



Monday, August 17, 2009

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Text of Governor Doyle's Speech Announcing He Will Not Seek a Third Term as Governor

Will Complete Second Term

MADISON – Governor Jim Doyle today announced that he will not seek a third term as Governor. The full text of his prepared remarks follows here:

I have decided that I will not run for a third term as governor.

Jessica and I, as Peace Corps volunteers, a lawyer and a teacher on the Navajo Indian Reservation, district attorney, attorney general, governor and first lady, have dedicated ourselves to working for others.

When I first ran for governor in 2002, Jessica and I assumed that if I was fortunate enough to be elected, it would be a two-term commitment. As I have thought long and hard about this decision, I have come back to this starting point. As much as I love the job, as hard as I work at it and as much as my team and I have to contribute in a third term, I believe that a governor should limit him or herself to two terms.

This is the norm in this country. The President and most governors are limited to two terms by law. Most others have followed tradition. It has largely been Wisconsin's practice over its history. I am already the longest serving Democratic governor and by the end of my term will be the second-longest serving governor in Wisconsin history.

And I think this national norm serves good purpose. It keeps the political world from becoming stagnant. It allows new leaders to develop. It gives the voters more choices. It allows us to draw new insights and inspiration from the wellsprings of renewal in each generation.

I personally would like to have put this decision off for another three or four month, to see if I feel differently then. I know I will regret the decision many times over the coming year. But I am not going to go Brett Favre on you. I am announcing my decision now to allow other candidates to step forward and get going.

Perhaps more than anyone I know what it takes. I have won seven major statewide races over the last 20 years – two primaries and five general elections. I know the usual pundits and observers will be filled with insider talk: who's up and who's down, who alleged what about whom, what "insiders" are saying. But running for governor is not about inside politics. It's about hard work.

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It is about endless travel, early, early mornings and late, late nights. It is about getting yourself known throughout the state, developing and communicating a clear and compelling message, raising money, assembling and leading a strong team.

In modern politics that takes time. By indicating my intentions now, I am giving candidates that time.

I should add about hard work – it is not just me, it is a family and a team. I am blessed with a wonderful family – Jessica, Gus, Asiah, Gabe, Carrie and Lily, my sister, Catey, and so many others. And I am blessed with a great team who have been working every bit as hard as I have.

But this is not the time for reflection and thanks. There will be plenty of time for that much later. It is simply about what we will be doing over the next year and a half.

I fully intend to serve my entire term. Maybe I am old fashioned, but I believe strongly that when you run for a term, you serve that term. I am going to work as hard as humanly possible over this time to help the people of Wisconsin.

Over the next year and a half, I will be the governor, and not a candidate. And I believe that without all the politics we can get a lot done.

This moment in history won't be wasted. Some might take a skeptical view, and say, well, there's not enough time between now and the next election to do anything meaningful. Or there will be some phony analysis claiming that without an election ahead of me, there will be no reason to act.

Well, let's look at history. Let's see what we've been able to do in a year and a half.

Since 2008, we've been able to guarantee that every child in Wisconsin can get health insurance coverage. That's meant that 130,000 people who didn't have health insurance before have it today, and most of them are kids. Wisconsin provides health insurance coverage to 98 percent of the people in the state -- the second-highest rate in the nation.

Since 2008, we have strengthened classrooms and given school districts and teachers the freedom to negotiate innovative and reasonable contracts. We've also laid the groundwork to improve school accountability, efficiency and to improve our state's largest school district, Milwaukee Public Schools.

Since 2008, we've guaranteed that our Great Lakes won't be siphoned off to faraway deserts and the water will be sustainably managed. We've guaranteed that our utilities will reduce mercury emissions and other pollutants by 90 percent.

Since 2008, we've created unprecedented tools for job creation, including tax credits to spur research development, high-tech business, and modern manufacturing and agriculture.

Since 2008, we've made sure that workers in our state will breathe clean, smoke-free air. We've guaranteed that committed couples can be assured some basic rights. We've made sure that an autistic child can get the treatment he or she needs under her parents' insurance. We've set a course toward sources of clean, renewable energy.

That's the short version of the list. If you want a longer list of accomplishments, I believe we will write it between now and January, 2011.

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We are going to do even more on education, health care, job creation and the environment.

In education, we will move forward with implementing the Wisconsin Covenant, with major education reforms under the leadership of President Obama, with school finance reform, and with education reforms in Milwaukee Public Schools.

At our great university system, we will finish the Institute for Discovery, create a new Wisconsin Energy Institute and continue to work on UW Milwaukee's Schools of Engineering, Freshwater Science and Public Health.

On health care, we will continue to make Badger Care available to more uninsured citizens, expand family care, and move toward having electronic medical records used throughout the state.

On job creation, we will keep Wisconsin as the number one state in modern manufacturing, continue to build a strong agriculture economy, expand the high-tech industries and the growth of green jobs in Wisconsin. We will ensure that Wisconsin comes back strong as the national recession eases.

On the environment, we will implement the recommendations of my Global Warming Task Force. We will greatly expand energy conservation and the development of renewable sources of energy.

And we will connect Wisconsin with the Midwest with high-speed passenger rail, connecting Chicago to Milwaukee, Madison and the Twin Cities.

So now my direction to my staff and my request to all those who have been so supportive is "Let's get to work."

Thank you and On Wisconsin!

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Editors please note: These are the Governor's prepared remarks and he did not deliver them verbatim.