and I think that will make our state a great state.

We believe in tolerance, tolerance. We want to welcome the world. We want to be a place where people from every part of this globe come and enjoy and meet the people of our state of Illinois. We want to export to the whole world. We understand the goods, services and the agriculture of Illinois are second to none. Our great, great agriculture is such a foundation of our economy. We honor all of those who plow and who make our economy, our agricultural economy so strong, that we can export and really feed the world.

We want to fuel the world. We want to heal the world. That's what Illinois has always been.

We're a beacon of hope. We're the place that Abraham Lincoln called home. We are the Land of Lincoln. We believe in what he believed in, democracy.

Carl Sandburg, sometime ago he said in a poem he believed in people. He said that people will always live on. The people know the salt of the sea. The people know the strength of the wind. Who else speaks for the family of man.

I believe in the everyday people of Illinois all my life. I've gathered a lot of signatures of citizens who aren't celebrities. Many, many people have given autographs and [signed] petitions that I have circulated for the Citizens Utility Board, for ethics in government, for reducing the size of government, and they had faith in me. I thank them for their commitment and their faith in democracy, because that's how our state will go forward and prosper, with an undying, abiding faith in everyday people. They're the ones who volunteer. They're the ones who come forward, and I just want to mention a few people that I have met along the way who have volunteered and helped their neighbor.

I can't forget Tiffany Henyard who answered the call of "Put Illinois to Work" and hired Octavia Jones and gave her a j-o-b. I think that's a high calling indeed, an employer who hires someone who never had a job and gave them hope and a chance in life.

I can't forget the man who just recited for all of us, together with us, the Pledge of Allegiance. Will Attig [Sgt., U.S. Army, Ret.], he won two Purple Hearts. He's a recipient of two Purple Hearts.

He's a veteran, and we have a duty to make sure that we on the homefront take good care of those who have borne the battle. When Will came home, he didn't have a job, he didn't have a j-o-b, but people came together in "Helmets to Hardhats" that he joined, and he learned how to be a welder. He learned how to put things together. He's got a union card now and he's a union welder.

And I can't forget Danuta Kowalik. Her son, Jakub, a United States Marine, "Semper Fi, Always Faithful," came from another place. I went to his hometown in Poland. I saw first-hand where he grew up. I went to his school.

But he came to America with his mother and he volunteered for the United States Marines. He lost his life in Iraq some years ago. We honor Jakub's life and all of those who have given their lives for our democracy, but it is said to me how important it is to welcome people from other places because they become part of America.

Just like three young soldiers who graduated from East Aurora High School, all of them Mexican-American. They all volunteered for the United States Marines. They all lost their lives far away.

When I went to their funerals, I can remember the mayor of Aurora saying those who are bashing immigrants ought to take a look at the surnames of these young Marines and what they mean to our country.

It's everybody in and nobody left out.

I know someone who believed in that. He lived only 30 years. God gave him a purposeful life. He was the first killed in action in the war in Iraq.

He came from our state, from a town, St. Anne. He ran in the State track meet, won a gold medal. He was a great athlete, but most of all he was a great person. When he was standing in line to make calls back home during the run up to the beginning of the war, a long line of soldiers, service members getting three minutes to call home.

He was a bachelor, he didn't have a family, he didn't have a wife. He was right near the front of the line and he stepped to the back of the line to show that those soldiers who had wives and kids, he wanted them to get the first chance at those calls.

That's what Ryan Beaupre was all about.

I want to say that Ryan is always in our hearts. He's a special person who, I think, showed us the way.

And one more person that I think knows firsthand how generous the people are when they come together and band together for a common cause that they believe in, is Jesse Alcozer and his family.

His son, Christopher, killed in action in 2004, November. We had to deal with a hate group that tried to disrupt the funeral, but we persevered. We understood the importance of faith and love and hope.

After that sad funeral of Christopher, who not only was a wrestler but also played the viola – he was only 19 years old – tragedy again came to the Alcozer family in December of that very year, right around Christmas. Their house burned down and they were able to retrieve the flag that was on Christopher's coffin, but they had a family without a home.

And in one month in 2005, 31 days, people from every state in the union donated money to rebuild that house, people in our state and every other state. A soldier who served with Christopher e-mailed his mom and said, please give \$20. I knew Chris, I can't give it myself. Send it to the family.

And I was so inspired by that, that that's really the heart and soul of America, the heart and soul of Illinois. When something bad happens we don't look the other way. We understand what the parable of the "Good Samaritan" was all about. We come together and help our neighbor and rebuild our home.

So I think we should always understand the importance of having faith and trust in the people of Illinois. The people are good and true. They always live on, and I think if we have that commitment we can overcome any of our challenges. We can have an honest government with a balanced budget, with a prosperous economy.

Those are my visions. That's my theme. That's what I believe in.

If all of us work together we can make the will of the people the law of the land.

Thank you.