

On this Veterans Day, we are here to honor our service members and veterans. We come together to remember the sacrifices they have made and the courage it takes to defend honor, duty, and country.

This Veterans Day is different from those we have experienced in the past. While we can not gather together as we usually have done, we can still pay honor to those who served to defend our country.

Serving in the military requires a sacrifice. Many of the liberties that we enjoy are not available to those in the armed forces. We did not get to choose what to do, or where to live. During time of war, we were not asked if we wanted to serve in a combat zone. The military sent us to where they needed us. The needs of our Country supersede the wishes of the individual.

It doesn't matter if we served two years or made a career of the military. It doesn't matter if it was in time of war or time of peace. Nor does it matter whether we served in a foreign land or here in the United States. We all answered the call to duty, honor, and country. We are all entitled to be called Veteran.

For many veterans, our nation was important enough to endure long separations from their families, miss the births of their children, freeze in sub-zero temperatures, bake in wild jungles, lose limbs, and, far too often, lose their lives.

Military spouses have had to endure career interruptions, frequent changes of address, and a disproportionate share of parental responsibilities.

The children often had to deal with changes in schools, separation from friends and, hardest of all, the uncertainty of whether or not Mom or Dad will live through their next combat tour.

The service members and veterans we honor today came from all walks of life, but they share several fundamental qualities. They possess courage, pride, determination, selflessness, dedication to duty, and integrity – all the qualities needed to serve a cause larger than one's self.

Today we honor all of those who have served in the Armed Forces. It doesn't matter whether they served during a time of war or a time of peace. The veterans do not get to choose. For those who served during peace time, let us remember that peace can turn to war in a matter of minutes as it did on December 7, 1941 at Pearl Harbor or on September 11, 2001. The call to duty, honor, and country remains the same no matter the time.

The commitment to duty, honor, and country exemplify what a veteran believes. When a person raises their hand and takes the Oath of Enlistment, they become members of the Armed Forces. They are willing to suffer the sacrifices it takes being in the Armed Forces so that our country can stay safe and strong.

Thank you, and God Bless our Veterans and the United States of America.