



## Veterans and Military Coalition of the Ozarks

**“CONTINUING TO SERVE – VETERANS SERVING VETERANS”**

**For Immediate Release**

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**Contact: John Hathcock**

**jhathcock@vmco1.org | 417.230.9187**

### **The Veterans and Military Coalition of the Ozarks Stands for Respect for our Nation and National Anthem**

**Branson, Mo.** - The Veterans and Military Coalition of the Ozarks (VMCO) or “The Coalition”, has issued the following Position Paper regarding respect for our Nation and National Anthem:

**“STAND!”**

#### **A Position Paper Concerning Respect for the U.S. Flag and the U.S. National Anthem**



#### **The Veterans and Military Coalition of the Ozarks**

#### **WHY STAND FOR THE U.S. FLAG AND THE U.S. NATIONAL ANTHEM?**

The document that established our Republic, the Declaration of Independence, concludes with: “And for the support of this Declaration, with firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”

As Americans, we all should indeed pledge our sacred honor and give our highest respect to our nation, our National Anthem, our Pledge of Allegiance, our Constitution, our president, our military veterans, and our first responders. And the preeminent symbol for all of these is embodied in the Flag of the United States of America. Our flag reminds us that all those who have given the ultimate sacrifice to protect and defend our liberties, served under that flag, from Fort McHenry to the most remote post in Afghanistan.

Recent protests against our flag and/or our anthem are not only misguided, but are extremely disrespectful. Those who do not STAND to honor our flag/anthem make no valid point, but instead bring only shame upon themselves, as they show how much less worthy they are than those who have fought for...and have been buried in...the Red, White, and Blue.

The national anthem should be our moment to STAND together as one United States of America and to be thankful for the liberties that have been bestowed upon us...at a tremendous cost. If any person kneels, it should be to thank God for their ability, their health, and that they live in such a country that their fellow Americans would fight for 'even' their right to protest the nation that feeds their ridiculous appetite for money and fame. As the ball players sit out the anthem...our warriors STAND and fight. As the ball players rise only to dance in the end zone, our warriors fall. The only dance our remaining warriors do is the 'dance' of having to figure out how to most honorably console the families of those who have fallen...or the 'dance' they can only dream of with the wives and husbands and children they cry for as they are separated often for months or years. To add to the absurdity of this situation, our warriors, trying to catch a glimpse of 'home,' are actually dancing when they get to see their team score a touchdown on the Armed Forces Network (usually a re-play version at 0400 in Afghanistan, if you can find a working TV)—how absurd that our warriors celebrate the success of their favorite teams, who are so determined to disrespect all that our warriors serve for! You can bet their favorite teams/players are not dancing for our warriors' successes. It is not even in the self-indulged consciousness of most ball players to consider the sacrifices of our warriors.

VFW leader and Vietnam War Veteran Keith Harman said, "there is a time and place for civil debate, and wearing team jerseys and using sporting events to disrespect our country doesn't wash with millions of military veterans who have and continue to wear real uniforms on real battlefields around the globe." The VMCO agrees...STAND or sit on the bench...or better yet, STAND and raise your right hand, and put on a real uniform so you can understand what it means to be a real hero!

AND FURTHERMORE...

To emphasize the traditions concerning our flag, The U.S. Flag Code calls on all present to stand at attention while the anthem is played. When the American Flag is raised, all citizens should stand and place their right hand over the heart (salute). Men should remove any non-religious head-dress (including hoodies, skull caps, etc.) with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the right hand being over the heart. When the National Anthem is played or sung, citizens should stand at attention and salute at the first note and hold the salute through the last note. The salute is directed to the flag, if displayed, otherwise to the music. Shifting around, displaying annoyance, talking and appearing distracted are not respectful.

Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute in the manner provided for individuals in uniform; and; all other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

When the flag passes in a procession, or when it is hoisted or lowered, all should face the flag and salute. Clapping, while innocently motivated, is actually considered somewhat disrespectful.

AND FINALLY,

The Veterans and Military Coalition of the Ozarks stands behind the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, the College of the Ozarks and all organizations promoting patriotism and respect for our flag, our nation, our military veterans, and those protectors/responders who STAND ready to serve our nation and our communities in so many critical ways.

Remember – We are ...”one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and Justice for all.”  
Land of the Free, because of the brave, One nation under God.

We encourage parents, educators, public role models and mentors of our children to reinstitute Americanism, Patriotism, U.S. Flag respect and prayer in our homes and institutions.

The Veterans and Military Coalition of the Ozarks (VMCO) is a proud Commemorative Partner with the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration. The VMCO is not a part of, or endorsed by, the Department of Defense.



P.O. Box 332, Branson, MO 65615-0332 | Office: (417) 230-9187 | [www.vmco1.org](http://www.vmco1.org)