

Jocelyn Benson Remarks
January 1, 2019

To Governor-elect Whitmer
Lt. Governor-elect Gilchrist
Distinguished officials and leaders on this morning's Dais,
To my fellow constitutional officers, members of the state Legislature
Judge Damon Keith
Family, friends and other distinguished guests

It is a new day for democracy here in the state of Michigan.

I began my career in Montgomery, Alabama investigating hate groups and hate crimes throughout the country.

It was there, standing at the foot of the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama where I was instilled with a deep commitment to do everything I could -- wherever I was -- to continue the work of those leaders in 1965 who sacrificed everything to protect our sacred right to vote.

And now, as your Secretary of State, I will work every day to bring that same commitment as our state's chief election officer to protect your vote, your voice, and our democracy.

And I am ready.

I am ready to work to make us a national leader in fair and accessible elections, to ensure our legislative districts are drawn by citizens in a nonpartisan manner.

I am ready to secure our democracy, and to work with all of you to take Michigan from worst to first in transparency, ethics, and accountability.

I am ready to instill a new standard and expectation for excellent customer service in our state government because every person -- no matter where you live in Michigan -- deserves to get-in-and-out of our branch offices in less than 30 minutes.

And I stand before you today as a military spouse, ready to help ensure our government works to serve and protect our military service members, families, and veterans just as they have worked to serve and protect all of us.

It is the greatest honor of my life to stand before you now as Michigan's 43rd Secretary of State.

I am grateful for your trust and your support, and I am ready to work as hard as you do every day in my service to you and to the interests of our state, our people, and our democracy.

Thank you.

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