



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**GARY HEBL**  
46TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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**Remembering Veterans Who Have Passed – and Honoring Those Still With Us**

*By Rep. Gary Hebl*

Memorial Day is a day we reflect on those brave Americans who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending the American ideal.

It's important that we have a day to pay tribute to those brave individuals. I believe one of the most sincere ways of honoring their sacrifice is by honoring the lives of their brothers and sisters in arms who return home with new obstacles and challenges involved in civilian life.

We have many uplifting examples of friends and neighbors who are working their hardest to support our veterans returning home from overseas. For example, US Vet, LLC, based out of Sun Prairie, is a full-service Disabled Veteran Owned company providing construction and subcontracting services. US Vet is owned by – and employs – veterans. US Vet is able to not only take advantage of the many skills its employees learned while in the military, but also provides an invaluable service for veterans who returned home in need of employment to support their families.

Companies like US Vet provide invaluable opportunities for our veterans. I believe that the legislature should take a leadership role in serving our veterans as well.

That is why I am a co-sponsor of legislation that would create a task force to address issues facing veterans as they return home.

And this week, I announced I am introducing legislation that would provide greater opportunities for returning veterans to receive creditable service under the Wisconsin Retirement System.

As a state, Wisconsin has acknowledged our soldiers' work by providing creditable military service for state workers who served their country. However, for veterans that enter the WRS, current law only allows creditable military service for service prior to 1974. That means that veterans who served in combat in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, Iraq, and other military conflicts would not be able to claim this credit.

The pre-1974 requirement was written into law nearly 35 years ago. In order to create a fair and equitable system and to show proper appreciation to veterans who have served since 1974, it is clear that we need to update this statute.

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I remain committed to addressing issues facing our veterans. This session, I have co-sponsored bills that would create an annual Veteran Education Awareness Week, allow college credit for military training and experience, and allow college credit for language courses for veterans who have participated in the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

On Memorial Day, we bow our heads and remember those we have lost. We gather with family and friends to reminisce and celebrate the lives of family and friends who died while serving our country.

But just as important as remembering the past is looking to the future. I will continue to work with constituents, veterans, and my legislative colleagues to make sure our veterans returning from combat have opportunities for psychological, emotional, and financial security.

*Rep. Gary Hebl represents the 46<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, which includes the cities of Sun Prairie and Stoughton, the village of Cottage Grove, and the townships of Cottage Grove, Dunkirk, Pleasant Springs, and Sun Prairie.*

Contact Rep. Hebl with any questions or concerns you may have at (608) 266-7678 or via email at [Rep.Hebl@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Hebl@legis.wi.gov).

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