



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
PUBLIC AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON DC 20420

JUN 9 2010

Dear distinguished guests, fellow Veterans, families and friends:

I am sorry I could not join you today at the 7th Annual Fallen Heroes Memorial Tribute in Connecticut, but please know that I am with you all in spirit.

Today, you gather to pay tribute to some of our Nation's finest: CW3 William Brennan, OSSN Tyler Connely, Sgt. Felix Del Greco, Jr., Sgt. Benjamin Gilman, WO Michael Knight, Navy Seal CPO Jason Lewis, and LT Michael Murphy. To them, duty to country meant more than their own lives. These seven men represented our country and the state of Connecticut with great honor and we will all forever be grateful.

To the families of our fallen warriors, I want to personally thank each and every one of you for your service and sacrifice. The depth of your loss is unimaginable. We will never forget your hero, but I can promise you, that we will continue to honor their memories.

I believe that we owe our servicemen and women an America that is worthy of their service and sacrifice. An America where no returning service member or anyone else is denied an opportunity because of race, religion, national origin, gender or disability.

So today, as we honor and remember these brave Americans who left us all too soon; who did their job without hesitation and without question; who stepped in harm's way, between the forces of tyranny and America – let us vow to keep their memories and sacrifice alive by working to strengthen America and making it the country full of opportunities, ideas and values that they cherished.

God bless you all, God bless our troops in harm's way right now, and as always, God bless the United States of America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy Duckworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

L. Tammy Duckworth