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As we honor our Veterans today on Veteran's Day, we should keep in mind that this is not a history lesson--the War on Terror continues to require sacrifices on the part of the best our country has to offer! We can be thankful that we once again have a president who loves America and understands the need for us to have a strong military in these dangerous times, but that does not lessen the real dangers our troops face everyday throughout the world as we have recently seen in Mali, Afghanistan, and on the high seas where precious lives have been lost. One of my best friends from our USMC days (now deceased), who was a Vietnam War veteran with the 101st Airborne, has a son who is now in Afghanistan for his third tour there. Jeannette and I have known Carl since 1976 when he was 2 years old, so his deployment has the feeling of seeing a family member again in harm's way overseas. I mention this in part because many of us have been isolated from the sacrifices our service members have to make--in part because they represent such a small number of the population that we just do not know them. This, in turn, leads to a sense that all of what they do becomes a TV news moment and is easily forgotten in the rush of our own lives. In truth, that is a perfectly normal phenomenon, but it contributes to a certain separation from the reality of what the troops are dealing with on a daily basis and can lead to us back home forgetting about them. I think that is especially true now when ISIS has been defeated in Raqqa and is on the run elsewhere. Given that, it is easy to fall into thinking "the war is over" simply because this is not the same war as we saw in Iraq or Afghanistan where thousands of troops were engaged in bloody battles that were constantly in the news. Still, as we continue to see, it can be just as deadly. Under

these new circumstances it is easy for us to become complacent about the daily dangers our troops are facing and so I hope that by highlighting someone in Afghanistan who our family knows and loves, all of us can become a bit more aware that for many families, the War on Terror is not some abstract event captured on the news--it is very real and creates the same fears for the safety of loved ones that Americans have always had whenever our troops are placed in harm's way.

As a way of remembering our troops who are deployed, perhaps this Holiday Season we could find some Alabama units that are overseas and send some cards and care packages--a thought.

For all of our Veterans in the Common Sense Campaign family, thank you for your service and sacrifices for our great country! God bless all of our Veterans, all of our members, our beautiful state of Alabama, and our great United States of America. Dr. Lou

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q65KZlqay4E>

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