

Full Text of Measure M

Notice is hereby given by the persons whose names appear hereon of their intention to circulate the petition with the City of Arcata for the purpose of enacting an ordinance which states that:

It shall be the official policy and practice of the City of Arcata to fly the Earth flag at the top of all city-owned flagpoles, above the flag of the United States of America and the California flag, and any other flags that the city may choose to display.

A statement of the reasons of the proposed action as contemplated in the petition is as follows:

Findings

Logic and Symbolism

The Earth flag currently flies on the Arcata Plaza, but the plaza flagpole order is not logical. The American flag flies at the top, the California flag beneath it and the Earth flag at the bottom. Doesn't the Earth encompass all nations and all states? Isn't the well-being of the Earth essential to all life? Aren't global issues more important to our healthy survival than nationalism? It's time to recognize the primacy of the Earth over nations and states when we fly their symbols on our town square. We cannot have a healthy nation without a healthy Earth. It is time to "Put the Earth on Top."

Patriotism

Some may think that flying anything above the American Flag is unpatriotic. The image on the Earth flag is known as The Blue Marble, taken Dec. 7, 1972, by the *Apollo 17* spacecraft crew, and is among the most reproduced images in history, now celebrating its 50th anniversary. The Earth flag should fly above the flag of any nation. Flying the Earth flag above the Stars and Stripes does not disrespect the United States.

Legality

But, isn't it illegal to fly any flag above the Stars and Stripes? The United States Flag Code does state that the American flag should fly at the top of a flagpole, but regarding the enforceability and application of the code, Wikipedia states:

"The United States Flag Code establishes advisory rules for display and care of the national flag of the United States of America ... This is a U.S. federal law, but only suggests voluntary customs for handling of the American flag and was never intended to be enforceable. The code uses non-binding language like 'should' and 'custom' throughout and does not prescribe any penalties for failure to follow the guidelines."

Priorities

Global warming and nuclear war are the greatest threats to our survival today. Stabilizing the climate and advancing peace require that we meet in good faith with other nations and develop a positive plan of action. We can proudly negotiate as Americans, but we must prioritize the overall well-being of our planet and be willing to make political and economic concessions.

Human-caused climate change and its product of global warming will make the Earth uninhabitable within the lifetimes of our children and grandchildren unless people agree to drastically cut CO2 emissions.

Nuclear war, inflamed by our new cold war with Russia and China, could destroy all life on Earth in just a couple of years with the onset of nuclear winter.. The only path away from the brink is for nations to put aside their political posturing and agree to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, pledge no first-use and use true diplomacy to resolve conflicts.

Once again, the focus must be shifted from national interests to the safety and health of our planet Earth.

Put the Earth on top.

Enacting Clause

The people of the City of Arcata do ordain as follows:

It shall be the official policy and practice of the City of Arcata to fly the Earth flag at the top of all city-owned flagpoles, above the flag of the United States of America and the California flag, and any other flags that the city may choose to display.

For the purpose of this measure, the Earth Flag shall be defined as the blue flag featuring the “Blue Marble” image of the Earth, photographed from the Apollo 17 spacecraft, in 1972.

/s/ David Meserve

Dated this 16th day of February, 2022