



City Attorney Mara W. Elliott Sworn In For Second Term *Inauguration Speech Transcript*

Thursday, December 10, 2020

Thank you, Madam City Clerk, for administering the oath of office -- and for organizing what I hope will be our last virtual inauguration ceremony.

As I was being sworn in, I thought about the sacrifices my family has made over the years – my husband Greg, and my two boys, Garrett and Graham. Families never get enough credit for the support they provide elected officials. I couldn't have done this without them. I hope my boys, who were just 1 and 3 when I started working at the City Attorney's Office, will be proud that their mother was the first woman to serve as San Diego's City Attorney.

I also want to thank the exceptional attorneys and staff on my team who work hard every day to make San Diego a better and safer place to live. The voters made clear that they appreciate what you do.

Today we begin a new era in our City. We welcome a new mayor, a new City Council, and -- with them -- new hope for our future.

I worked with our new mayor, Todd Gloria, when he served as interim Mayor in 2013. I saw him lead the City through a time of crisis, and I know he shares my commitment to protecting public health and safety, promoting equity, and ensuring the sustainability of our city. I'm ready to get things done with you, Mr. Mayor.

Our five new Councilmembers spent the last two years engaging with their communities and arrive here with fresh energy and ideas. My team and I - and especially our new Assistant City Attorney for Council Relations - are eager to work with all of you.

Years from now, we may look back on this as a pivotal moment for our city.

Forces may conspire to divide us, but we know we are at our best when we are at our most inclusive. Our greatness is our people -- diverse, opinionated, old and young, but all of us invested in our collective success.

When I was sworn in four years ago, I pledged to make protecting San Diego my first priority. That pledge was made in front of a thousand people. Today I renew it while speaking to a screen. This pandemic has only affirmed that commitment.

Every day we wrestle with the challenges that the coronavirus has created for vulnerable San Diegans. COVID-19 has increased the stressors that contribute to domestic violence, making the work of our Family Justice Center more urgent and important. I'm proud that our staff and community partners seamlessly continued their work to help victims safely escape abusers and heal.

COVID-19 has exacerbated mental health struggles for many. During the first six months of the pandemic, the number of gun-related suicide threats nearly tripled. Our nationally recognized Gun Violence Restraining Order program has proven essential in protecting the public during this global health crisis.

And COVID-19 has isolated seniors and dependent adults who could easily slip through the cracks. In response, we heightened our crackdown on substandard housing. We invested in personal protective equipment so that our investigators could continue to report to the field, rescue victims, connect them to housing, and hold those who abuse and exploit them accountable. Home should be a safe place for everyone.

As we look ahead to a second term, my team and I are ready to continue the work we started four years ago. We're committed to strengthening these programs and ensuring their survival beyond my term. While we continue to pull together and weather the pandemic, I'm more enthusiastic than ever about our work to make San Diego a safer, more inclusive, and livable city for everyone.

I welcome my new colleagues and thank them for their commitment to serving the people.

Now, let's get to work.