

**Mayor Sylvester Turner**  
**9/11 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration**  
**Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021**

Good morning everyone.

Thank you for attending today's important commemoration of the **20th anniversary of the September 11th attacks on our nation.**

Today, we look to the future while remembering the past.

Bells are tolling across the nation as we mark a dark day in mournful, yet hopeful, ceremonies - such as the one here today in Market Square Park.

20 years ago, in an instant, our world changed forever.

Terrorists hijacked four commercial airplanes.

Two of the planes were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center and a third one into the Pentagon. A fourth, United flight number 93, was being redirected towards Washington, D.C.

It was the only one of the four hijacked aircraft that failed to reach the terrorists' intended target that day.

Passengers and crew members on the flight had heroically prevented the hijackers from reaching their intended target.

In those horrifying and final moments, the passengers and crew showed what it means to be an American: unity, courage, and defiance in the face of adversity.

Sadly, all 40 heroes were lost when they crash-landed on an empty field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

By the time it was over, the hijackers had **killed 2,977 people in the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil.**

We watched in disbelief and shock as our seemingly safe shores were touched by terror.

When that shock wore off, we came together as Americans, and a remarkable spirit of unity rose from the tragedy of that day.

We will not forget the innocence lost.

We will not forget the brave acts of everyday Americans.

We will not forget the courage of the men and women – those fire fighters, police officers, medical personnel and private citizens who risked and gave their lives in response to the emergency calls.

I ask all Houstonians to join our fellow Americans so that in unity, we as a nation will “Stop & Remember” those lives lost on 9/11.

Please join me in a moment of silence.

***((Note: You will start the moment of silence and pause for about 15-20 seconds then continue your comments))***

I want to thank the family of **Lauren Catuzzi Grandcolas** for turning their grief into a lifetime commitment of serving others.

Through the **Lauren Catuzzi Grandcolas Foundation**, over 100 scholarships have been awarded to graduating high school girls to attend college in the last 20 years.

In addition, the foundation has provided financial assistance for women's and children's healthcare institutions – leaving a legacy of hope, inspiration, perseverance and love.

None of us will ever forget September 11, 2001. We all remember exactly where we were, what we were doing, and how we felt.

Today, let us remember those whose lives have been transformed forever.

There may be some in the audience today or watching on TV who lost a friend or family member. On behalf of the City of Houston, our prayers are with you as you remember and grieve on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

God bless the families, the heroes, the survivors, and may God continue to bless America.

– Thank you.