



May 27, 2009



Honoring the Fallen

Memorial Day is Monday, May 25th — a time for reflection and gratitude to those who paid the greatest price. It is a solemn day when we take a moment to signify that we remember those who have been lost, and that we acknowledge their sacrifice. Each time that Americans are called to fight for freedom, there are men and women that answer the call. Some of them do not return home to their families and friends. These are the people we honor.

Most recently, soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines have been called to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan to protect our country from the threat of terror. Everyday, units are deployed to the Middle East, and some of these brave individuals do not return to their families and friends. Much like many communities across our nation, our community has also suffered losses, and there are many mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters who are forever in our thoughts and prayers.

Memorial Day is a time for us to reflect on the sacrifices made by our brave service men and women. This session, we worked on legislation to honor these brave heroes in our area. Heroes Way Interstate Interchange Designation Program will allow interstate interchanges in

Missouri to be named for service members who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Heroes Way provides an opportunity to memorialize these heroic soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who do not return home to their family and friends. It provides communities throughout Missouri with an opportunity to acknowledge the loss they all feel when one of their own is killed in combat.

I worked with the Missouri Department of Transportation on this bill after I was contacted by Ross Gartman, a former member of the Missouri National Guard, regarding a way to honor his friend and fellow serviceman, Bradley J. Skelton. Staff Sgt. Skelton of Gordonville was killed by an explosion in Baghdad on Feb. 6, 2008. I was then able to work with family members of all Southeast Missouri fallen soldiers to finalize the legislation. In addition to Staff Sgt. Bradley J. Skelton, the soldiers from Southeast Missouri who lost their lives in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom are:

Staff Sergeant Charles R. Sanders, Jr. of Charleston: April 6, 2005

Sergeant Robert G. Davis of Jackson: August 18, 2005

Specialist Blake W. Hall of East Prairie: August 21, 2005

Corporal Jeremy R. Shank of Jackson: September 6, 2006

Sergeant Adam J. Kohlhaas of Perryville: April 21, 2008

These are a few of the military men and women we have lost in recent years, and there are so many more that have fought for America's freedom during the history of our great country. We cannot let the memories of those who fought for all the rights we all too often take for granted fade. This Monday, I will join the families and friends of these brave soldiers to remember and come together in honor of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

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.senate.mo.gov/crowell>.

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