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# Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, November 6, 2015

NOVEMBER 09TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## **Service and Sacrifice Friday, November 6, 2015**

Since 1775, our brave military men and women have fought for freedom and democracy. On this Veterans Day we remember our service members that have bravely faced the challenges of a dangerous world from the Revolutionary War to today's War on Terror. Like so many, military service has been a part of my family. My uncle courageously fought in Vietnam earning a purple heart. Because of the selfless service of many like him, my commitment is to ensure that our veterans are treated with respect and receive the benefits they earned.

Recently, I have worked to reform the Department of Veterans Affairs. I sponsored the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, legislation to provide much needed assistance to the heroes of our nation who were exposed to different chemical toxins while sacrificing for our country during the Vietnam War. I also worked to get veterans living in rural areas better access to care. It has been more than a year since we learned that at least 40 veterans died while waiting months and even years for care in the VA health system. Veterans should be able to see the doctor they want, close to home. There's no excuse for bureaucracy obstructing our veterans from getting the care they were promised when the rest of the health care industry is innovating and finding ways to help more patients with shorter wait times.

We also are working to root out fraud and abuse at the VA. This week, the House Veterans Affairs Committee subpoenaed VA employees who abused the relocation payments in the department – abuse found by the VA’s own inspector general. It also was discovered that the VA paid \$23 million to people on leave, and had no tracking mechanism. This is unacceptable and our veterans deserve better.

Meeting and helping our heroes is one of the best parts of my job, and twice this year I was honored to meet members of the Greatest Generation when they visited their WWII memorial in Washington, D.C. Those veterans from southeast and south central Missouri, along with many of their children and grandchildren for the first time saw how the nation was honoring their service. Additionally, I sponsored a bill that would pay tribute to those who served in the Korean War, a war in which 945 Missourians lost their lives.

When I talk with veterans, some are surprised to learn that my office can help with VA problems. If you are a veteran having trouble, please contact one of my offices for help. You can find all of the offices listed on my website at [www.jasonsmith.house.gov](http://www.jasonsmith.house.gov). We can help you navigate the VA bureaucracy, get the benefits you have earned, or replace lost or stolen medals.

Join with me this Veterans Day in remembering and thanking those who served our country so honorably. As Ronald Reagan said, “We owe this freedom of choice and action to those men and women in uniform who have served this nation and its interests in time of need.”

Pictured below, Senator Bob Dole and I recently helped welcome WWII veterans from Missouri to their memorial in Washington, D.C. I am forever grateful for the service and sacrifice of the Greatest Generation.

[/images/2015 Images/WWII Veterans.jpg](#)

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