

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**JOURNAL OF THE SENATE.**



**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018.**

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## JOURNAL OF THE SENATE.

Wednesday, February 14, 2018.

Met at eight minutes past one o'clock P.M. in the Chamber of the House of Representatives for the purpose of receiving remarks from former Senator Linda Dorcena Forry.

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The President, members, guests and staff then recited the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Pledge of allegiance.

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The President recognized the Senator from Suffolk and Norfolk, Mr. Rush, for the purpose of remarks on the retirement of former Senator Linda Dorcena Forry.

*Remarks of Senator Michael F. Rush.*

Good Afternoon. It is both my highest honor and privilege to be here before you on this momentous yet heartfelt and extremely emotional occasion to honor the service and say thank you to Senator Linda Dorcena Forry.

Remarks of Senator  
Michael F. Rush.

Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Polito, Governor Patrick, President Chandler, Speaker DeLeo, Mayor Walsh, President Murray.

Through you to the members of the Massachusetts General Court, the Citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Residents of the First Suffolk District and most importantly, the Dorcena and Forry Families.

A very heartfelt and appreciative thank you to Senator Forry's family, her husband Bill and four beautiful children: John, Conor, Madeline and Norah, thank you for allowing all of us to work with your mother and wife to do the incredible things she has accomplished.

Senator Forry, it is with mixed emotions that we stand before you this afternoon, everyone in this chamber and beyond is both excited for your future but we continue to have a heavy heart for the absence you will leave in this Legislature and in the public realm. We are your friends, we are your fans, and we consider you family. And we believe in you!

You have worked with so many of us to accomplish great things. You have been thoughtful, you have been deliberative, and many would agree, you have been outspoken at times when things have needed to be said.

Thinking of your career in fact reminds me of one of my favorite moments in political history, the time when a someone hollered to President Truman, "Give em hell Harry....to which President Truman responded....I never give them hell, I just tell them the truth and they think its hell....".

Fifty-seven years ago this past January, a young, vibrant, political force to be reckoned with stood on this rostrum and gave a speech to the citizens of Massachusetts and the world, President Kennedy said from that rostrum where his words are immortalized:

Courage – judgment – integrity – dedication – these are the historic qualities of the Bay Colony and the Bay State – the qualities which this state has consistently sent to this chamber on Beacon Hill here in Boston

Senator Forry has epitomized these words both in her private and public life, "*Courage - judgement - integrity and dedication.*"

The Official Motto of Haiti, "*L'Union Fait La Force*" - "Unity is our

strength”. How appropriate, “unity is our strength” Senator Forry’s incredible success as a public servant has been to bring people from all walks of life together, every background, every political philosophy, every religion, every way of thinking to achieve the very best outcome for the residents of Massachusetts.

She is intelligent, funny, charming, motivated and driven. She is everything that we all want to be.

In conclusion, we are all here today, in this historic chamber, on this memorable day, to express the same sentiment...“Senator Linda Dorcena Forry... Thank you! Thank you for your Service, Thank you for your Leadership, Thank you for your Friendship. Thank you for always putting people first. Thank you for making the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a better place to live today.

The President recognized the Senator from Middlesex and Worcester, Mr. Eldridge, for the purpose of remarks on the retirement of former Senator Linda Dorcena Forry.

*Remarks of Senator James B. Eldridge.*

Thank you Madame President, Senate and House colleagues, distinguished guests, and constituents, friends and family of the lady from the 1<sup>st</sup> Suffolk District. I am incredibly honored and humbled to say a few words about my former colleague, and great friend, Linda Dorcena Forry. While I congratulate her on her new opportunity, I’m also very sad not to have her as a colleague anymore.

The fact that I have talked with Linda as much every week since she left the Senate, as we did while we served together, speaks volumes about our true friendship, but also about the kind of public servant she is.

Madame President, with the lady from Dorchester, the personal is the political. When you saw her in the Senate chamber, she was the same person as at some community event, or in the halls of the State House, or with her family, or relaxing after a long day at the State House. Linda is real, with a big heart, a welcoming smile, a willingness to tell what you she thinks, good or bad, to your face, but always with the comfort that she would stand by your side, help you with what you needed, as a colleague, constituent, advocate, or friend.

Madame President, you could see this in the fact that during budget week, she made sure the staff had plenty of hot dogs and hamburgers from Sully’s, and not just the Senators. You could see it in Linda and her staff fielding calls, and providing support, for thousands of Haitian-Americans in need not just from her district, but across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. And you could feel it in her voice, the power of her convictions, calling out homelessness, as the chair of the Housing Committee, of how morally unconscionable it is that in this state you must prove that you are living in a car, before you and your children receive shelter.

I remember Linda kept calling out in front of the Grand Staircase, “WE’RE TALKING ABOUT CHILDREN. HOMELESS CHILDREN. CHILDREN.” No facts, statistics, studies, or reports – Linda’s moral outrage comes straight from the heart.

