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News

November 6, 2009

Honoring our Veterans

November 11th is the day we honor all veterans who have served our nation. Veterans Day began as an observation of the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918 when the armistice ending the fighting in World War I was signed. Many times since those early days of the 20th Century, brave American service men and women have answered freedom's call. It is all these fine men and women of our past, present, and future that we honor on this Veterans Day.



It was on another 11th day in our recent future that our military was called to defend our freedom. It was in September of 2001 when terrorists hijacked four planes and thousands of Americans lost their lives in the resulting crashes. This new day of infamy for this generation marked a time when we had to decide if we would cower in fear from

extremists who despise our way of life or fight for what has made this country great. I'm

proud to say we have fought back.

As the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan continue, brave men and women from this country make the noblest of sacrifices daily. Few veterans will brag about their service, though their courage is surely heroic enough to do so. They will not demand Bronze Stars and Purple Hearts for simply fulfilling what they see as their responsibility. The great causes of ensuring freedom and protecting America have called them, and they have answered, forever adorning these veterans with invisible medals of valor and honor. As the members of our armed forces spend every day watchfully working to protect our great nation, we too should stand guard every day to keep them all in our thoughts and prayers.

This past legislative session, the General Assembly worked hard to pass House Bill 683, which established the Heroes Way Interstate Interchange Designation Program. The program allows relatives to honor the memory of their loved one's that gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Service men and women who were killed in action during active military duty in Afghanistan or Iraq on or after September 11, 2001 are eligible to be sponsored by a member of the General Assembly for recognition at a highway interchange. Family members can submit to have an interstate interchange named for their fallen loved one to the Missouri



Department of Transportation. This tribute includes memorial signs placed at the interchange in remembrance of the sacrifice these courageous service men and women made protecting our freedoms.

The soldiers from our community 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

Staff Sgt. Bradley J. Skelton: Feb. 6, 2008

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

These are a few of the many stories of honor and courage that are repeated across Missouri, in towns big and small, which remind us of why we remember our heroes on this Veterans Day in 2009. People have given up their families, homes and, in some cases, even their lives so that we can be free. Please join me in expressing gratitude for the commitment of those who have stood ready to protect our safety in the present as well as those who dedicated themselves to our country in the past.

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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