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THE INAUGURATION OF BARACK OBAMA

"It's a reaffirmation of our democratic processes. My hope is that we not have change for the sake of change that endangers the long-term health of the country. Certainly in the area of national security, but also on the economic front and on the social front. The social fabric of this country should not be ripped apart for the sake of saying we changed it."

Anthony J. O'Donnell,
Minority Leader,
Maryland House of Delegates

"In my world right now, getting money for both housing and commercial development [is most important]. The whole TARP thing isn't doing what they expected it to do."

James C. Richardson,
Director, Harford County Office of Economic Development

"I've been pleasantly surprised at how the president-elect's administration has already [begun working] on the economy, which is the No. 1 issue for the country. I'm also hopeful that the Obama administration will tackle the ... deficit, Social Security and health care issues that the country needs to have addressed. I think the onus is going to be on Congress to put partisanship aside."

Kathleen T. Snyder,
President and CEO,
Maryland Chamber of Commerce

"I think really we're just looking to see an attitude of making investments in areas that will spur the economy and doing so as quickly as possible, [such as] transportation, housing, public education building, water and sewer. There's a lot of things that we could use some significant investment in and would help us address these problems."

Donald C. Fry,
President and CEO,
Greater Baltimore Committee

"Universal health care. I know President Truman has tried it; President Nixon has tried it; President Clinton has tried universal health care. It's very difficult because of the competing interest of doctors, insurance companies, and the increasing cost of health care, but if anyone can make it happen, it's him."

Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr.,
President, Maryland Senate

"For retailers, we certainly hope the stimulus package gets consumers spending again and that it works. Not much else is going to be good or helpful for us until we can get the economy back on track, especially because the first half of the year is going to be very tough for our industry."

Tom Saquella,
President,
Maryland Retailers Association

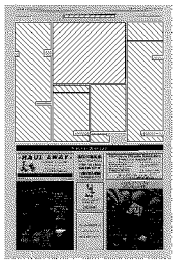
"I hope that this administration does a better job than the last to take care of the needs of needy Americans. ... Where's the promise of America where you can't even survive, you can't get the day-to-day needs? That dream of opportunity has become almost imagination, because if you can't survive day to day, how do you dream?"

Timothy M. Dixon,
Law Offices of Timothy M. Dixon

"I guess everybody has a lot of hopes and we all wish him great success. From our industry perspective, our greatest concern is economic conditions. The Columbia Bank would very much like continued emphasis on the stimulus package and what we can to do to help the industry through this rough time."

John Scaldara Jr.,
President and CEO,
The Columbia Bank

"I think we'll see an energy policy that will encourage renewables. I would hope that he would also continue with what he talked about in the campaign, which was not making renewables the only option, but making it so that renewables and other energy sources are part of the mix along with traditional resources. Everyone expects that



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climate change policy will come down fairly early in the administration and that it will be a national approach rather than a state-by-state approach, which would be pretty welcome. I think in the next four years those of us in the energy industry will be very busy."

Todd Chason,
Lobbyist, Maryland Energy Group

"It's said sometimes we're the "R" party for restaurants when it comes to our industry, not siding with Democrats or Republicans. We'll do our best job to communicate with any leader about the role the restaurant plays in Maryland and the U.S. economy. We are confident that President-elect Obama has a favorite restaurant or two, and we welcome the opportunity to share the industry's stories with his team as he shapes policy for America's future."

Paul Hartgen
President,
Restaurant Association of Maryland

"I was particularly pleased that President-elect Obama named a Baltimorean, Margo Lion, and George Stevens Jr., who founded the American Film Institute, to co-chair his arts and policy committee, and that was one of the first [committees] he named. I think that points to his commitment to the arts and education, and his administration has already demonstrated they want to cultivate and inspire a creative citizenry."

Hannah Byron.
Assistant Secretary, DBED's Office of Tourism, Film and the Arts

"Obviously we have a president who's very enthusiastic about sports in general and how he perceives things like the [Bowl Championship Series] and that there needs to be playoffs at the championship level. Seeing Barack's day-to-day interaction and passion for sports, hopefully that attitude will bring a positive benefit to the sports world."

Terry Hasseltine,
Sports marketing director, DBED

"In terms of our industry, there's a lot of discussion about the stimulus [package]. Jim Rouse [the late developer and urban visionary] used to say that every challenge is just an opportunity in disguise. I think there's an incredible amount of opportunity coming out of the $850 billion or trillion-dollar stimulus package, if we're smart about it. I think the key thing in the stimulus is to be thoughtful and creative about how we invest those dollars for big-time impact, not just in creating a few construction jobs, but really teeing up the permanent jobs, so that the stimulus is not just used to repave a few highways in the middle of nowhere, and instead look at things like investing in infrastructure for EBDI [East Baltimore Development Inc., a nonprofit, public-private partnership that is revitalizing parts of East Baltimore], since life sciences is such an important part of Baltimore's future, or at UMB Biopark, or at Harborpoint, for infrastructure around Morgan Stanley, which is 900 new jobs. Those are ones where you can say that these are not just construction jobs, but permanent jobs."