As elected officials, we all have work that drives us, that gets us up in the morning, that motivates us to get home very late at night, and working weekends. When I think of Senator Linda Dorcena Forry’s legacy, I think about inclusion, and I think about representation.

Are we a society that believe that people, no matter their race, skin color,

Remarks of Senator  
James B. Eldridge.

ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, sexual preference, gender identity, or immigration status, should be able to work wherever they want, live in whatever community they wish to live in, and equally important, thrive and succeed? And if we as a society do believe that, what are we doing as government officials, to make that vision a reality?

Whether it was housing policy, employment in Boston, especially the trades, public education, or economic development, Linda fought to make sure that EVERYONE was included, that everyone had a seat at the table, that the American Dream would live on in Massachusetts. As the daughter of Haitian immigrants, Linda has lived that American Dream, and has worked her entire life to provide that same path of success that her parents, and she and her family, have worked so hard towards realizing.

Madame President, since Linda's made her decision to leave the State Senate, of course every news story notes that now there is not a single black Senator in the body. Added to that, Linda is one of the few Senators who has a parent who is an immigrant to this country. As a close friend, observer and seatmate of Linda's, I have seen the impact of racism.

When the State Senate began its legislative session last January, in the early days of the Trump administration, I watched in awe, tears, and rage, my friend and colleague Linda Dorcena Forry stand up from her seat, and rail against white supremacists like Steve Bannon, fully installed in the White House, calling out the racism that President Trump practices, and has encouraged. When I touched her hand after she finished her speech, I could feel her trembling. And I immediately thought, "What is it like, to be black in America?"

It's a hallmark of her entire career, calling out bigotry, and bringing people together. From her first election to the House, which tipped the scales towards Massachusetts protecting marriage equality, to her fighting for the economic security of Haitians who fled the earthquake-ravaged country in 2010, to her vigilance this session, in both ending mass incarceration in the Senate criminal justice reform bill, and providing economic opportunity for people of color in the marijuana legislation, Linda has shown great strength, leadership, and resolve in fighting racism, prejudice, and xenophobia. Her work has inspired people from across Massachusetts, and she has served her district extremely well, connecting with and helping people from all walks of life.

I want to close my remarks and restate that representation matters. Who represents the wonderful diversity of the people of Massachusetts, matters. I saw that last year, when my sister, and her two biracial children, Olivia and Joshy, were at the State House for a visit. I wanted them to meet Linda.

So in the hustle and bustle of another busy day at the State House, I called her, and she made her way over to Emmett's Pub, where we were having lunch, and, with all of the charm, kindness, and warmth that we all know is Linda's style, she talked to the kids, and asked them questions about what they were up to. And I saw their eyes light up, looking back at me and my sister, and then Linda - just taking in that someone who has the same job as their Uncle Jamie, looks like them.

Madame President, I want to thank the lady from Dorchester, the State Senator for the 1<sup>st</sup> Suffolk District, the State Representative for the 12<sup>th</sup> Suffolk District, for her 23 years of public service, her compassion, drive, sense of humor, kindnesses, determination, courage, moral outrage, her excitement for "public – private PAHHTNERSHIPS," and her true friendship. Linda, you have left the Massachusetts General Court, the constituents of your district, and the people of Massachusetts much better off. Thank you, we miss you so much!

The President in the Chair, who then recognized former Senator Linda Dorcena Forry for the purpose of giving her final remarks.

*Remarks of former Senator Linda Dorcena Forry.*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Madame President, and through you to the members, my dear colleagues, Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Polito and Mayor Walsh... to my family and friends.

Remarks of former  
Senator Linda  
Dorcena Forry.

Thank you.

I want to thank my good friends who spoke today, Senator Michael Rush of West Roxbury and Senator Jamie Eldridge of Acton, they are the best! Thank you gentlemen for your friendship, your guidance and your awe inspiring service to our commonwealth. To think, folks say a progressive dem and a moderate dem can't get along, it's all bologna.

Thank you Senator Rush for your incredible sacrifice serving our country in the military as Lieutenant Commander.

I am so moved and honored by all of your presence here today. We didn't plan it this way— I swear we didn't --- but it's so appropriate, because today is a day that we celebrate love. And I've loved this job, I've loved this place, I've loved my constituents, and you my colleagues. And my heart is full, it's full of the memories and the good-will and the laughter and victories that we have shared.

This is where my career in elected office began, here in this historic chamber — back in April 2005, to be exact during budget week on the 25th (smile). I was sworn in along two other freshman who won special elections that year— Chris Speranzo and my good friend, the gentleman from Brighton, Leader Mike Moran.

