



INAUGURAL ADDRESS

GOVERNOR JANET NAPOLITANO

JANUARY 6, 2003
ARIZONA STATE CAPITOL



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Judge Schroeder, former governors, President Bennett, Speaker Flake, Senator Brown, Representative Loreda, honored guests, and my fellow Arizonans:

On this perfect Arizona day, in the company of my family, and surrounded by old friends and new colleagues, it is the greatest honor of my life to stand here as your 21st Governor.

I would like to take a moment to thank our twentieth Governor, Jane Dee Hull, for devoting a quarter century of her life to public service. Governor Hull, throughout the transition we just completed, you could not have been more gracious and helpful. Thank you.

Today, a restless state looks on and wonders what will happen next. Weary of bad news and wary of more disappointment, citizens watch as we exchange one governor for another, one political party for another. With a mixture of hope and skepticism, Arizonans look on and ask: Will anything really change?

My friends, I say to you today we are already changing.

The change we bring is exciting because in our quest to fix what is wrong with Arizona, we are re-discovering everything that is right with Arizona. Our strength lies in our diversity and it lies in our heritage. And we must draw on both of these gifts in the days ahead.

Our diversity gives us a rich mix of cultures, faiths and traditions from across Arizona's communities and around the world.

Our heritage gives us its strength of character and its stubborn optimism. After all, we have built our modern cities and towns on the foundations first laid by the Hohokam, the Anasazi and the Mogollon peoples. Our past thrives in our modern-day values of rugged independence and a can-do spirit.

Our diversity and our heritage define the vital Arizona I saw throughout my journey to this stage. I saw it in the eyes of young Navajo children learning to use the Internet. I witnessed the determination of Spanish-speaking parents, learning English alongside their children in Yuma.

I saw it in the marvelous and artistic mosaics created by previously unemployed young adults at Las Artes in South Tucson.

I have felt it among the growing ranks of entrepreneurs in our state, eager and willing to build a new economy. And as the nation watched the seventh game of the World Series last year and the Fiesta Bowl last Friday it saw the simple essence of Arizona: this is a great place to live.



But I also saw another side of Arizona that we simply cannot wish away. I saw it through the eyes of the Sikh community after the murder of Balbir Singh Sodhi, the victim of a hate crime. I saw it through the eyes of parents going to a food bank to get food for their children. I still see it through the eyes of a homeless World War II veteran I pass each morning on my way to the Capitol.

I see both sides of Arizona, and my goal is simple: We must ensure that prosperity wins over desperation and becomes the norm for all Arizonans. To do this, we must come back together as one, united in the knowledge that we need each other, and bound by our commitment to each other.

My friends, we are all in this together.

We must lift this state out of its budget crisis without sacrificing education and the long-term future of Arizona.

To accomplish this, we must change the political culture at this Capitol. With this inaugural, I declare an end to government where winners take all to the exclusion of everyone else. There is no room for this brand of politics in the new Arizona, and it will not be practiced in my office.

As a testament to my firm belief that we need a new culture of cooperation, I have appointed a bipartisan administration. My team members reflect the diversity of our culture, and they represent the best thinking of all Arizonans.

Next week a new Legislature will convene, and I will submit my plan to revitalize Arizona and balance our budget. Put simply, there are no painless solutions to our problems.

To emerge from this quagmire, we need patience, discipline and a long-term vision of a new Arizona.

We are in the deepest financial crisis of our history. Our constitution requires a balanced budget. But again – we must not balance our budget on the backs of children, as we have done too often.

I make this pledge: We will not mortgage our future to make up for the mistakes of the past. We must sacrifice short-term rewards and agendas, and keep our eyes on a larger prize – a new Arizona where hope and opportunity abound.

All of this will take time, patience and a willingness by all elected officials to challenge their own beliefs in search of a better ways to serve the people. We cannot fix in a few months a crisis that was a decade in the making.



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Frankly, generations to come will not remember us for how we balanced the budget, or how we expanded or contracted the size of government.

Instead, they will remember how we educated our children, how we protected our seniors, how we built a new economy, and how we made this wonderful state an even better place to live.

We are building a new Arizona, and in doing so we are creating our own proud legacy of an Arizona that offers the best public education in America, leads the world in research and product development, and boasts of prosperous and growing communities.

My friends, we have what it takes to create that legacy. To write our chapter of Arizona history.

For today, I thank you for your confidence and trust in me. I ask for your support and understanding as I embark on the task ahead. I ask for your hand in partnership.

Our future starts today, and what a beautiful day it is.

Thank you.