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I have recently heard tales of corporations mandating that employees take down flags and other patriotic materials that they began displaying on their desks as a result of the attacks on September 11. I know of condo associations that do not allow residents to fly a flag outside of their homes. Our home was attacked, lives lost and every single American has been changed in a way that can never be undone.

In a time when the country is reeling from the loss of lives and destruction resulting from the acts of terrorism [the nation](#) watched, there has never been a better time to display the flag. It is a symbol of strength, a symbol of freedom and a symbol of hope. On September 13, 1814 Francis Scott Key penned "The Defence of Fort McHenry" after witnessing the Maryland fort being bombarded by the British during the War of 1812. He was inspired by the sight of the flag, surviving through the night's battle still visible at dawn. His poem was later set to music and became our National Anthem.

We need to look up at dawn and see Old Glory still flying. During a tragedy of this magnitude the country needs to have a symbol to look to. Regardless of politics, the American flag is a steadfast symbol of all that we, as a country, believe in, a symbol that masses through the last 225 years have been willing to fight for and give their lives to preserve the freedoms this country has stood for.

I am a descendant of Stephen Hopkins, a signee of the Declaration of Independence, and never before have I held that lineage so dearly as I have since the World Trade Center bombings. I have always been proud of my ancestors, but now there is a need to embrace the heart of our Country's founders. We need to have a symbol of unity and strength visible for everyone to see. One that is as hard to ignore as a harbor full of tea or a midnight ride.

I, like many people in the area, have been searching for a flag. The fact that I have been unable to locate one speaks volumes for the people of this country. Instead of prohibiting flags, each and every business, association, and neighbor should be promoting it. Let the terrorists see that when our nation is threatened, Americans band together and show our true colors.

I will end this with the lyrics Key wrote on that September morning:

"O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace may the heav'n rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto - "In God is our trust,"
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave"

Leigh Trimadi
American