It's been a remarkable journey over these 13 years. I had the honor of serving with some of the best people ever assembled under this dome. Together, we made a difference. That first year, right off the bat, we tackled equal marriage and we ensured that our neighbors would never again have to worry about an assault on their right to be with the ones they love. What a way to start a career in elected service.

I am so proud of that vote, of how we stood tall— people from both sides of the aisle and from different religious and life experiences. And I know you are too.

But my career here in the State House started well before 2005. I first arrived here in 1996, just out of Boston College. I interviewed for a job with then Chief of Staff Lily Mendez to become a legislative aide in the office of State Rep. Charlotte Golar Richie. Thank you Charlotte. Charlotte and Lily are here today— and I'm so grateful you took a chance on a young woman who was way more interested back then in fashion design than public policy. Thank you to CHAMPIONS who encouraged them to hire me, we all need people in our corner and for me that was Honorable Jim Brett, who also served in this chamber with distinction, and my priest, rest his soul Fr. Bill Francis.

None of us do this work alone. We stand on the shoulders of men and women who blazed trails long before we came along. To Leader Byron Rushing, who embraced my candidacy for state rep in my first election. To Marie St. Fleur, Mel King, Bruce Bolling and Senator Dianne Wilkerson and Rep. Gloria Fox who are her today. These men and women helped me see my own path forward, and it was so important for me as a young person of color to see myself in my leaders growing up and starting my own career.

I was fortunate to come here on the vanguard of a real sea change in our state and country. I was elected a year before Deval Patrick first appeared on the

scene— and I was proud to work for his election. I loved my time working with him and his wife Diane Patrick, another great model for grace and dignity and success. And together with many of you, I was so excited to support and work hard to elect the greatest president in my lifetime, Barack Obama. We miss his leadership— and that of his amazing First Lady— but we will have a chance to feel that way again someday— and I have faith that it won't be a long wait.

From my first days here as a member, I felt the support and guidance from all of you— my colleagues and my peers in government. I was so fortunate to serve under Speaker Sal DiMasi, whose wife Debbie is here today, thank you for being here. Sal, saw promise in a young member from Dorchester and gave me the chance to step up, serve, learn and lead. I'm forever grateful to you and we're happy you're home.

Speaker DeLeo. You supported me at every turn, you gave me the chance to challenge myself and help my district. You have been a mentor, a friend, a wonderful leader for the House. We have laughed a lot. I am so proud of you— and the work you've done, the example you've set. On behalf of my constituents, thank you for your leadership.

It was hard to leave this chamber, but when I did in 2013— my friends in the Senate made the transition so wonderful. My fellow Dorchester girl, President Therese Murray is here today— thank you Madame President for leading the way, for breaking down barriers, for making me feel welcome and empowered. I remember every now and then as I'm walking thru the halls, and I hear from a distance "Dorchester" and I would response "in the house." I wish we had more time together, but we made the best of it and you have been such a great friend to me. Thank you. Thank you also Senator Rosenberg, for bringing me into your leadership team. To President Harriette Chandler--- Madame President, thank you for your dedication to the Senate and for showing your leadership when we need it the most. I am in your corner, rooting for you and I know you will succeed.

To my colleagues in the Senate thank you so much for your friendship, in particular Senator Katie O'Connor Ives of Newburyport, Barbara L'Italien of Andover, Michael Moore of Worcester,

I want to thank the Boston Delegation, Mass. Black and Latino Legislative Caucus, Women's Caucus, thank you all for your partnership and commitment.

To Governor Baker. We have worked so well together— and I really admire how you approach your work here in the Commonwealth. Even on those matters where we've disagreed, and there's a couple here and there, you have heard me out, you've listened, and you've given my constituents your good faith and your best effort. I'm proud to call you a friend. And I extend that feeling to all of my colleagues here who happen to belong to a different political party, Minority Leaders Bruce Tarr and Brad Jones and all of you. I've never let the labels, the Ds and Rs get in my way — we are all here to serve and I've loved working with each and every one of you.

There is no greater privilege than to serve your community, your neighborhood, your city, your block here in the Legislature. I am so grateful to the people of First Suffolk district— and the 12th Suffolk House seat— for sending me here to represent them. I hope that I was able to live up to your expectations on my better days, and to make you proud. Every day I came here, I would think of you— and why you sent me here.

I feel like we accomplished so much together. We built new pathways along our waterfront on the Neponset River and connected communities that were separated for many decades. We fought hard to improve our business districts and



to add new amenities. We built new housing and train stations in Dorchester and Mattapan and there's more in the pipeline. We've created jobs and made it easier to access them. We've partnered with businesses and unions and civic leaders to level the playing field. We create new pathways to wealth and security. We have been tested by tragedy and we've shown what strength and resiliency really looks like.

