



New York City Comptroller  
Scott M. Stringer

---

January 1st, 2014

NEW YORK, NY -- Inaugural Address of Scott M. Stringer, 44th Comptroller of the City of New York, as prepared for delivery:

"Twelve years ago, when New York gathered on these steps to swear in a new government, it was a deeply uncertain time for our City -- and our Nation.

The dust from ground zero still hung in the air. Our economy was battered. Our confidence shaken.

But the people of New York rose to that epic challenge as they always do, with grit, compassion, and eternal belief that there is nothing that our City cannot overcome when we join together as one.

Today, we have arrived at a different moment of transition for our City -- and once again New Yorkers have come together with a new sense of resolve to tackle the great challenges of this time.

Mayor deBlasio, thank you for giving voice to those who for too long have had none and for demanding that we must again be a City where working people can afford to pursue their dreams, and where aspiration and opportunity must walk hand in hand.

There will be those who say that we as a city cannot afford to tackle poverty and inequality. As Comptroller, I say we can't afford not to.

I believe that pursuing a progressive agenda and being fiscally responsible is not mutually exclusive. We can and we must do both.

We can double-down on solving homelessness, on improving our infrastructure, on growing jobs -- while also protecting our double-A bond rating.

We can lift up every New Yorker, by ensuring that all communities are treated equally before the law.

We can educate every child with the skills needed to compete in the 21st Century economy.

And yes, we can shelter every family in safe, affordable homes, not squalid shelters where 22,000 of our children will go to sleep tonight.

As the City's chief fiscal officer, it is my duty -- my promise -- that I will do everything in my power to maintain our fiscal health.

I will audit every city agency to root out waste and abuse.

I will work everyday to build our pension fund so that we can invest more resources in priorities that matter and I will join with other institutional investors around the country to hold corporations to the highest standards of workplace safety, environmental sustainability and corporate diversity.

Because companies that respect their workers and our planet are companies that will help to grow our pension fund for years to come.

I intend to remake the office of Comptroller into a think-tank for innovation and ideas.

Because with new faces must come new approaches to our most stubborn challenges, from educating our kids, to diversifying our economy, to improving retirement security for all.

Now, none of this will be easy.

But there's a reason E.B. White once called New York "A visible symbol of aspiration."

You see, it was aspiration that led millions of families to leave their homelands, drawn by the promise of Liberty's eternal flame.

It was aspiration that brought workers into our streets to fight for a 40-hour work week, transforming New York into a beacon of fairness and opportunity.

And it was aspiration that drove our parents -- and my grandparents -- to lay down roots and build our neighborhoods, knowing that hard work would be repaid with success.

Today, millions of New Yorkers continue to benefit from this legacy.

And just as America has historically looked to New York for inspiration, so the country once again turns its eyes toward us today, to this city, to our people, for a blueprint of a thriving hopeful future, to a city that puts people above politics, and shared prosperity above individual success.

A city that demands performance from its government, and holds its leaders to the highest standards of transparency and efficiency, and a city that understands that for all its great wealth, New York is only as strong as its most vulnerable citizens.

We can and we will uphold and strengthen New York's eternal promise, that in these five boroughs, it does not matter who you are or where you come from, all people will find opportunity and a fair shot at success in our City of aspiration.

That is my solemn pledge. Thank you very much."