

1 MR. METZ: IT'S A GREAT PLEASURE FOR ME
2 TO INTRODUCE THE 61ST GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF
3 KENTUCKY, STEVE BESHEAR. HE'S HERE BECAUSE HE IS
4 CONCERNED ABOUT THE 874,000 KENTUCKIANS WHO HAVE A
5 DISABILITY. HE'S NO STRANGER TO OUR MIDST, SINCE HE
6 PARTICIPATED IN OUR GUBERNATORIAL FORUM LAST YEAR.

7 WILL YOU JOIN ME IN GIVING A WARM
8 WELCOME TO OUR GOVERNOR, STEVE BESHEAR.

9 (APPLAUSE.)

10 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: THANK YOU. THANK YOU
11 VERY MUCH.

12 THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ALLOWING ME TO
13 COME AND SPEND A FEW MINUTES WITH YOU THIS MORNING.

14 A SOCIETY SHOULD NOT BE JUDGED ON HOW IT
15 TAKES CARE OF THE RICH AND POWERFUL. INSTEAD, IT
16 SHOULD BE JUDGED ON HOW IT TAKES CARE OF THOSE THAT
17 ARE THE MOST VULNERABLE. WE'RE HERE TODAY TO MAKE
18 SURE THAT IN KENTUCKY WE TREAT OUR VULNERABLE CITIZENS
19 WITH RESPECT AND WITH DIGNITY.

20 (APPLAUSE.)

21 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: BY THAT I MEAN NOT
22 JUST THAT WE SPEAK AND ACT IN A SENSIBLE MANNER, AND
23 IN A SENSITIVE MANNER, I ALSO MEAN THAT WE COMMIT TO
24 DOING WHAT'S REQUIRED TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF ALL OF
25 OUR PEOPLE. MORE THAN --

1 (APPLAUSE.)

2 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: MORE THAN 874,000
3 PEOPLE IN THIS STATE LIVE WITH SOME TYPE OF
4 DISABILITY. THAT IS AN ASTONISHING NUMBER. IT'S MORE
5 THAN 20 PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION. THAT INCLUDES
6 NEARLY 42,000 PEOPLE WHO ARE BETWEEN 5 AND 15 YEARS
7 OLD, NEARLY 600,000 PEOPLE WHO ARE AGES 16 TO 64, OR
8 WHAT'S CONSIDERED TRADITIONAL WORKING AGE, AND MORE
9 THAN 235,000 PEOPLE WHO ARE AGE 65 AND OVER. AND THAT
10 DOESN'T INCLUDE PEOPLE WHO ARE IN NURSING HOMES OR
11 OTHER LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES. IT ALSO DOESN'T
12 INCLUDE PEOPLE WHO ARE IN JAIL, WHERE IT'S ESTIMATED
13 THAT 40 TO 60 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION HAS A
14 DISABILITY. AND IT INCLUDES PEOPLE WITH A VARIETY OF
15 CHALLENGES RANGING FROM NEEDING STRONG GLASSES TO
16 HAVING DOWN'S SYNDROME.

17 THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND EVEN POLICY
18 MAKERS, OFTEN HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME UNDERSTANDING WHAT
19 IT REALLY MEANS TO BE DISABLED. WE NEED TO MAKE SURE
20 THAT ALL OF US REALIZE THAT IT CAN MEAN A VARIETY OF
21 THINGS. INCLUDED IN THAT 874,000 FIGURE ARE PEOPLE
22 WITH SENSORY DISABILITIES, PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUFFERED
23 BRAIN INJURIES OR SPINAL CORD INJURIES, PEOPLE
24 SUFFERING FROM MENTAL ILLNESS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE,
25 PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

1 ONE THING UNITES THEM ALL.
2 HISTORICALLY, THEY HAVE FELT NEGLECTED AND LEFT OUT OF
3 THE GOVERNING PROCESS IN KENTUCKY.

4 (APPLAUSE.)

5 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: AND I WANT TO CHANGE
6 THAT.

7 (APPLAUSE AND CHEERS.)

8 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: AND WITH YOUR
9 COLLABORATION AND YOUR COOPERATION, WE CAN.

10 (APPLAUSE.)

11 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: THIS COALITION IS A
12 BIG STEP TOWARD ACCOMPLISHING JUST THAT. YOU'VE
13 BECOME A VERY POWERFUL ADVOCATE IN ASSURING THAT YOUR
14 CONSTITUENCIES' NEEDS FOR SUPPORTS AND SERVICES ARE
15 BEING MET, AND I COMMEND YOUR UNITED APPROACH.

16 (APPLAUSE.)

17 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: AS IT WAS MENTIONED
18 HERE IN MY INTRODUCTION, A YEAR AGO I ATTENDED THIS
19 EVENT AND FILLED OUT A CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE. IN
20 THAT QUESTIONNAIRE I EXPLAINED SOME OF MY LONG-TERM
21 GOALS: TO ELIMINATE WAITING LISTS FOR SERVICES.

