



## Announcement Speech

February 25, 2010

Thank you Senator Pichardo for those kind words and thank you for standing here with us at this historic moment in our City.

Thank you all for joining me on this extraordinary day. I would like to recognize a special supporter, Meg Curran, for the courage she showed in fighting corruption. Thank you also for your confidence.

My name is Angel Taveras and I'm running for Mayor of Providence.

I want to talk to you about who I am and where I want to take the City of Providence.

Providence has been my home for nearly my entire life. I have lived in many neighborhoods throughout our city, from South Providence to Silver Lake to my current home, Mount Pleasant.

I was raised by my mother, Milagro, after my parents divorced. My mother worked long hours to put food on our table and clothes on our back.

I'd like to take this moment to say hello to my mom, who is watching via online streaming from the Dominican Republic: *Bendicion Mami*.

My mother worked at several of the companies that were the backbone of our strong city:

- Bulova on Dexter Street
- BB Greenberg on Branch Avenue, and
- Federated Lithographers on Prairie Avenue

These companies have left our city. These jobs have left our city.

That is why we are here today – This empty supermarket is where, at age 16, I first punched a time clock and earned a paycheck. This very parking lot is where I used to collect shopping carts and bring them inside. This cold, empty building behind me is where I bagged groceries and was later promoted to cashier, where I learned to tie my own tie, which I have kept as a reminder of my roots.

Today, this building, which once fed our community with groceries and with jobs, now stands empty and quiet while our communities are hungry for jobs and for opportunity.

This building is a symbol of what once was and now stands as a symbol of crisis. A crisis I see when I talk to so many residents in need of a job – the faces of an unemployment rate reaching 20 to 30 percent in some of our neighborhoods.

A crisis I see when I drive through our neighborhoods and see so many houses covered in plywood; a sea of plywood that has spread like a plague.

Plywood where there should be doors and windows, children and families.

That's why I am running for Mayor of Providence.

I am running for Mayor because we need to turn these houses back into homes.

I am running for Mayor because I want to turn this building behind us into an economic engine that feeds our community once again.

I am running for Mayor because I want all of our parents to earn good, solid wages that will help our families climb the economic ladder and strengthen our neighborhoods.

I am running for Mayor because I want all of the city's children to have the same opportunities in our schools and in the community that I had as a child.

I am running for Mayor because I want all of our children to feel safe and end the violence in our communities.

I know what it's like to struggle. I've been in your shoes. But I also know we can overcome this downturn.

I went from Head Start to Harvard, but I never forgot my roots in this city. I see my city struggling, and I want the children and families in Providence to have the same opportunities that I had - and that have made this moment possible.

This city has given me everything. That's why I want to give back. That's why I want to be your Mayor.

We must bring jobs back into our city and tear the plywood off the houses and businesses.

We must breathe life back into Providence's economy.

Even as we stand here today, even as we face significant challenges, I know that the promise of a brighter future for Providence is within our reach.

Just a few blocks from here the Olneyville Housing Corporation has helped dozens of working families realize the dream of affordable homeownership. They have torn down the plywood and helped bring families back.

Just a few blocks from here YouthBuild is educating and training a new generation of construction workers and trades people at their newly renovated building.

I will build upon the City's partnership with organizations like Youth Build, the Steel Yard and Building Futures - because our workforce needs good blue collar jobs – middle class jobs.

We need carpenters and plumbers and painters and laborers and electricians from the North End, Washington Park and Mount Pleasant, not from Massachusetts or Connecticut!

I will also build upon Providence's potential for new ideas, new businesses and job creation and, above all, supporting and nurturing our creative potential.

I have been talking to innovative entrepreneurs in our city: they have inspired me to believe in our creative capital.

I will make good on the promise: "Providence: The Creative Capital," and grow our Knowledge Economy.

From our students in K-12 and our world-class institutions, to our vibrant arts scene, to innovative start-ups such as Andera and Epivax, our creative community deserves our attention and support.

Our economy depends on this kind of entrepreneurial spirit that dates back almost 375 years and spurred America's Industrial Revolution.

We need to keep this momentum going, and I am here to say to our creative, research and scientific communities - However the City can help you move forward beyond these achievements - my administration will be a strong partner in this endeavor.

To our small business owners, my administration will work to help you create jobs, access resources and grow your business.

In the days and weeks to come you will be hearing my specific policy proposals in the areas that matter to our city's residents.

And I will be walking our neighborhoods, knocking on doors and engaging you in conversation, both in person and online through my website, **angelforprovidence.com**, Facebook and Twitter. Listening to your ideas and thoughts about how we can work together to maximize our city's enormous potential.

I went From Head Start To Harvard with many stops and many lessons learned along the way.

I want to be your Mayor to ensure that our children have that same opportunity, to ensure that our residents have access to good jobs and to improve the quality of life in all our neighborhoods.

If you entrust me with your vote, I will dedicate every waking moment to ensure that Providence, the city that has given me everything, realizes its boundless potential.

This is a time of tremendous challenges, but I have no doubt that together we will meet these challenges, rebuild our communities and feed our families like this supermarket once did.