Gov. Rick Perry and First Lady Anita Perry today announced that the 156-year-old Texas Governor's Mansion has been fully restored.

"Today is a day for marking the 156 years this structure has served at the heart of the State of Texas, and for looking ahead to the next 150 years and more," Gov. Perry said. "Today, the Governor's Mansion stands renewed, as a symbol of Texas' resiliency and our state's determination to work together to overcome the greatest of challenges."

"Texans from across our state came together to rebuild Texas' home, a living link to our state's past and a monument to the individuals and families who have made the Lone Star State what it is today," said First Lady Anita Perry. "The Texas Governor's Mansion stands once again as a symbol of our proud heritage of bold leadership, revered tradition and fierce independence."

In October 2007, the mansion underwent deferred maintenance to replace plumbing and electrical systems, install indoor fire sprinklers, and improve handicap accessibility. In the early morning hours of June 8, 2008, an unidentified arsonist threw a Molotov cocktail on the front porch causing catastrophic damage.

The governor and first lady, along with the Texas Legislature, committed to preserve and restore the historic mansion, which has served as the official residence for governors and their families since 1856. It is the fourth oldest continuously occupied governor's residence in the country and the oldest governor's mansion west of the Mississippi River.

The restoration was made possible by a $21.5 million appropriation by the Texas Legislature and a private fundraising effort led by Mrs. Perry, which raised more than $3.5 million from thousands of Texans. The governor and first lady thanked the first responders who helped fight the fire and save the structure from total ruin. They also offered praise to the many agencies that collaborated to rebuild the Texas treasure, including the State Preservation Board and the Texas Historical Commission.

The entire mansion underwent a complete restoration, including a new roof, repairs to the exterior masonry, restoration of the columns and porches, renovations to the kitchen, and the installation of a new geoechange system to provide more energy efficient heating and cooling. Private funds were used to pay for an addition to the west side, restoration of historical features, improved handicap accessibility, and the completion of landscaping and historical documentation.

For more information about the mansion restoration project and the history of the mansion, please visit: [http://governor.state.tx.us/mansion/](http://governor.state.tx.us/mansion/) and [http://governor.state.tx.us/mansion/timeline](http://governor.state.tx.us/mansion/timeline).
Today I get to say the six words I've wanted to say for a long time now: 
Welcome To The Texas Governor's Mansion!

Just about four years ago, I stood not too far from this spot and said we would rebuild this magnificent structure, so that future generations may gaze upon its beauty and appreciate its history.

Today, that day has arrived, and it's a great day for Texas.

By definition, governors are temporary residents of the Mansion, but it's hard not to become personally invested in this place when you're living among the mementoes of governors past, and constantly reminded you're merely following in the footsteps of the giants of Texas history.

I've spoken to many people who formed that kind of personal bond with the mansion after just a visit or two because this place has that sort of magic to it.

When fire broke out that early morning of June 8, 2008, the mansion's future was very much in doubt.

Among the renovations planned at the time was the installation of a sprinkler system, like it has now, but in 2008, that system wasn't in place yet, leaving nothing to beat down the growing flames.

All that prevented the mansion behind us from burning to its very foundation were the bravery and dedication of the members of the Austin Fire Department.

Three members who answered the call in the early hours of that morning are here with us today.

They probably won't brag on themselves, so I'll have to do it for them.

This was a very dangerous and difficult fire, and it took all the skill and coordination of more than 100 firefighters to save what was saved.

What they saved was a genuine Texas treasure, a building that was the site of historic moments, a building that was host to world leaders, and a building that was home to generations of governors' children and grandchildren.

Again, these firefighters are the reason we're standing in front of a fully restored governor's mansion, and not undertaking the creation of an entirely new one.

Most blessed of all, nobody was injured or killed fighting this blaze because buildings can be renovated or rebuilt, but a hero lost is lost forever.

On behalf of more than 24 million Texans, I'd like to thank the Austin Fire Department for everything they did.

Today is a great day, a day for looking back at the past and celebrating everything that this mansion stands for.

But it's also a day for looking forward.

It's a day of celebrating the brave firefighters who saved the mansion and the skilled and talented individuals who restored it for posterity.
It's a day for marking the 156 years that this structure has served at the heart of the State of Texas and looking ahead to the next 150 years nd more t'll be part of the Texas landscape.

Today, the Governor’s Mansion stands renewed as a symbol of Texas’ resiliency and our state’s determination to work together to overcome the greatest of challenges.

As we look forward to a brighter future, we must never lose sight of where we're from.

Now, I'd like to introduce a woman who is a powerful voice for the preservation of our state’s history, and who stands among the greatest First Ladies in our state's history, Anita Perry.