

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
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MONDAY, JUNE 17, 2019

MAYOR'S STATEMENT

Today the City of Albany is delighted to raise the Pride Flag in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. That rising against oppression is widely viewed as having energized the nationwide movement to expand the concept of "liberty and justice for all" to embrace the equal treatment of gay and Lesbian Americans. The LGBTQ+ movement has only grown and strengthened and expanded its concerns as it has achieved success after success.

The people of Albany are passionate about diversity and inclusion and making our City a welcoming place for all. By raising the Pride Flag we are not just declaring our municipal embrace of our citizens without regard to their gender identity or sexual preference, but also celebrating their active participation in civic life as individuals and on behalf of their community.

Two issues have been raised with respect to the flying of the Pride Flag that I wish to address.

First, I want to be clear that we are flying the flag to express the perspective of our community as it is understood by our elected officials. We are not flying the flag at the request of any individual or group other than the City of Albany, and are not creating a public forum for the flying of flags by individuals or nongovernmental groups. Concerns have been raised in the past that as a result of raising this flag we might be required to fly flags that are hurtful to members of our community, such as the Confederate Battle Flag, but we believe those concerns to be misplaced.

Second, some assert that the Pride Flag itself might be hurtful to the minority of our community that holds to certain traditionalist beliefs and reject the idea that people should take pride in nontraditional sexual and gender identities. I want to emphasize here that by embracing our gay and Lesbian community, and supporting their proud participation in public affairs, the City of Albany is not in any way rejecting its traditionalist citizens and their communities. While the majority of our residents may disagree with their perspective, our community positively embraces these neighbors too. We know that so long as hate is not part of the equation, we all benefit from the expression of diverse perspectives and from the mutually respectful exchange of ideas. Minorities of all kinds contribute to the rich diversity of our community and its hope for a positive future for us all.