

*Gary Christenson, Candidate for Mayor of the City of Malden, MA*

*Speech written for a campaign fundraising event on September 12, 2011*

\*\*\*

Thank you! Thank you!

Thank you – those words have been said a lot over the past few days: actually, over the past ten years.

We say thank you to our first responders for their selfless dedication;

We say thank you to our armed forces for protecting our freedom and our way of life.

As the tenth anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup> came and went yesterday, we must never stop saying thank you.

But to truly honor those who lost their lives that day and in the hundreds of days since, we must do more than speak our thanks – we must act it.

As Maldonians, as Americans, you have the power to do just that.

Tonight, for example, we gather together to continue the centuries old tradition of democracy; a small symbol that our nation is stronger today than it was on September 10, 2001.

Some people around the world disagree with our way of life; others fight to gain the smallest glimpse of freedom. But the world can look at America now, in small towns and cities from coast to coast and see the heart still beating. It doesn't matter what political aisle you sit in or team you root for - in our differences, we are united.

Tonight, right here in this room is a microcosm of American strength. Such is the theme of this election. As I've said since I first announced my candidacy, this campaign is not about me. It is about you; it is about coming together to get results.

It's about taking every corner of Malden and folding them in together like citywide origami, to create something new, something beautiful, something unique.

This election is about you - and you are the future of Malden.

I stand before you, 58 days until Election Day, to let you know that I am ready, willing and able to be your voice as together we lead our great city forward.

For the past 10 months, I have seen firsthand why it would be an honor to be Malden's next Mayor. I have witnessed all the wonderful, diverse cultures, groups and organizations work together to make our city better. It is what makes our city special - people from all walks of life joining hands to take the next step. There is so much potential across our nation – but so much of it is located right here in Malden.

Election day is November 8<sup>th</sup> and to be victorious we need your energy, your passion, and your dedication.

I have been listening to you, the residents - hearing what issues are important to you. From reducing crime to expanding our local economy to becoming more efficient and utilizing the latest technology tools, I am certain Malden can overcome any obstacle.

We will become a model of progress in America.

As your next mayor, I promise we will get there together.

To repeat the two words I started with – the two words that mean so much - Thank you!