



TREIG E. PRONSCHINSKE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 92nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Contact: Rep. Treig E. Pronschinske
(608) 266-7015

Remembering What Makes Us American

Seventeen years ago the world stopped. We tuned into our televisions and radios waiting to hear if our loved ones and the loved ones of our fellow Americans had made it through. Our country found itself in a time of tremendous peril, and shortly after was at war.

The attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and Flight 93 were horrific. But on that day and the days that followed, our country came together as one people, united as Americans. In the process of remembering the events that took place on September 11th and honoring U.S. Constitution day on September 17th, I find myself recollecting on what exactly it is that makes us Americans.

We have all, of course, heard of the opening phrase of the Constitution, “We the People” but what do we have in common? It is the way we come together in times of great need, how we can openly express our differences without fear of persecution, our ability to protect ourselves from tyrannical governments, our deeply rooted traditions and our love for our country that we are willing to put everything on the line to defend it.

Some of these fundamental freedoms stem from the Constitution’s Bill of Rights, which guarantees us certain unalienable rights as American citizens. We must place great value on the protection of these first ten amendments, because they allow us to have differences of opinion, remain strong in the face of adversity, and pursue our dreams.

These values are not to be taken lightly, and we ought to take every opportunity to respect and appreciate the sacrifices that are made for our liberties each and every day. For with these liberties comes a responsibility to protect them, and that responsibility falls upon all of us, collectively, as one nation.

As always, feel free to contact my office with questions, comments, or concerns.

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