

Lodi News-Sentinel

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Rep. Jerry McNerney, D-Stockton, whose district includes Lodi and Galt, gives his thoughts on Monday's inauguration of President Barack Obama:

During Monday's inauguration ceremony, I joined a bipartisan group of my colleagues to participate in our nation's 57th Inauguration. Today is a celebration of our country, our democracy, and a country for the people and by the people.

The energy in our nation's capital was palpable all weekend. As more and more people poured into the city, you would expect tempers to rise and impatience to prevail. Instead, it was the exact opposite. I saw people being kind to one another, local residents offering directions and assistance, perfect strangers smiling at one another, happy to just be a part of such a historic moment.

In the morning, security, of course, was of the utmost importance, but despite long lines, big crowds and wait times, the feeling of celebration prevailed.

For me, the best part of the day was meeting with the people from home who traveled all the way to D.C. to be a part of the ceremony. To share this moment with the people I am so honored to represent made it truly special. I was also grateful to have my family here with me, including my wife Mary, my son Michael and his wife Jillian, and my daughter Windy. To be surrounded by my family and people from our community was rewarding and a true honor.

Moving forward, I hope that what we heard today from the president will become a reality tomorrow — that we will work on the challenges we face as a country and disregard the partisan rancor that has permeated our discourse in the last two years.

The sentiment of coming together to do the work of the American people should be more than a sentiment; it should be what we do every day. In my role, I hope to carry forward the positive message from today and work across the aisle to help better the lives of the people I represent, and people across the country.