



Office of
Jason Crowell State Senator
The Crowell Connection

Senator Jason Crowell – Serving Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

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PEARL HARBOR DAY

Veterans health care a top priority

December 7, 2006 marks the 65th anniversary of one of our country's darkest days. The horrific events of that day triggered the United States' entry into World War II, and forever changed our nation's history. Early in the morning on Dec. 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. The surprise bombings killed 2,403 American service members and 68 civilians. The malicious attack shocked the country to its core, but quickly unified Americans in a determined effort to defeat Japan and Nazi Germany.



For four years, brave American service men and women fought for world peace. By the end of World War II in 1945, more than 400,000 valiant American men and women had lost their lives; nearly 700,000 more were wounded.

Pearl Harbor Day is set aside to recognize and honor the sacrifices made by these fearless warriors. They were men and women who served with pride, determination, and distinction. We, as Americans, owe them a great deal for their selfless acts in defending our freedoms; the freedoms we still enjoy today.

It has been more than sixty years since World War II and it is evident we cannot repay the tremendous debt owed to all of our military veterans. However, I believe we are making significant strides in helping them live comfortably and providing for their health care needs. During the 2006 session, my colleagues and I secured state funding to give nurses and other staff members at state veteran homes a significant pay increase. We also funded some new positions to help alleviate the ever-increasing nursing shortage.

Specifically in our area, efforts to improve the lives of local veterans are evident. The 16-year-old Missouri Veterans Home in Cape Girardeau has been undergoing a \$7 million renovation to make the place many veterans call home more comfortable and enjoyable. The two-year project is nearly complete, and I commend those involved for their dedication and hard work.

But we can and must do more. Although the Cape veterans now enjoy a newly-refurbished facility, not all beds can be filled because of the tremendous shortage of qualified nurses. There are currently 292 veterans on Cape's "waiting list." Unfortunately, the Cape Veterans Home is not alone in this problem. Statewide, there is a shortage of 127 full-time nurses that need to be filled before the homes can function at full capacity. Ensuring all veterans get the nursing and health care assistance they need is one of my top priorities. During the 2007 session, which begins January 3rd, I will diligently work with Governor Blunt and my fellow lawmakers to secure additional funding so the nursing shortage becomes a thing of the past, and our veterans are given the care they so justly deserve

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.jasoncrowell.com>.

Contact Information

Capitol Office
State Capitol Building
Room 323

Website:

Phone Number:
573.751.2459
Fax:

Jefferson City, MO 65101

<http://www.senate.mo.gov/crowell>

573.522.9289