



Leana Kinley <leana@ci.stevenson.wa.us>

Regarding the Pledge of Allegiance

3 messages

AE Reynolds <eizenija@gmail.com>
To: citycouncil@ci.stevenson.wa.us
Cc: Annie McHale <anniemchale64@gmail.com>

Mon, Aug 9, 2021 at 8:57 AM

Dear Stevenson City Council,

In 1940 the Supreme Court ruled that school children could be required to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. In 1943 the Supreme Court overturned that ruling. Justice Robert Jackson wrote the majority opinion including the words:

“If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein.”

This opinion was upheld in 2004.

While small rituals like standing and reciting a pledge can create a feeling of unity and strength, if there is not complete understanding and agreement the same ritual will drive division and resentment.

I have spoken with Councilor McHale and understand her choice not to participate in the pledge at the recent city council meeting to be motivated by the desire to call for a more inclusive America and City of Stevenson, where all citizens and residents are treated with respect for their basic human rights.

Events in recent years have shown us that there is a lot of pain—spiritual and economic—and that Americans need to take steps to understand each other better and to help each other thrive again. To recite the 19th century pledge that claims America is indivisible today can be seen as refusing to recognize the glaring divisions that exist.

To my mind Councilor McHale demonstrates her dedication to the community by giving her time and energy to the city council and by participating wholeheartedly. We should not silence respectful challenges but investigate them (as any successful CEO will tell you.)

More than in any other nation, the strength of democracy in America is based on the freedom to disagree. Imagine what a powerful nation America would be if we could forge a feeling of community in each municipality from the ground up.

We owe it to ourselves to try.

Sincerely yours,

Anna Reynolds
Stevenson resident

Leana Kinley <leana@ci.stevenson.wa.us>
To: AE Reynolds <eizenija@gmail.com>
Cc: citycouncil <citycouncil@ci.stevenson.wa.us>, Annie McHale <anniemchale64@gmail.com>

Mon, Aug 9, 2021 at 11:23 AM

Anna,

Do you want your comments included in the next update of the council packet to be recorded for the August 12th meeting?

Thanks,

Leana Kinley, EMPA, CMC

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AE Reynolds <eizenija@gmail.com>

Mon, Aug 9, 2021 at 11:30 AM

To: Leana Kinley <leana@ci.stevenson.wa.us>

Cc: citycouncil <citycouncil@ci.stevenson.wa.us>, Annie McHale <anniemchale64@gmail.com>

Yes, please do.

Best regards,

Anna

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