



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Senator O'Mara's weekly column 'From the Capitol' -- for the week of September 11, 2023 -- 'Never forgetting critical to moving forward'

THOMAS F. O'MARA September 11, 2023

| ISSUE: **9/11 REMEMBRANCE**



Senator O'Mara offers his weekly perspective on many of the key challenges and issues facing the Legislature.

I am grateful, each and every year on Patriot Day, for the chance to remember how so many citizens, young and old, from all walks of life and all stations, responded with a powerful, instinctive, enduring determination to help America recover and rebuild.

Senator O'Mara offers his weekly perspective on many of the key challenges and issues facing the Legislature, as well as on legislative actions, local initiatives, state programs and

policies, and more. Stop back every Monday for Senator O'Mara's latest column...

This week, "**Never forgetting critical to moving forward**"

This year's 9/11 observance arrives at a particularly divisive and disruptive time in our nation.

In far too many American cities and communities, including many throughout New York State, an escalating crisis of lawlessness and violence continues to create a dangerous and threatening climate for police officers and first responders.

Among numerous concerns, the migrant crisis spreads as a growing and urgent risk to homeland security.

Yet the years keep passing, twenty-two now, and Americans never forget. More than two decades later, never forgetting is suddenly as critical as it has ever been since that fateful morning of September 11, 2001, and its long aftermath.

Throughout this 22nd Anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, there will be observances here across our region, at the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial in Washington, at the Flight 93 National Memorial near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and, of course, at the 9/11 Memorial & Museum in New York City.

To find out and view more, visit the 9/11 Memorial & Museum website (911memorial.org), where these fitting words have been shared, "Today, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum stands as a beacon of healing and renewal – a physical embodiment of the compassion we showed to one another, the resolve we demonstrated to the world, and how, in the face of unfathomable loss, we rose as one."

East to west, north to south, Americans will undertake a responsibility and a duty as citizens to, in the words of former President George W. Bush, "honor the memory of the 11th day."

That means we will continue to honor the memory of 9/11's victims and keep their families in our prayers.

We will pay tribute, again and always, to the heroic bravery, courage, and selflessness of the rescue and recovery workers – the firefighters and police officers, every first responder and every citizen who gave their lives, and those who spent week after week after week at Ground Zero in tribute to the ultimate sacrifice of their fellow men and women.

We will reaffirm our pride in this nation's service members, and we will keep all of them and their families in our thoughts and prayers – including those young men and women whom we have lost from here at home. As events continue to unfold across the world, our veterans and their families must know that as a nation, we value, we respect, and we honor their remarkable service and sacrifice.

We also recognize, however, that too many American veterans struggle in crisis, and, tragically, too many of these heroes are taking their own lives. We need every veteran to know and to believe that they are never alone. The nation's Veterans Crisis Line is available around the clock to connect with caring and qualified responders with the Department of Veterans Affairs, many of whom are veterans themselves. The Veterans Crisis Line can be reached by calling 988 (then press 1) or text 838255.

As always, I also take the opportunity to recall all the many law enforcement officers and emergency services volunteers, not-for-profit organizations, school classrooms, business leaders, and individual citizens and communities from across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions responded in such strong, uplifting ways in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

I am grateful, each and every year on Patriot Day, for the chance to remember how so many citizens, young and old, from all walks of life and all stations, responded with a powerful, instinctive, enduring determination to help America recover and rebuild – and how, to this very day, this memory can stand as a reminder that even in the darkest of days and troubling of times, Americans face a future of hope, that the fundamental American values of fortitude, generosity, and strength will help us carry on and keep this region, this state, and our nation looking ahead.

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