

04.15.14 Governor Patrick Delivers Remarks at Boston Marathon Bombing One-Year Anniversary

AS DELIVERED:

Governor Deval L. Patrick
Boston Marathon Bombing One-Year Anniversary
Hynes Convention Center, 900 Boylston Street, Boston
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Mr. Vice President, Mayor Walsh, Mayor Menino, ladies and gentlemen, brothers and sisters.

None of us at this podium could possibly add to the testimony of the survivors who have spoken today.

I am just glad to be here with them and with all of you.

I am glad to join in the remembrance of Krystle and Lingzi (LING-zuh) and Martin and Sean. I am glad to share in acknowledging and supporting the families who survive them, and the other survivors -- many here and some not yet ready to be here -- who still hurt from this tragedy, and yet inspire us with their determination.

I am glad for the chance to honor and thank again the first responders and medical professionals and volunteers who cared for and comforted those hurt, and the many law enforcement officials who meticulously and methodically worked to solve this crime and find the killers.

I am glad to be here with Mayor Menino and Mayor Walsh and the many other political leaders who put their emphasis on "leader" and not on "political" throughout that fateful week.

I am glad to have this tragedy behind us, and the next Marathon ahead of us. And I am glad especially to share in the timeless triumph of our community's response to this crisis. Because, as I see it, "Boston Strong" is about the triumph of community itself.

Over and over again in the last several years, we have emphasized the importance of building community, of seeing our stake in our neighbor's dreams and struggles as well as our own. Sustaining such sentiments is tough in the face of the crushing cynicism so prevalent in modern culture.

And yet, for me, the thing we witnessed in the aftermath of that vicious attack last year, and that I submit we are here today to celebrate, is precisely that sense of community, that enduring and transcendent display you and so many others showed last year of kindness and grace.

There are no strangers here. In the days and weeks after the Marathon last year, we were reminded how few degrees of separation there are, in fact, between us.

I think of the young lawyer on my own staff who finished the route on Boylston Street equidistant between the first and second blasts. Or the friends who left the finish line minutes before the first explosion because their small children needed a nap. Or the friends who didn't. There are no strangers here.

I see nurses and doctors in elevators and at the CVS whom I met on their third shift a year ago caring for the injured. Our daughter Katherine was walking towards Boylston Street when the first bomb went off. I carry in my pocket today the photograph of Martin Richard holding a campaign sign for me when he was 2 years old -- he got around Mr. Mayor. There are no strangers here.

The day after the bombings I visited with Karen Rand, her boyfriend and his brother in the hospital, as she waited to learn whether doctors could save her leg. I did what I could to encourage and support her, and she reminded me that we had met two summers before on Shelter Island. Last summer, when the street in Chicago where I was born and raised was renamed for me, who should come rolling up in her wheelchair to support me but the same Karen Rand? There are no strangers here.

We are not strangers. We are all connected -- to each other, to events beyond our control, to a common destiny. We share the same fears, the same hopes, the same community. "We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality," Dr. King used to say, "tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

We are not strangers. We are, in the end, one community.

I hope we hold tight to that. I hope that as we remember the dead and the injured, we remember community. I hope that as we remember the courage of the first responders, we remember community. I hope that as we thank the medical teams and the public officials, we remember community. Because it all adds up to an enduring example of the power of common cause, and of working together and turning to each other when we could have easily turned on each other, indeed the power of love itself.

That's what a community is. And I am so, so proud to be a part of this one. God bless you all. Thank you.

