



Delbert Scott
28th Senate District

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 416
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

A Weekly Column for the
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Contact: Debbie Poire
(573) 751-8793

Honoring Those Who Gave the Ultimate Sacrifice

You can't turn on a television, tune into a radio station, or pick up a newspaper without hearing or reading about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Like many of you, I continue to pray for the safety of those brave men and women who are sacrificing everything they have so we can continue to enjoy our freedom in this great country.

While we support our soldiers, we must not overlook those brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice – those who have lost their lives while defending our nation. The Missouri Senate is on its way to passing a bill that will help honor those fallen soldiers.

[Senate Bill 806](#) would require all government buildings to fly the U.S. and Missouri flag at half-mast for one full day whenever a Missouri resident is killed in combat. According to the bill, the soldier must have resided in Missouri at the time of his or her enlistment in the military or at the time of his or her death.

In order to have the most up-to-date information regarding the positioning of the U.S. and state flags, lawmakers would have to work closely with the [Missouri Veterans Commission](#) to make ongoing efforts in determining if any Missouri resident has been killed in the line of duty. The commission would notify our governor of any such death. Then, the governor would determine the day on which the fallen soldier is honored, and notify the Office of Administration to share the message with state officials.

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According to the [Missouri Office of Administration Web site](#), the U.S. government has pre-set days when the American flag should be flown at half-mast: Peace Officers Memorial Day, unless that day is also Armed Forces Day (May 15th), Memorial Day (the last Monday in May), Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (July 27th), Patriot Day (September 11th), and National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (December 7th).

The office of the governor also has the authority to order the lowering of flags to half-mast upon the death of a president or former president of the United States, the vice president, chief justice, or a retired chief justice of the United States, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and a U.S. member of Congress.

The flags are also flown at half-staff in the event of the death of a present or former state governor as well as other officials or foreign dignitaries. The governor can also order a flag to be lowered in a specific county for state officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty as a mark of respect for their memory. It is the least we can do as a legislative body as well as citizens of this state to honor those who laid down their life to protect our freedoms we often take for granted.

Upon final approval, Senate Bill 806 will be sent to the Missouri House of Representatives for similar consideration. If you have questions or comments about this legislation, guidelines for displaying the U.S. and Missouri flags, or any other issue, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.state.mo.us.

Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.

