

INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY MAYOR GEORGE PABEY
January 2, 2005 East Chicago, Indiana.

"Thank you all for being here today. This is a truly remarkable day. I'd like to take a moment to introduce the members of my family, for without their strength, love and support, I would not be standing here today.

"As I said, this is really a remarkable day. Standing before you today, I am both proud and humble. I am proud to call East Chicago my home. And I am humbled that you have put your faith and trust in me. I won't let you down, because it is true. *Together*, we really did make history.

"My parents came here to find the American dream -- a good job, owning a nice home, living in a safe neighborhood. My parents were hard working, and they were deeply committed to family and friends. They taught me about values and those things that are really important in life. They taught me about hard work, about being honest, about caring for my family and serving my community.

"They taught me that as a family we had an obligation to stick together, to help each other and that by working together we could accomplish great things. These are the values I was taught, and these are the values I try to live by every day.

"I am proud to look around this auditorium and see us coming together, and the rainbow of people that make up East Chicago. In our city we are family. Young, old, Black, White and Hispanic... this is our family and we will accomplish great things *together*. Our diversity is our strength and *together* we will make East Chicago a great place to live, work and to raise our families. We will work *together* to make life better and safer for our senior citizens. And we will work *together* to improve education and bring good jobs to our city so that our children will have hope and opportunity for a bright and successful future.

"*Together* we will improve our schools.

"*Together* we will rid our neighborhoods of crime, drugs and gangs.

"*Together* we will bring new businesses and good paying jobs into our city.

"*Together* we will work to lower the property taxes, maintain free bus service, and bring back stores and business to our city.

"The election is over. Now it is time to govern and there is so much to do.

"As we begin to unravel the years of secrecy, back room deals, and corruption that have plagued our city, there is no telling what we will find. And there is no telling how bad our city's financial situation is. But we know it is not good. We will have to make hard decisions and tough choices to turn our city around, and we will make those decisions *together*.

"During the next 100 days I will be working hard to create a new beginning for our city, and while there are many things we will be doing, here are some of my top priorities:

"1. We will hire an independent financial auditor to review the city's revenue and expenses. We will open the books and shine the light on the casino money to see where it has been going and how it has been spent.

"2. I will appoint a Citizens' Budget Committee to work with the independent auditor so that taxpayers will have a direct view of our financial condition.

"3. I will cancel all unnecessary and overpriced contracts with consultants, lawyers and contractors. I know this will save us enormous amounts of money. In terms of the City work force I will be asking Department Heads to accept lower salaries, and I am going to immediately put an end to the '2% Club' where City workers have been pushed into contributing 2% of their salary to the Mayor's reelection fund.

"I pledge to sweep politics out of City Hall and this is a giant first step. Our work force will be judged by the quality of the work they do, not by their political contributions and connections.

"In addition to these agenda items, I will be working to increase personal contact with each and every resident to truly open up City Hall so that it serves all of the residents of this great city.

"4. I will put all my energies into finding ways to reduce property taxes by tightening our belts, eliminating waste, and doing things right.

"5. I will personally work to reorganize our police department to make sure we have more officers on the street.

"And of course I will be working to put together a new administration that can work together to improve the quality of services, and who can understand that in the NEW East Chicago we put the residents first and not ourselves.

"One Saturday every month I will have open office hours from 9 AM to 5 PM. You won't have to make an appointment to see me, just come down to City Hall.

"We will be scheduling Town Hall Meetings in each Council District so that myself and your Council member can hear your issues and concerns and work *together* to solve problems and be responsive to your needs.

"There are many things we need to do to turn East Chicago around. We will do it because we will all work *together*.

**For our children,
for our seniors,
for our families...
we must do all we can to make
East Chicago
the
City of our Dreams.
I thank you and God bless you all!"**