C. William "Bill" Struever
President,
Struever Bros. Eccles & Rouse

"We're a resilient group, so obviously we're in a cyclical business where we've been through these downturns in the past. But unlike previous downturns, this one is so much more global. ... Manufacturing is affected, everything is affected. We feel that housing has to come first. They've tried to patch up the finance industry to an extent, but we represent such a large economic potential, that we deserve attention. We're looking forward to Obama, but you almost look forward to anyone at this point who [represents] a change. ... We think [economic stimulus] does have to come from the federal government. Knowing that the state has a huge deficit, the only thing we expect from them is those relief sort of things, with the building permits, with things like that."

Michael Owings,
President,
Home Builders Association of Md.

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"It's exciting from our perspective, to see that affordable housing is even an issue being addressed. But even that is just a dialogue that was used in the presidential debates, that it's a national issue that used to be largely just a grassroots discussion. From what we've seen of the Obama administration, we think he will be committed to affordable housing, not only what to do with all the vacant properties that have been left behind by the foreclosure crisis to people who need and want decent and affordable housing, it's an issue."

Anne Balcer Norton,
Director of Foreclosure Prevention,
St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center

"There will be those who say because we elected someone of this ethnicity, all of our problems with race have been overcome. There will be those who use this as an excuse to ignore real problems that exist. ... I don't think [Obama's victory] should be taken for more than its worth. One person of color got elected to a particular position. I don't know how much that says about how we deal with people we come in contact with every day."

Anthony P. Ashton,
DLA Piper

"I think he is absolutely the man we need right now. He brings the hope but he also brings the substance. ... I think he'll take action on Day One on Guantanamo. I anticipate the Justice Department will return to its fundamental mission. I like his commitment to urban issues; I think the cities have been given inadequate attention. We've already seen action on labor issues and unemployment. A whole lot of energy will be dedicated to the economy, but I think with the quality of people coming in we'll see a very substantive policy. I'm just concerned that with the hand he's been dealt with he won't be able to do what he wants to do."

Kathleen Cahill,
Solo practitioner whose Towson office served as a Maryland headquarters for the Obama campaign

"There seems to be a marked difference in [the foreign-born faculty's and students'] confidence and respect in the country. In my 20 years here, it's the first presidential inauguration that I've seen any interest and involvement. There are such high expectations, but from everything I've seen he and his administration are up to the challenge. He's looking for the most informed voice, not who meets his ideological qualifications. On so many levels, there is a greater likelihood of peace in the change in our approach to the global community."

Jane C. Murphy,
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs,
University of Baltimore School of Law

"It's almost like a global movement. It has so many multiple meanings and it comes at a time when our country needs healing. It's only a second thought that Obama is a man of African ancestry. That's the kind of uniter we need. ... He's not going to solve all the problems and he's going to make mistakes, but they'll be well-meaning mistakes. I'll be happy if when he leaves office we're in a much better position economically and we've solved the wars on two fronts. I hope we become a kinder nation. Every time I see Michelle Obama, there will be a smile on my face. To think that a black woman is first lady, and such a wonderfully educated and accomplished one at that, is absolutely phenomenal."

Taunya Lovell Banks,
Jacob A. France Professor of Equality Jurisprudence,
University of Maryland School of Law

"I'm hopeful we'll have a resolution of the Iraqi conflict and that we'll be able to address the suffering of people in the United States who have been hurt by the financial crisis. ... I do think that he has the vision and the acumen, along with the people that he's chosen for the Cabinet positions, to really bring some peace and comfort to those in need."

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Judge Lynne A. Battaglia,
Maryland Court of Appeals

"I hope that the Obama administration can lead the American public and their elected representatives from both parties toward an effective consensus on how to act quickly to address the financial crisis. Perhaps this bipartisan cooperation can then be extended to help move beyond the partisan gamesmanship that has plagued Washington, so that our government can find creative and effective solutions to the other critical issues facing America at home and abroad."

Dennis M. Robinson Jr.,
Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLP

"I'm a Democrat; I'm a screaming liberal; I cannot be more excited. We're seeing somebody who's so bright and thoughtful. ... I'm not naïve. I know honeymoons end, but I'm so excited."

Professor Byron L. Warnken,
University of Baltimore School of Law

"We have not comprehensively dealt with immigration issues. We [prosecutors] are forced to deal with it on an ad hoc basis. I am hoping he [Obama] will help us."

John J. McCarthy:
Montgomery County State's Attorney

"I don't have any expectations other than I think Obama, his lead-up to the inauguration, has been spectacular. He thinks, he plans. I'm really excited. ... I actually decided the morning of [the election] who I was going to vote for and I'm very pleased. At 7 o'clock in the morning, I thought 'we do need change.' ... He's going to get us back on track, I hope."

Richard Winelander,
Baltimore solo practitioner

"I don't like a tax evader put in charge of the Treasury and the IRS. I don't like Holder [because of the Marc Rich pardon]. Aside from that, I have hope that [Obama] can do what he seems to want to do, and that is stop the bickering and come up with some solutions. I hope he does well. I voted for him frankly because he selected Joe Biden as his vice president, and frankly it's the first decision that a nominee for president has to make, and I thought that was a great, great selection."

M. Albert Figinski,
Law Offices of Peter G. Angelos PC

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Local law enforcement worked with the Secret Service during President-elect Barack Obama's rolling stop in Edgewood on Saturday.

Armed with signs and flags, supporters waited in 20 degree weather to see Barack Obama Saturday in Edgewood as the President-elect's train slowed to a crawl on its way to Washington.

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Members of the crowd to see Barack Obama at the Edgewood MARC train station Saturday strain to get a photo of the President-elect.

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