

Four years ago we stood at the crossroads. One road would take us down the path of building more prisons; continuing to incarcerate people at a rate unknown to other countries; contributing to the disproportionate number of persons of color in the system. It led down a path where convictions mattered more than victim safety and empathy. Where government acted unilaterally and without transparency. That path was the status quo.

Instead, we took the other road. By electing me, you sent a signal that we needed a change. We needed a government that worked for the people. One that was tough on crime by being smart on crime. And a government that listened to its citizens and welcomed their input. Now, we are changing the face of government. And we need to stay on track. Our communities cannot afford to lose another generation.

The first people we encounter on our road are those in our midst that we can save.

I'm talking about saving the children that stole a pair of sunglasses and, on the other road, wound up in a system designed to convict rather than rehabilitate. On our path, those kids aren't put into detention and into a system and into a world where they become gang members and learn only how not to get caught next time. Instead of costly detention for these kids, we are creating cost-effective community alternatives. Since my election, we have had three years of dropping juvenile delinquency rates.

I'm talking about saving the children that drop out of school. On our road, we walk hand in hand with school officials and are having successes reducing truancy. In the Hibbing school district alone, unexcused absences dropped 75% over the last three years! These successes help create future efforts so we can expand the impact throughout the county. These successes ensure a brighter future for our community.

I'm also talking about saving the victims of crime or the vulnerable in our communities that need the justice system to be tough on offenders while protecting the victim's own fragilities. On our road, we walk alongside victims and their advocates to reform our practices to take into account victims' needs. Victim advocates calculate that domestic violence in St. Louis County comes at a cost of a whopping 38 million dollars a year. We are creating practices that aim towards prevention of abuse, not just convictions of abusers. We can put that 38 million dollars back into the pockets of our citizens.

Finally, I'm talking about saving those adults who have chemical or mental health issues that cause them to get into legal troubles. Along the path you all chose to take four years ago we find officers of the court walking with counselors who address those behaviors through problem solving courts like drug court. Our problem solving courts are keeping people out of costly incarceration and onto a path of employment or beneficial activities so they can positively contribute to our communities.

You can see, I am not walking alone down this road. I am walking alongside others in the community to create a government that shows kids and adults of all races and status that the County wants our children and families to succeed.

We may have stood at a crossroads four years ago, but we have taken the right road for our county. We are getting the job done TOGETHER as a community with justice and compassion.

We need to continue down this path so that it becomes the only road we can follow. We cannot afford to turn back. By reelecting me, you will tell your elected officials and community leaders that future generations matter. By reelecting me, I will continue to work with all citizens to create a County where people want to live and raise their families. We can enjoy the diversity of our neighbors. We can feel the

power of our democracy, which was designed to be self-government. As Abraham Lincoln said, we can create a government Of the People, By the People, and For the People.

Tomorrow I will file to run for a second term as your County Attorney. We cannot have our children look back at us and say we failed. With your votes, I will continue to walk with you to create a better future for our children.