



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

JUN 29 2017

Message for Hoosier Service Members and Veterans

On behalf of myself, and the men and women of the Department of Defense, I send greetings to all gathered for the 13th annual Honor Our Military Patriotic Boat Parade in Monticello, Indiana. This is an outstanding way to kick off an Independence Day weekend focused on celebrating our courageous Service members and veterans, their families, and this truly supportive community.

Today we especially honor the heroic Hoosier Service members and veterans serving in conflicts from the Persian Gulf War through today's overseas contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. These brave men and women have answered their Nation's call, often serving numerous deployments in difficult conditions, and have not faltered in their dedication to each other or to the missions before them.

We thank each and every one of you who have chosen to serve, and your families who have served and sacrificed beside you. As a Nation, we cannot hope to repay the tremendous debt that we owe you. None of our shared freedoms, values, and goals would exist without our best and brightest selflessly stepping forward to continue in the proud tradition of military service.

As you enjoy this wonderful event at "The Crossroads of America," remember those who have made it possible for you to do so. Let their exemplary lives of service inspire you.