

Honoring our Nation's Veterans

As we commemorate Veterans Day on November 11th, it is important to remember that all Americans owe their freedom to the courage, service, and sacrifice of members of the Armed Forces and veterans. Throughout our history, our nation's servicemembers have nobly stood as the protectors of our most fundamental freedoms. Most importantly, they are the visible embodiment of our nation's ideals, goals, and principles, demonstrating to the world who we are and what we stand for.

Though we are grateful for those who served each and every day, Veterans Day provides us a unique opportunity to come together as a nation to officially recognize their generosity and valiant service. We owe a tremendous debt that can never be repaid to those who throughout the years have sacrificed so much – leaving their families, their homes, and their jobs – to serve our nation and helping to promote peace, stability, and democracy worldwide.

As our troops are giving their best to America, we must stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our nation's veterans and their families by delivering on our responsibilities. Throughout our country's history, our military has demonstrated their love for our country by placing their own lives at risk to protect our freedom here at home. To honor the sacrifices made by these patriots, it is essential that Congress continue to provide necessary resources to our nation's veterans.

Congress has worked hard to care for those who have fought to defend our country by dramatically expanding funding for veterans benefits and services to over \$120 billion for 2011. This includes funding for veteran medical services, mental health and substance abuse, and assistance to homeless veterans. Of note, \$580 million of these funds was allocated for medical and prosthetic research, helping to fund research on mental health, traumatic brain injury, burn injury, and sensory loss. Congress must ensure that while we work to restore fiscal responsibility in Washington, we also deliver on our nation's promises to those who put their lives on the line in defense of our nation.

This Veterans Day, we must send a message of gratefulness and support not only to our soldiers fighting in the Global War on Terror, but to over 21 million living American veterans, and the millions who gave their lives for the rest of us to be free, prosperous, and safe. Let us remember and express our appreciation for the price they have paid to protect our great country not just on one day each November, but all year long.

Rep. Gary Miller represents California's 42nd Congressional District.