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THE AMERICAN FLAG- A GREAT SOURCE OF PRIDE

So Why Are They Made By Convicted Felons?

MT. LAUREL, NJ April 8, 2005 – The graves of servicemen and servicewomen who fought for our country are being adorned by grave marker flags that were made by convicted felons. The Flag Manufacturers Association of America (FMAA) seeks assistance in putting a stop to this disrespectful practice.

Many New Jersey counties are purchasing grave marker flags for use in cemeteries that have been produced by convicted felons. This prison production of flags teaches inmates a trade for which few United States jobs exist. Moreover, the jobs that do exist in the sewing industry and garment manufacture trade are now being taken away from law abiding citizens and county residents and given to prisoners. There has to be a better and more productive use for prison labor.

FMAA has expressed concerns over this issue with the New Jersey Department of Corrections and the Department has made it clear that they will continue to produce the flags and supply the municipalities/counties. FMAA has also sent letters of request to numerous government officials in the tri- state area and received support from numerous dignified representatives.

From a historical perspective, in 1997, the US Department of Justice, Federal Prison Industries withdrew its proposal to produce flags when they recognized that the American Flag is a truly unique product. They realized it was symbolically inappropriate to have prisoners making the greatest symbol of our nation.

As the association representing the manufacturers of flags produced in the United States, FMAA seeks support to stop this disrespectful practice by proposing legislation that will prevent the purchase by New Jersey municipalities and counties of United States flags manufactured in the prisons of New Jersey. The American flag belongs to the people of the United States and is a great source of pride. The graves of our service personnel who fought for our freedom should not have a United States flag made by imprisoned laborers who have had their freedoms taken away.

“The United States flag does not belong to any one political party, nor does it represent any one political view,” remarks Sandy Van Lieu, FMAA Chairman. “It is our strong belief that the American public and particularly the residents of New Jersey should be able to purchase a United States flag that has been made by honest and earnest American workers.”

The Flag Manufacturers Association of America is a non-profit trade association, established in 2003, representing the leading United States flag manufacturers. It is dedicated to educating and promoting the quality, variety, and proper use of flags manufactured in the United States. FMAA sponsors the “Certified Made in the USA” program that certifies your flag has been made in the USA of materials that are domestic in origin and that all processes in every step of its manufacture were completed in USA facilities with USA labor.

For more information on the Flag Manufacturers Association of America or the “Certified Made in the USA” program, please contact the headquarters office: 15000 Commerce Parkway, Suite C, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054; Phone: 856-439-0500 or fax: 856-439-0525.

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