



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 29, 2011

Pledge of Allegiance Continues to Cause Controversy

The Pledge of Allegiance continues to cause controversy, this time for the city council of Eugene, Oregon. The council debated whether or not the pledge should be recited before every council meeting, but the proposal was voted down. Instead, the council came to a compromise that apparently appeased no one.

The compromise proposed that the pledge be recited at just four council meetings a year — those closest to patriotic holidays: the Fourth of July, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and Flag Day. Reciting the pledge would be voluntary. Councilman Mike Clark had hoped that the board members would be pleased, but found that when it comes to the Pledge of Allegiance, there is no simple solution.



Fox News reports:

Clark says all he wanted to do was unite the council and show his more conservative constituents that in this city where diversity is celebrated, their more traditional values also are important.

"It's a little ironic to see those who have championed the idea of tolerance be less tolerant on this question," Clark observed.

For example, Mayor Kitty Piercy referred to the Pledge of Allegiance as divisive, declaring, "If there's one thing the flag stands for, it's that people don't have to be compelled to say the Pledge of Allegiance or anything else."

Similarly, Councilman George Brown, who voted against the compromise, claimed, "People can say it in their front yard or backyard. It really doesn't help move the city business forward. It does not unite us."

Additionally, Councilwoman Betty Taylor actually compared reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to reading from *The Communist Manifesto*.

As noted by Fox News, the Pledge of Allegiance has been "part of the American fabric" since it was written in 1892 by Baptist minister Francis Bellamy. The original pledge did not include the words "under God," which were added in 1954 at the request of the [Knights of Columbus](#) and other groups. Many who recite the pledge today choose to leave out the words "under God."

In recent years, the Pledge of Allegiance has faced a number of challenges. They began when a California atheist asserted that it stood in violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals determined in a 2-1 ruling that the pledge does not in fact violate the Establishment Clause.

Last November, a number of incidents pertaining to the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance during



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political debates sparked [two specific instances](#) where guests took matters into their own hands.

On two separate occasions, the League of Women Voters refused to allow a debate audience to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. League President Arlene Levy claimed that the requests to recite the pledge were purely political and intentionally disturbing.

"There have been some groups who want to create a ruckus, call attention to something and using the pledge to the flag and making it seem the League is unpatriotic if we don't," she remarked.

On both occasions, the crowds refused to comply and broke out into a spontaneous recitation. The first incident took place in Illinois, while the second occurred in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In upstate New York, residents of North Collins Elementary School District were angered over the [manner](#) in which the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. At North Collins Elementary School, a student announcer recites the first few words of the Pledge over the intercom, and then stops midway to allow each individual classroom to finish at their own pace.

Parents of North Collins Elementary School students felt this was an intentional token of disrespect to the Pledge of Allegiance, as the same student announcer recites the school's Character Pledge in its entirety over the intercom daily." Two-hundred and fifty people signed a petition demanding that the Pledge of Allegiance be recited in its entirety over the school's intercom system.

More recently, NBC sparked controversy during this year's U.S. Open golf coverage, when the network produced a montage of children reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and edited out the words "under God." The video sparked so much controversy that the network was forced to make an on-air apology just three hours after the montage was aired.

As far as the debate in Eugene, Oregon, Jordan Sekulow of the American Center for Law and Justice believes it is an example of political correctness taking precedence over American values. "It vindicates all of us who say our Judeo-Christian heritage is under attack. Sometimes it's the courts, sometimes it's elected officials and sometimes it's the media," said Sekulow.

Apparently it's more than just political correctness. In some cases, it indicates a lack of allegiance to one's homeland. Eugene resident Anita Sullivan confirmed as much when she said, "So you say 'I pledge allegiance' and right there I don't care for that language. It sort of means loyalty to your country; well, I feel loyalty to the entire world."

Despite the compromise, which was approved by the council board, the pledge was not recited at Monday's regular meeting, even though it was the meeting closest to the Fourth of July. Those who opposed the measure said it was just "too soon."



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