

THE FOURTH AHEAD AND THE FORGOTTEN

Yeah, I know, you just want to get your holiday on. We're all suffering from pandemic fatigue which makes everything we do more challenging.

We can't just hop in the car and go to the store without planning ahead – not merely shopping lists but whether you have a mask, a backup mask, hand sanitizer, a container of sanitizing wipes, something in which to corral potentially contaminated items, so on. Our lives have become complicated if we're taking the risk of COVID-19 seriously.

And we want a break from it. We want a slice of normalcy – a cold beverage in hand, burgers on the grill, fireworks overhead, fireflies after dark, family and friends all around us. And we want it now.

Some of us, though, won't get these things. Some of us have been forgotten.



Some Americans will have to spend the coming Fourth of July holiday in a place we thought we'd have left by now, watching out for deadly attacks we thought were going to diminish.

Some Americans will have to "celebrate" knowing the commander-in-chief simply doesn't give a rat's butt about them. Certainly not enough to deal with pushing back at threats against them. They will have to spend the holiday doubling down on security because the president is going

to do nothing except his usual nonsensical bullshit talking about himself.

Which is why some of the rest of us Americans can't let them be forgotten. We need to continue to hold our elected officials' feet to the fire no matter whether a holiday lies ahead. We need to insist the GOP senators who have majority control whether they are going to simply roll over and do nothing like Trump, or if they are going to uphold their oaths, do their damned jobs, and remember our service members in Afghanistan and elsewhere who have likewise sworn an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution and protect our nation.

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Here's your action item, same as posted a couple days ago:

- If you have a GOP senator(s), call their office and ask for a statement from the senator about the Russian bounties on our troops in Afghanistan. Where do they stand? What action will the senator take?
- Share the results of your call here in the comments.

Congressional switchboard number is (202) 224-3121. Or you can look up their local office number at <https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact>. You can also use Resistbot and ask them to respond but this will much slower than a phone call.

Here are all the GOP senators; note the ones especially who are Class II running for re-election this year. Contact only your own senator – they represent you, after all – and share what you hear from their office.

Special note to Floridians and Kentuckians: Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe and other leaders in the U.S. intelligence community are supposed to brief the "Gang of Eight" today about the Russian bounties. Feedback from Sens. Rubio and McConnell will be

of particular interest for this reason.

Senator	First Name	Party	State	Class	Position
Class I – 2024					
Scott	Rick	R	FL	I	
Braun	Mike	R	IN	I	
Hawley	Josh	R	MO	I	
Wicker	Roger	R	MS	I	
Cramer	Kevin	R	ND	I	
Fischer	Deb	R	NE	I	
Blackburn	Marsha	R	TN	I	
Cruz	Ted	R	TX	I	
Romney	Mitt	R	UT	I	
Barrasso	John	R	WY	I	
Class II – 2020					
Sullivan	Dan	R	AK	II	
Cotton	Tom	R	AR	II	
Gardner	Cory	R	CO	II	
Perdue	David	R	GA	II	Called, but no comment to date.
Ernst	Joni	R	IA	II	
Risch	Jim	R	ID	II	
Roberts	Pat	R	KS	II	[1]
McConnell	Mitch	R	KY	II	Gang of Eight member
Cassidy	Bill	R	LA	II	
Collins	Susan	R	ME	II	
Hyde-Smith	Cindy	R	MS	II	
Daines	Steve	R	MT	II	
Tillis	Thom	R	NC	II	https://twitter.com/SenThomTillis/status/1277629794167984132
Sasse	Ben	R	NE	II	
Inhofe	James	R	OK	II	
Graham	Lindsey	R	SC	II	
Rounds	Mike	R	SD	II	
Alexander	Lamar	R	TN	II	[2]
Cornyn	John	R	TX	II	
Capito	Shelley Moore	R	WV	II	
Enzi	Mike	R	WY	II	[3]
McSally	Martha	R	AZ	III	[4]
Class III – 2022					
Murkowski	Lisa	R	AK	III	
Shelby	Richard	R	AL	III	
Boozman	John	R	AR	III	
Rubio	Marco	R	FL	III	Gang of Eight member
Loeffler	Kelly	R	GA	III	Called, but no comment to date.
Grassley	Chuck	R	IA	III	
Crapo	Michael	R	ID	III	
Young	Todd	R	IN	III	
Moran	Jerry	R	KS	III	
Paul	Rand	R	KY	III	
Kennedy	John	R	LA	III	
Blunt	Roy	R	MO	III	
Burr	Richard	R	NC	III	
Hoeven	John	R	ND	III	
Portman	Rob	R	OH	III	
Lankford	James	R	OK	III	
Toomey	Pat	R	PA	III	
Scott	Tim	R	SC	III	
Thune	John	R	SD	III	
Lee	Mike	R	UT	III	
Johnson	Ron	R	WI	III	

[1] Retiring in 2020. Seat open.

