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Crowd in Fieldsboro protests yellow ribbon ban

FIELDSBORO, N.J. (AP) — Unhappy with the mayor's policy banning yellow ribbons on municipal property, ralliers marched through town Saturday, tacking the offending emblems on everything from the front door of the town hall to the mayor's car.



Fieldsboro, N.J., Mayor Edward 'Buddy' Tyler discusses his reasons for the yellow ribbon ban.

By Tim Larsen, AP

Led by Guardian Angels founder Curtis Sliwa, about 100 marchers left ribbons along the main street, then affixed dozens more to a pine tree when they reached an old school building that now serves as town hall for this central New Jersey borough's 522 residents.

The crowd whooped and cheered when Sliwa bedecked the hood ornament of the mayor's Lincoln with a big yellow bow.

All the while, Mayor Edward "Buddy" Tyler was upstairs in his second-floor office. He has been harshly criticized for ordering yellow ribbons taken down from public property in the town he has presided over for most of the past 22 years.

"It's their right" to protest the decision, Tyler said. He then added, "We do not allow anything on government property without permission from the governing body."

Yellow ribbons are widely used as a symbol of support for U.S. troops and express hope for their safe return. Saturday's ralliers, wearing yellow ribbons themselves, waved American flags, shouted patriotic slogans and singing songs.

Sliwa said Tyler's stance did not reflect residents' patriotism, and called the mayor stubborn for refusing to back down.

Others were less subtle, calling for Tyler's resignation and referring to him as "Bonehead Buddy." Elsewhere, a protester wearing a Saddam Hussein mask carried a sign, "Mayor Tyler is my Buddy."