It's been an honor to be one of your voices here at the State House and to fight that good fight alongside colleagues who are just as devoted to our progress. And I leave here knowing that we are in good hands. In Boston, we have a tremendous partner in government, another former member of this Legislature, Mayor Marty Walsh who is here today. Thank you Marty for your leadership and your friendship. And for being a good neighbor. Seriously, he's out there shoveling all the time, he's no joke (smile).

To the amazing women and men who worked with me throughout the years, I salute you. We all know the people who work in our offices are the ones who make the difference for our districts. I want to thank everyone from Team LDF over the last 13 years. Some of them are here today: Sasha Link, Jacquetta Van Zandt, Michael Williams, Jacob Bombard, Sean Pierce, Amanda Curley and Janice Blemur. To my current crew: thank you, Kathy Christian, Kethia Nazaire-Allien, Patrick O'Brien and my Chief of Staff Ceferina Murrell.

To all the wonderful people in this building who believe in public service and have dedicated their life to serving others. Thank you to the Senate Clerk, Bill Welch, my good friend Michael Hurley and the team. To the House Clerk Steven James and the team, Thank you. To the Senate Business office Deb Woodman, the House Business office Patty and the team, thank you. To the incredible State House Rangers, under the leadership of Captain Steve Owens, who are on the frontline protecting us every day. Thank you.

Because I was the state's only elected Haitian leader for a time, my staff and I worked overtime to help constituents who did not live in my districts, but who saw me as their best connection to state government, as their voice. I did my best to help them. To my Haitian brothers and sister...I will always be your advocate; I will always lift my voice with yours. We know there are always mountains beyond mountains, but we climb and we conquer and together we are stronger. And that will never, ever change.

The immigrant story is the American story! I stand before you as a first generation American and only in this country can you start from humble beginnings and become a State Senator.

As you all know and you know it well, this work is not possible without the sacrifices of others who support us at home and from those who came before us. I see Senator Jack Hart, my predecessor, thank you for being here. I see city council at-large, Ayanna Presley thank you for being here. I hope that President Bill Bulger is at home watching and listening, I say thank you to him.

I have been lucky to have that support and encouragement from day one from my family. My mother Annie Dorcena is here with me today. She cared for our children from their youngest weeks to allow me to get back to work quickly or to hit the campaign trail. My father, Andre, did the same — as did my grandmother, Anita, who is home watching today. She is amazing— she will be 104 in a few weeks, and she's praying for all of us right now (smile).

My parents set me on this path many years ago. They gave us everything we needed to succeed— education, faith, confidence, a safe and loving home. They encouraged us to be good citizens, to give back. And there's no political advisor or consultant in the country who I would listen to over the words of my mother,

Annie Dorcena. She's the heart and soul of my political career.

To Bill, the love of my life, who has encouraged, counseled and loved me. He is actually the one that pushed me to run. At that time, we had John who was 13 months old, and Bill was speaking to our Mayor, then Rep. Walsh, when it was said Finneran was not running.... As a rep, I had 3 additional children, where it could've appeared that the timing was just around budget time, it wasn't, but we got a whole lot of things done for the district. To my children who are here: John 14, Conor 11, Madeline 7 and Norah 5, THANK YOU!

Ed Forry, my father in law, has been a constant source of advice and support— from our first day on the trail in 2004 to helping us organize the St. Patrick's Day Breakfast. Ed, thank you for all you have done.

To all my aunts and uncles, my brothers and sisters, and my cousins, especially Carolyn and Philip who stood by my side everyday knocking on doors in 2004/2005 in the middle of winter

I take my leave from this house, from the people's house. We have done so much together— and we've made this a better Commonwealth. We have shown that labels and party affiliation don't have to divide us. There is no one here in this building whom I can't work with— and no one in this building who I can't laugh with and find common ground. We have shown what's possible when good people come together to do great things. I think that example is something that is worth celebrating. We could certainly use more of this Massachusetts form of leadership across our great country.

For me, it's time to start a new chapter. I am excited to move into the private sector and join John Fish at Suffolk Construction as Vice President for the Northeast Region for Diversity, Inclusion and Community and to make an impact in a different way. But I will not be a stranger— and I won't promise you today that I won't be back someday, somehow. We never know what tomorrow brings. What I know for sure is that I will never forget what you have done for me, and my family, for the people I have been honored to represent. This is not a forever goodbye, this is not a sad farewell.... This is simply a time for me to say, thank you. And I love you.

**On motion of Mr. Tarr, the above remarks were ordered printed in the Journal of the Senate.**

Former Senator Linda Dorcena Forry was presented with a Congressional Certificate of Recognition from a representative from the office of Congressman Michael E. Capuano for her committed service to the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Ordered printed.

Congressional  
Certificate of  
Recognition.

Pursuant to an order previously adopted, at four minutes past two o'clock P.M., the Senate adjourned to meet again forthwith, in Gardner Auditorium, in a full formal session with a calendar.