22 (APPLAUSE.)

23 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: TO MAKE SERVICE
24 DELIVERY LESS FRAGMENTED.

25 (APPLAUSE.)

1 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: TO FORM PARTNERSHIPS
2 WITH COMMUNITY PROVIDERS, TO HELP AGING PARENTS WHO
3 CARE FOR MENTALLY DISABLED CHILDREN.

4 (APPLAUSE.)

5 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: TO IMPROVE ON THE
6 ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL PROGRAMS.

7 (APPLAUSE.)

8 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: TO ENHANCE ACCESS TO
9 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION MATERIALS IN
10 ALTERNATIVE FORMATS, TO EXPAND SCREENING IN SCHOOLS
11 FOR MENTAL DISORDERS.

12 (APPLAUSE.)

13 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: THOSE REMAIN MY
14 LONG-TERM GOALS, AMONG OTHERS.

15 FOLKS, WE HAVE INHERITED A TERRIBLE
16 BUDGET PROBLEM, AND WE ALL KNOW IT. WE DIDN'T CREATE
17 IT, BUT IT'S MY JOB TO ADDRESS IT, AND I WILL.

18 AND GIVEN THAT CURRENT BUDGET CRISIS,
19 I'M NOT SURE HOW FAST WE CAN MOVE IN SOME AREAS, BUT I
20 AM DETERMINED, I AM DETERMINED THAT WE'RE GOING TO
21 MOVE. WE ARE GOING TO MAKE PROGRESS. WE HAVE TO GET
22 OURSELVES ON A SOUND FINANCIAL BASIS, AND WE KNOW
23 THAT. WE CAN'T CONTINUE TO OPERATE BY SPENDING MORE
24 THAN WE HAVE.

25 BUT IN MAKING THOSE DECISIONS, WE HAVE

1 TO MAKE SURE THAT THE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR SOCIETY
2 HAVE A PRIORITY.

3 (APPLAUSE.)

4 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: ACROSS THE ENTIRE
5 BREADTH OF STATE GOVERNMENT, I'M BEING FORCED TO DELAY
6 A LOT OF PLANS AS WE COME TO GRIPS WITH THIS BUDGET,
7 BUT WE ARE WORKING FEVERISHLY, AND I MUST TELL YOU
8 THAT THE SECRETARY OF THIS CABINET, JANIE MILLER, IS
9 WORKING WITH ME 24 HOURS A DAY TO TRY TO MAKE SURE
10 THAT WE CAN PUT TOGETHER A BUDGET THAT WILL ENSURE
11 THAT THE CURRENT SERVICES PEOPLE ARE GETTING THEY WILL
12 CONTINUE TO GET AND THAT WE CAN START EXPANDING WHERE
13 WE CAN AND WHEN WE CAN.

14 I REALIZE --

15 (APPLAUSE.)

16 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: I REALIZE, I FULLY
17 REALIZE THAT YOU'RE NERVOUS, AND YOU SHOULD BE, ABOUT
18 ALL OF THIS TALK AND ALL OF THIS BUDGET TALK. I KNOW
19 YOU'RE NERVOUS ABOUT THE SHORTFALLS IN MEDICAID
20 FUNDING, SINCE MANY OF YOU RECEIVE MEDICAID SERVICES.

21 I'M NOT GOING TO STAND UP HERE AND MAKE
22 YOU A LOT OF PROMISES, BECAUSE, IN FACT, I THINK YOU
23 HEARD A LOT OF PROMISES THE LAST TWO OR THREE YEARS.
24 WE HEARD THAT THERE WERE GOING TO BE REFORMS PUT IN
25 PLACE THAT WOULD BALANCE THE MEDICAID BUDGET, AND

1 INDEED, SOME STRUCTURAL REFORMS WERE WORKED AT, AND
2 WE'RE REVIEWING THOSE REFORMS, AND MANY OF THEM LOOK
3 LIKE THEY SHOULD BE THERE AND THAT WE SHOULD HAVE
4 THOSE REFORMS.

5 THE PROBLEM IS, THOSE REFORMS WEREN'T
6 IMPLEMENTED, AND ALL OF THE SUPPOSED SAVINGS THAT WE
7 WERE GOING TO SEE THAT WOULD BALANCE OUR MEDICAID
8 BUDGET DID NOT COME ABOUT, AND THAT'S ONE OF THE
9 REASONS THAT WE ARE SITTING HERE FACING THIS SITUATION
10 RIGHT NOW.

11 AND WE ARE LOOKING AT THE STRUCTURES
12 THAT WE HAVE, AND WE ARE GOING TO MOVE FORWARD AND
13 IMPLEMENT THOSE STRUCTURES WHERE THEY ARE GOOD SO THAT
14 WE CAN START REALIZING SOME OF THOSE SAVINGS.

