

■ Recognize:

- Congressman Sonny Montgomery
- Adjutant General James H. Lipscomb
- Paul Ott, Master of Ceremonies
- David Waide, MS Farm Bureau
Federation
- Allison Kellogg, Miss Mississippi 2003
- Dr. Jerry Young and Reverend Willis
Britt
- Ron Young, Jr.
- Lt. Colonel Oliver North and

○ And **most importantly**, servicemen and women, veterans and their friends and family

■ This afternoon, welcome to all the veterans and current members of our armed forces

■ I want to thank you all for your commitment to your job and your dedication to our nation

■ Father Dennis Edward O'Brien of the US

Marine Corps said it best when he said:

- “It is the soldier, not the reporter who has given us the freedom of the press”
- “It is the soldier not the poet, who has given us the freedom of speech”
- “It is the soldier, not the campus organizer, who gives us the freedom to demonstrate”
- “It is the soldier who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn the flag.”

■ You have answered the call of our country
to defend these principles of freedom and
justice that we hold dear

■ This year has been a trying year for our
country's men and women of the armed
forces and their families

○ Supporting Operations Enduring
Freedom, Noble Eagle and Iraqi
Freedom

■ As Commander-in-chief of Mississippi

National Guard

- Been there at 5am as families watched their loved ones board buses and airplanes to serve our country
- Been there when these same soldiers return home to the open arms of their loved ones
- Images / will always be with me

■ To the families of:

- Shane Childers of Harrison County,
- Larry Brown of Jackson,
- Henry Brown of Natchez,
- Kenneth Bradley of Utica, and
- Jonathan Lambert of Newsite
- Joe Wilson of Crystal Springs and
- James A. Chance, III of Kokomo

■ never forget / sacrifices your sons made / in
the defense of our country

- In times of war, there are those who see a
hopeless end; I see an endless hope.

- America is the greatest nation in the history
of mankind, and nothing will change that.

- America is not just a country, it is an ideal, it
is a principle.

- Jonathan Lambert, a US Marine from MS who gave his life in Iraq, said it best in a letter he wrote to his hometown paper about the job our soldiers do:
 - “We know that this is more than a job, we do it for our children, grandchildren, friends and family.”

■ You all are our **heroes**, we are **proud** of you

■ May God bless you, the State of Mississippi
and the United States

**(Stay at podium, you will be recognizing the
special guests and honorees)**

- Please join me in recognizing today's special guests and honorees
- **all current military service men and women** please stand for recognition (lead applause, but keep it short)
- **all veterans** please stand
- **all prisoners of war** please stand
- **gold star mothers** (on stage)
 - Mrs. Rhonda Brown
 - Mrs. Becky Lambert
 - Mrs. Rena Parker

- The Congressional Medal of Honor was established on July 14, 1862 as the nation's highest award for military valor
- There have been 3,459 Medals of Honor awarded
- Are currently 134 living recipients, 4 of those living are from Mississippi.
 - 3 of the 4 are here with us this afternoon
- Unable to attend is Captain Louis Hugh Wilson, Jr., from Brandon, was awarded medal for his heroism on the island of Guam during WW II (allow for applause)

- I am honored this afternoon to present the MS Medal of Honor to Mississippi's three Congressional Medal of Honor awardees

- (Ask each to stand as their name is called) Second Lt. Van T. Barfoot, from Edinburg, awarded the medal for his heroism near Carano, Italy during WW II

- Captain Ed. W. Freeman, from Neely in Greene County, for his heroism during the Vietnam War, and

- Private 1st Class Jacklyn Harold Lucas, of Hattiesburg, for his heroism on Iwo Jima during WW II

(Walk over to the three men and hand them their plaque and MS Medal of Honor)

- Once again, thank you all for your service and sacrifice to ensure our continued freedom.

(after Ron Young speaks you will present a plaque to Congressman Montgomery)

- It is my honor this afternoon to make a presentation to Congressman Sonny Montgomery honoring his work for our veterans.
- Congressman Montgomery has been an unwavering friend to America's servicemen and women
- He has fought along beside them in World War II and Korea
 - Traveled to Vietnam to visit troops and search for missing soldiers

- Led the official contingent to the 40th anniversary of D-Day at Normandy and again for the 50th anniversary
- Led the House delegation in 1990, that successfully negotiated with North Korea to bring home the first set of remains from the Korean War
- Congressman Montgomery served 14 terms on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, including 14 years as chairman
- Authored key legislation for support of the military

- Legislation to protect employment of reservists and national guard members when they return from duty
- To protect benefits of their families while soldiers are serving their country
- Wrote legislation that provided veterans with improved health care, low-income loans and opportunities for better education
- Best remembered for the passage of H.R. 1400, or as we know it, the Montgomery G.I. Bill

- Gives veterans financial assistance to attend college after leaving the service
- Has improved military recruitment as well as skills and earnings of veterans
- Former Speaker of the House Jim Wright said of the bill, “It is my firm judgment that no investment our government ever has made, at least in recent times, has been as productive as the G.I. bill.”

- Is there any question why people across the nation simply refer to Congressman Montgomery as “Mr. Veteran”?
- Mr. Veteran once said, “Patriotism is a pretty simple word, but also a beautiful word to most Americans”
- In that spirit and on behalf of the citizens of Mississippi and veterans across the nation
 - Present this plaque to Congressman Montgomery for his service to his country and his unwavering support of America’s veterans.

**(walk over and hand him the plaque then
take your seat)**