

House, No. 997

Presented by: [Representative David L. Flynn](#)

Remarks of the Dean of the House of Representatives David L. Flynn of Bridgewater delivered to a session of the House of Representatives on January 1, 2003.

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HOUSE, No. 997

REMARKS OF THE DEAN
OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
DAVID L. FLYNN
OF
BRIDGEWATER
DELIVERED TO A SESSION
OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ON
JANUARY 1, 2003

[Ordered printed by the House of Representatives
on motion of
Representative Thomas M. Finneran of Boston.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Three.

REMARKS OF THE DEAN OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DAVID L. FLYNN, DELIVERED TO A SESSION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON JANUARY 1, 2003.
January 1, 2003.

Welcome everyone to this opening of the 183rd Biennium of the General Court.

Under the provisions of the Massachusetts Constitution, the Rules of the House (Rule 3 Section 3), and the tradition of the House, it is my duty and privilege as Dean of the House to preside at the gathering and formation of this historic body.

I welcome back, fondly, my colleagues from the previous session. I am proud to call you my colleagues.

I extend the warmest welcome to the new members of the House who are embarking today on a voyage of unimagined possibilities. And I especially welcome your families and friends who have been so critical to your success in attaining this high office.

I can remember the feeling of pride I had when I raised my hand and was sworn, as a member of this House for the first time ... On the first Wednesday of January, 1965.

So much has happened since then.

Speaker Quinn and his focus on consumer protection; Speaker Bartley and public education K thru college; Speaker McGee, who faced a similar fiscal crisis; Speaker Keeverian and his process reforms; and Speaker Flaherty and his solidarity with organized labor.

And so much will happen to you and at some point you will look back and realize that it all happened so fast.

This, however, will SEEM like a long year, a long two years.

Because everything we do, hope to do or can't do is going to be decided against a fiscal backdrop of deficits caused by shrinking revenue.

October 6, 2003

I've been in elected or appointed government service for parts of six decades now and, from a strictly revenue point of view, this is the worst recession I've seen in that time.

Our main job this session and in the next will be to manage a budget and manage this government through this recession.

Two years ago our gifted House Ways and Means Chairman, John Rogers, described our situation both vividly and succinctly.

"When we look astern at the bright fiscal skies now behind us," Chairman Rogers said "one might believe that the Ship of State may continue her course full ahead. If, however, we look ahead, as we must do now, we see a gray horizon threatening, and turbulent waters just off the bow. Prudence requires throttling down and plotting a course with the best chance of safety and soundness," the Chairman advised.

I would describe what Chairman Rogers saw as "The Perfect Fiscal Storm".

Thankfully, we have the firm hand and focused vision of Speaker Finneran at the helm.

As Dean of the House I can tell you that longevity has its benefits. Chief among them are patience and perspective.

I've been around long enough to have seen many good years and many bad years. And from the perspective of many years experience, I will confess this to you ... I am an incurable optimist.

You will enjoy your time here. You will be most productive, if you take an optimistic view of the future and of the possibilities and options we have to fix the problems that today seem so overwhelming.

Remember this ... no string of good years lasts forever. And no string of bad years lasts forever. (Unless, like me, you're a Red Sox fan !)

So today, join me in looking, with optimism, to the opportunities ahead, to the ways we will solve our crises and to the years ahead that will be full and fruitful.

Restoring fiscal integrity will not be easy.

This will be a difficult job and it's a job that probably will not be finished in this biennium.

But it's a job we sought and it's a job we will succeed at.

In my heart I know that the best approaches to solving this fiscal problem will be generated here in the House.

We will be criticized for what we do. But the role of a critic is an easy one. The role of serving here, of making decisions, is the more difficult one. But, ultimately, it is our role to devise the solutions to this problem, not the critics.

With parts of some six decades of public service behind me — of service at both the local and state level — it is my firm belief that this body, the House of Representatives, is closest to the will of the people.

My love for this chamber, and for you, my colleagues, reminds me of General MacArthur's love for West Point.

For MacArthur it was "the Corps ... the Corps ... the Corps".

For me it is "the House ... the House ... the House".

I came in here with faith and with hope and with love. Today, in the evening of my time in government, I maintain that faith and hope and love.

Let us all, regardless of party, commit ourselves today to working together in that spirit for the greater good of our Commonwealth.

Good luck and God bless from your Old Dean.