15 BUT BECAUSE WE ALL KNOW THAT ALTHOUGH WE
16 THOUGHT THE MEDICAID BUDGET WAS GOING TO BE BALANCED,
17 WE FOUND OUT WHEN I ARRIVED HERE THAT IT WAS NOT AND
18 THAT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO WORK HARD TO MAKE SURE
19 THAT IT IS.

20 WHAT I CAN GUARANTEE YOU IS THAT
21 ADVOCATES FOR THE DISABLED WILL HAVE INPUT IN THIS
22 PROCESS. YOU HAVE BEEN HAVING INPUT. WE'RE GOING TO
23 CONTINUE TO MEET WITH YOU AS WE BRING TOGETHER THIS
24 BUDGET SO THAT WE CAN MAKE THE VERY BEST DECISIONS WE
25 CAN MAKE ON YOUR BEHALF, AND YOU NEED TO HAVE

1 FIRSTHAND INPUT --

2 PARTICIPANTS: YES.

3 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: -- IN WHERE WE DO
4 THIS.

5 (APPLAUSE AND CHEERS.)

6 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: I CAN ALSO GUARANTEE
7 YOU THAT AS WE MOVE FORWARD, YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE, AT
8 THE TABLE, FIRSTHAND INPUT AS WE WORK ON ISSUES LIKE
9 CONSUMER-DIRECTED OPTIONS.

10 (APPLAUSE AND CHEERS.)

11 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: LIKE PROGRAMS THAT
12 ALLOW THE MONEY TO FOLLOW THE PERSON.

13 (APPLAUSE.)

14 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: AND PROGRAMS --
15 PROGRAMS THAT STRESS INCLUSION INSTEAD OF SEGREGATION.

16 (APPLAUSE.)

17 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: FINALLY, I WANT TO
18 SHARE WITH YOU CERTAIN PRINCIPLES THAT ARE GUIDING OUR
19 DECISIONS. WE BELIEVE KENTUCKIANS WITH DISABILITIES
20 DESERVE TO HAVE THEIR VOICES HEARD.

21 (APPLAUSE.)

22 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: YOU DESERVE THE SAME
23 OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD HAPPY AND PRODUCTIVE LIVES AT
24 SCHOOL, AT WORK, AT HOME, AND IN THE COMMUNITY.

25 (APPLAUSE.)

1 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: WE WANT TO EMPOWER
2 INDIVIDUALS WITH THE FREEDOM TO BE EDUCATED ON THE
3 SERVICES AND SUPPORTS THAT ARE AVAILABLE, AND WE WANT
4 THOSE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS TO BE HIGH QUALITY.

5 (APPLAUSE.)

6 GOVERNOR BESHEAR: WE'RE COMMITTED TO
7 ENSURING THAT OUR INITIATIVES FOCUS ON INDIVIDUALS'
8 FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE, PRODUCTIVITY, SELF-SUFFICIENCY,
9 AND RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY, WHERE RECOVERY IS
10 POSSIBLE.

11 EVERY INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS A DISABILITY IS
12 ELDERLY, OR BOTH, AND HIS OR HER FAMILY AND CIRCLE OF
13 SUPPORT HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW ABOUT OUR SYSTEM OF
14 CARE AND DECISIONS THAT IMPACT THEM.

15 FOLKS, THERE AREN'T ANY EASY SOLUTIONS,
16 AND I KNOW I'M NOT TELLING YOU ANYTHING YOU DON'T
17 ALREADY KNOW. YOU'VE DEALT WITH THIS FOR YEARS.
18 THERE ARE CERTAINLY FEW INEXPENSIVE SOLUTIONS, BUT
19 WORKING TOGETHER, FOLKS, WE'RE GOING TO GET THROUGH
20 THIS BUDGET CRISIS. WE'RE GOING TO GET THROUGH THIS
21 BUDGET CRISIS, AND WE'RE GOING TO COME OUT ON THE
22 OTHER SIDE OF THIS BETTER OFF BECAUSE OF IT. WE'RE
23 GOING TO GET OURSELVES ON A SOUND FINANCIAL BASIS, AND
24 BY WORKING TOGETHER AND BY HAVING YOU AT THE TABLE, WE
25 WILL PUT TOGETHER THE BEST POSSIBLE BUDGET WE CAN TO

1 TAKE CARE AND CONTINUE SERVICES AS MUCH AS WE CAN, TO
2 EXPAND SERVICES WHERE AND WHEN WE CAN SO THAT AS WE
3 MOVE DOWN THE ROAD, WE'RE GOING TO ALL HAVE A BETTER
4 DAY FOR FOLKS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF
5 KENTUCKY.

6 I WANT TO THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR
7 WORKING WITH ME, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO
8 HAVE THIS KIND OF COOPERATION THROUGH THE NEXT FOUR
9 YEARS.

10 THANK YOU SO MUCH.

11 (STANDING OVATION.)

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