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As we approach the anniversary of September 11th and the most horrific terrorist attack on American soil, it is important that we pause to recognize the sacrifices, commitment and dedication of the thousands of Americans who answered the call to duty on that fateful day. Earlier this week, a 70-foot steel column from the World Trade Center was put in place at ground zero in Manhattan. This structure will serve as part of the 9/11 Memorial currently being constructed at the site of the former Twin Towers buildings as a lasting tribute to remember and honor the nearly three thousand people who died on that tragic day.

Thousands of men and women, many working 24 hour shifts, helped to free those still trapped under the debris. Volunteers helped to provide the rescuers with food, water and shelter while others donated their time, resources and money to the recovery efforts. It was a day that forever changed the way we look at the world. It made us reflect on what we take for granted in America. It made us hold our families closer. It made us appreciate the sacrifices that so many have made and continue to make for the sake of our freedom.

In an effort to create a lasting tribute to the fallen heroes and loved ones of September 11th, I am sponsoring legislation in the State Senate that would allow a special September 11th Remembrance Flag to be flown alongside the American, New York State and POW flags. The September 11th Remembrance Flag was created by Steve and Joanne Galvin of Wolcott and symbolizes the resilience of the American people to rise up from the devastating losses of that day and to help Americans come together to heal and rebuild our Country. Although Steve Galvin passed away before seeing his dream of the September 11th Remembrance Flag become a reality, his widow, Joanne, continues to hope that the flag will become a daily reminder that our resolve as American citizens will never be compromised.

On September 11th, we pause to remember and acknowledge the dedication and commitment of those individuals that protect us, each and every day. Whether it's a member of our armed forces serving their Country, a volunteer fireman, an emergency response provider or the members of our law enforcement, these peoples

are heroes. While most are too humble to give themselves the title of “hero”, the sacrifices that they have made, and continue to make, in order to protect our safety and well being, is nothing short of heroic. They have each made the choice to become a part of something greater than themselves and they have put the needs of others above all else, including their own safety. These individuals risk life and limb to protect us. They are the true heroes of today and words cannot adequately express the gratitude and appreciation that our Country owes to them.

On this day, we must also remember that we owe tremendous thanks and gratitude to those who have served our Country in the past, as their unwavering commitment to freedom is the reason that we have the right to stand up and voice our opinions and openly celebrate our diverse views. Their challenges were always great and their response always greater. The millions of Americans who sleep safely at night have these individuals to thank for defending our liberty.

I’ve often said that a person is a hero not for what they do, but for what they would do. And I know there is nothing that our service men and women, our firemen, police officers or our emergency rescue personnel would not do to protect their community or serve their Country. As we remember our heroes, those past and present, let’s also make it a point to reach out and thank those who serve our communities and pray for those who continue to serve our Nation abroad.

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Authored by Senator

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Feature image:

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