



# State Senator Harry Kennedy

Room 226 - State Capitol - Jefferson City, MO - Phone 573 - 751 - 2126

## PRESS RELEASE



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### Sen. Kennedy's Memorial Day Letter

Today we honor those who have fought to make our country free. Missourians have fought in every major conflict from the Revolutionary War to today's Global War on Terror... with distinction, courage, and honor.

On the wall of my Senate office in the Capitol in Jefferson City hangs the picture of the man for whom I am named. My uncle, Harry Scullin, was a major in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II. He served in the Pacific theater flying off the carrier U.S.S Enterprise near the island of Papua. He never returned from a mission one day, and his body was never recovered. Just a few years ago, more than 60 years after he was lost, wreckage believed to be from his plane was found. It should remind us all that no matter how long ago the sacrifice, we should never forget.

We have seen heroes such as Sergeant Brandon Wallace of Festus. Sergeant Wallace had already served his country with three years in the Army and had gotten out to train for his boyhood dream of becoming a police officer - once again preparing to serve his fellow Americans. But the Army had another plan, and he was surprised as he was called back to active duty in the Individual Ready Reserves for a deployment to Iraq. With just two weeks left in his time over there, a roadside bomb would rock Sergeant Wallace's vehicle, killing him this past April 14<sup>th</sup>. While he now lies at rest within my district at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, he will not be forgotten by his friends and family who loved him so dearly... and he should not be forgotten by this country who owes him and all who have given their lives in the cause for freedom such a debt of gratitude.

If you have not had the chance to tour the hallowed grounds of the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, I encourage you to do that today. You can find the specific markers of friends and loved ones or just walk the row after row of alabaster white markers and see the names of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. I can tell you, it will be an emotionally-filled walk.

While we honor those who have died, let us not forget those who are still with us... those who answered the call when their country asked. Today, more than half a million veterans live in Missouri with St. Louis City and St. Louis County home to more than 114,000 of them, many who were part of the Greatest Generation who literally saved the world during the darkest days of World War II. You might see some of them at today's commemorations: older and wiser to

how terrible war can be and how beautiful this country truly is that it is worth the sacrifices they and their families have made.

Those sacrifices continue today as this nation is engaged in the Global War on Terror. In Afghanistan, more than 380 Americans have sacrificed their lives with another more than 1,200 wounded. In Iraq, 3,300 U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines have died in more than four years of fighting... fighting that has also left another 25,000-plus injured. Staggering numbers.

But today is a day to remember and embrace those who have done what it took when freedom called.

– END –

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