

Speech for Senator Connie Lawson upon the occasion of National Guard Military Police  
Deployment from Hendricks County

There are a lot of words we can use to describe the scene that's unfolding before us today.

**Historic**, in that these members of the 38<sup>th</sup> Military police Company will continue the largest call-up of Indiana National Guard troops since World War II.

**Heroic**, in that these members go willingly, with a sense of duty and determination, leaving behind the comforts of home to serve their country in a part of the world that needs them now even more than we do.

**Humbling**, in that these members are literally putting their own lives on the line for us.

Yes, there are many words we could use but none seem worthy enough to express just how much each one of these individuals means to their family, this community and the state of Indiana.

Then again, few words are really necessary. They say a picture paints a thousand words. The pictures I see in front of me today are ones of faith, hope and love. The faith that these brave people will not be going to their missions alone. The hope that they will deliver to such a troubled part of the world while at the same time, making us all more secure.

The love of friends, family and community, so genuinely expressed here today – perhaps the best armor of all in uncertain times.

So on behalf of all those in Hendricks County – and the Indiana State Senate – we salute you today. We want to do everything we can to support you – not only as you go to serve but when you return home. I was pleased to support Senate Bill 480 last year, the most comprehensive veterans' benefits package in our generation. This legislation rewards and remembers Hoosier veterans in a variety of ways. It exempts military pay earned while serving in combat from state taxation.

In the legislature, we were also eager to pass a bill offering you and your spouses priority placement in state-sponsored employment programs. We made it possible for your husbands and wives, parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters to take a 10-day leave of absence from work to spend time with you when you're on leave. Another new law created the "Support Our Troops" license plates with the goal of raising money for Indiana's military family relief fund.

These gestures are the least Hoosiers can do for you as you continue to do so much for us. As you sacrifice and serve us, rest assured you will *always* have our support here at home.

In the meantime, we will keep both you – and the families you leave behind – in our thoughts and prayers. We will remember the examples of heroism you have set before us and future generations. And we will look forward to that day when you return, safe, sound and triumphant – another day when few words will be necessary and our outstretched arms will say it all.

Thank you and May God bless you until you're back home again in Indiana.\