

This is a very sad day.

But it is a good day to be an American.

It is a good day to be free.

If you woke up this morning in Northwestern Minnesota you were free to appreciate the *amber waves of grain* flowing on the horizon toward Ada, Halstad and North Dakota.

If you woke up in Duluth you couldn't help but be overcome by the expansive beauty of Lake Superior and the freedom this waterway provides for our products to be sold around the world.

If you woke up in the cities of St Paul or Minneapolis you could look out at the tall buildings that are a testament to capitalism and the success of our diverse economy.

And if you woke up in Red Wing you could walk to the shores of the Mississippi River and imagine the early pioneers making their way to the great northwest and all along the way leaving the seeds of freedom and adventure.

Those seeds have produced well.

Twenty-first century America is strong and its democracy has deep roots that produce the fruits of our freedom.

Twenty-first century America is strong because like the pioneer that traded furs up the Mississippi and the pioneer that broke the wheat fields of Northwestern Minnesota, we are a resilient people.

As we look back to a year ago we know that there is no guarantee to our freedom.

We know that no matter where you wake up in this country, we must earn our freedom every day.

We earn it by working hard, parenting our children, voting, volunteering and remembering.

Remembering those who gave of themselves to keep our country free.

Today Minnesota remembers the sad, sad day of September 11, 2001.

It will, forever, be remembered as a day that made us even more resolved to keep our country free.

We have much to be thankful for in this country, but without freedom we have nothing.



To the victims of 9/11/2001, God be with you, and be assured, we will never forget.

Thank you.