

ASSESSOR BILL POSTMUS' ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

January 8, 2007

Thank you Paul for your warm introduction. It's an honor for me to be introduced by you on this great day of Importance to me and San Bernardino County - our mutual home that we care so much about. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the Honorable Supervisor Josie Gonzales and Supervisor Gary Ovitt for their participation. How truly fortunate we are to have a dynamic and passionate leaders like my friends Josie, Gary and Paul fighting for their constituents. Thank you very much.

I would also like to introduce my parents, Bill and Connie Postmus, and my sister Holly.

Thank you for your support.

It is with both a sense of pride and sadness that I accept the oath of office to serve as San Bernardino County's 19th assessor. For the past six years I have had the distinct privilege of serving the great residents of San Bernardino County's First District as their voice on the County Board of supervisors. As many of you know, this constituency covers 17,500 square miles and includes 400,000 people. It's one of the fastest growing regions in both the state and nation, and I am honored, humbled and proud to have been your advocate as a member of the Board of Supervisors. I will miss representing you as the First District supervisor.

However, the mark of any public servant is the legacy he - or she - leaves upon conclusion of their term of office. I am so proud that together we are leaving the First District in a much stronger position than when I first accepted my oath of office on that cold December day in 2000.

I am so proud to have worked with County Fire Department Chief Pat Dennen and his predecessor Peter Hill to strengthen fire and emergency services, both in the First District, and the county at large. Thanks their determination and foresight, our county - which unlike many other California counties - has its own county fire department that has a staff of over 1,000 dedicated professionals who are ready to respond to all emergencies, large and small.

The protection, safety and security of life and property has been considerably strengthened, and I am so proud to have worked with so many great people to ensure that the vision of a 21st century emergency response service became reality. Thank you for all you do by putting your lives on the line to protect us.

Proving the county's commitment to law enforcement, we have also strengthened our county sheriff's office, which is led by Sheriff Gary Penrod. Every day, the deputies of our great department work to protect us and our families from the scourge of crime and violence. I am honored to be a part of a county that has a proven commitment to excellence in law enforcement, and every member of this great department deserves a round of applause for the outstanding work they do every day to protect our communities. Working with Sheriff Penrod, we on the Board of Supervisors are ensuring that criminals are kept where they should be - behind bars. To that end, we have built a new county jail that will house inmates who otherwise might be released back onto our streets. We have hired 22 new deputies

to patrol unincorporated areas and have added 7 new helicopters to add in the fight against crime. I would like to thank all the dedicated and hard-working members who comprise the San Bernardino County Sheriff's office.

I would like to thank the voters for passing Measure O, a ballot initiative that I wrote after the United States Supreme Court's decision that expanded the power and scope of eminent domain. The passage of Measure O means that the county's use of eminent domain to transfer property from one private party to another - without the original owner's consent is now prohibited. Measure O is a strong statement to the citizens of San Bernardino County that county government will protect the rights of property owners.

Before I begin the next chapter in my public service career, I would like to take a moment to express my deep and sincere gratitude to a true gentleman and public servant of San Bernardino County, the Honorable Assessor Donald Williamson.

Assessor Williamson is a friend to many of us here today, and it's easy to see why. Mr. Williamson laid the groundwork for a modern County Assessor's office, and I will carry the torch from where Don initiated his ideas for a better Assessor's office.

Elections come and go, and we should remember that Don Williamson was elected three times by the people of this great county to this position. I feel so fortunate to have earned the similar trust of San Bernardino County voters, and I know all of you will join me in commending Don Williamson for his service to the taxpayers of San Bernardino County.

As I prepare to accept the challenge of serving as San Bernardino's county assessor, I would like to state there is much work to do. For instance, I will begin work immediately to digitize and protect important documents to benefit county taxpayers. To secure those documents, my team of professionals will ensure the protection of confidential taxpayer information by strengthening identity theft protection measures and creating a more user-friendly website for taxpayers. San Bernardino County deserves a modern Assessor's office, and that is what they will get.

I want taxpayers to know that they have a friend in the fight against higher taxes. High taxes drive business away from California and stifle personal economic growth. With neighboring states like Arizona and Nevada cutting taxes in attempts to lure economic growth from us here. During this campaign, it had been stated that there was very little a county assessor could do to halt high taxes in California. I beg to respectfully disagree. As assessor, I will work with state lawmakers to sponsor taxpayer-friendly legislation that benefits every Californian.

I would like to take a moment at this point to introduce a great friend of mine and a true friend to every California taxpayer, Michelle Steel, the new member of California's Board of Equalization. It's an honor to welcome her to San Bernardino County as a representative of California's Board of Equalization, which is the only elected tax board in the nation.

As many of you may know, California's Board of Equalization works hand-in-hand with county assessors and counsels throughout California to ensure appropriate tax exemptions for qualifying taxpayers. The BOE is also the governing board of assessors statewide. I look forward to working with the Honorable Michelle Steel to

ensure across-the-board tax fairness.

The San Bernardino County Assessor's office is one of three fiscal-rated county positions, the others being the County Treasurer Dick Larson and the County Auditor Larry Walker. As assessor, it will be my role to work with my counterparts to maintain this county's strong fiscal condition while ensuring the highest level of constituent service to every taxpayer.

In leaving my position as supervisor, I would like to thank County Administrative Officer Mark Uffer for the tremendous work he does to keep San Bernardino County exceptionally well-managed. After Mark Uffer's stellar work at the Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, it has been a real privilege to work with Mark as the county's CAO. Your steady hand and guidance means San Bernardino County will always be moving forward on the right track. Thanks Mark for your excellent leadership.

I would also like to thank the members of the staff of the First District for the fantastic job they have done for the constituents of San Bernardino County. Brad Mitzelfelt, I could not have asked for a better chief of staff. Your leadership in my office has allowed me to assemble the best and brightest members to serve the First District. I cannot thank you enough for the personal sacrifices you have made to ensure that the people had excellent liaisons to county government. You did an amazing job.

I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to all the members who served the First District alongside me: Paula Nowicki, Michael Orme, Adam Aleman, Jessie Flores Sheila Raines, David Zook, Talli Lynd, John Richardson, Robert Eland, Lu Russ, Dawn Sikes, Burt Southard, Greg Eyler, and Bob Smith and Bob Hunter. I could not have achieved my accomplishments without the fantastic jobs you have done day in and day out. You truly were the best, and I am so fortunate to have worked with you. Thank you so much.

Of course, the support staff at the County Board of Supervisors. These professionals work so hard to ensure smooth meetings, accurate records of actions, and maintain order and decorum no matter what the circumstances. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you and please know your work does not go unnoticed. Keep up the great work.

Finally, I would like to thank my former colleagues on the Board of Supervisors. I have learned so much from each of them. To Vice Chair Paul Biane, Supervisors Dennis Hansberger, Josie Gonzales and Gary Ovitt, thank you. It has been my honor and privilege to work alongside you as we strived together to make a better San Bernardino County. Working together as a team, we have accomplished so much. I look forward to partnering with you again in the future.

In conclusion, I may be accepting the oath of office today, but I dedicate this day to whom it really belongs - the taxpayer. I look forward to being your advocate every step of the way.

I am so honored today. Thank you.