[2] Retiring in 2020. Seat open.

[3] Retiring in 2020. Seat open.

[4] Appointed to fill John McCain's seat, running in 2020.

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These are the forgotten Americans. There are families including children who won't see them or hear from them this coming holiday, let alone ever again. At least two young Americans will never, ever have seen them for any holiday.

22, Jan 2019	Army Sgt. 1st Class Joshua "Zach" Beale, 32, killed by small-arms fire in southern Uruzgan province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/fort-bragg-green-beret-killed-in-action-was-on-third-tour-in-afghanistan-1.565656
22, Mar 2019	Army Sgt. 1st Class Will D. Lindsay, 33, of Cortez, Colo., died after being wounded during combat in northern Kunduz province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/us/defense-department-identifies-two-soldiers-killed-in-afghanistan-1.574044
22, Mar 2019	Army Sgt. Joseph P. Collette, 29, Lancaster, Ohio, died of wounds sustained in combat operations in northern Kunduz province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/us/defense-department-identifies-two-soldiers-killed-in-afghanistan-1.574044
8, Apr 2019	Marine Sgt. Robert A. Hendriks, 25, was one of three Marines killed by a car bomb outside Bagram Airfield.	https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/marines-killed-in-afghanistan-blast-died-only-days-before-they-were-to-come-home-1.576482/cpl-robert-hendriks-1.576478
8, Apr 2019	Marine Staff Sgt. Benjamin S. Hines, 31, of York, Pa., died in a car bomb explosion outside Bagram Airfield.	https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/marines-killed-in-afghanistan-blast-died-only-days-before-they-were-to-come-home-1.576482/cpl-robert-hendriks-1.576478
8, Apr 2019	Marine Staff Sgt. Christopher K.A. Slueman, 43, was killed by a car bomb outside Bagram Airfield.	https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/marines-killed-in-afghanistan-blast-died-only-days-before-they-were-to-come-home-1.576482/cpl-robert-hendriks-1.576478
8, May 2019	Army Spc. Miguel L. Holmes, 22, died in eastern Nangarhar province from wounds sustained in a noncombat incident.	https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/pentagon-identifies-soldier-who-died-monday-in-afghanistan-1.589888
25, May 2019	Army Sgt. James G. Johnston, 24, was killed by small-arms fire in southern Uruzgan province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/us/fort-carson-green-beret-fort-hood-eod-soldier-killed-in-afghanistan-firefight-1.587825
25, Jun 2019	Army Master Sgt. Michael B. Riley, 31, was killed by small-arms fire in southern Uruzgan province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/us/fort-carson-green-beret-fort-hood-eod-soldier-killed-in-afghanistan-firefight-1.587825
30, Jun 2019	Army Sgt. 1st Class Elliott J. Robbins, 31, a Green Beret medical sergeant from Utah, died from noncombat injuries in southern Helmand province.	https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2019/07/01/10th-group-green-beret-dies-from-non-combat-incident-in-helmand/
23, Jul 2019	Army Sgt. Maj. James "Ryan" Sartor, 40, died from injuries sustained by enemy fire in northern Faryab province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/pentagon-identifies-green-beret-killed-in-afghanistan-1.590174
29, Jul 2019	Army Spc. Michael Isaiah Nance, 24, of Chicago, died after being shot by an Afghan soldier at a military camp in southern Uruzgan province. [Never saw his son.]	https://www.stripes.com/news/us/the-worst-day-in-our-family-s-history-grieving-uncle-says-of-chicago-soldier-killed-in-combat-in-afghanistan-1.592728
29, Jul 2019	Army Pfc. Brandon Jay Kresciger, 26, died after an Afghan soldier opened fire at a base in southern Uruzgan province. [Never saw his son.]	https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/pentagon-names-two-paratroopers-killed-during-insider-attack-in-afghanistan-1.592589
21, Aug 2019	Army Master Sgt. Luis F. Delc6n-Figueroa, 31, was one of two Green Berets killed in northern Faryab province by small-arms fire.	https://www.stripes.com/news/one-of-the-toughest-kids-i-ve-ever-met-families-mourn-green-berets-killed-in-afghanistan-1.595504
21, Aug 2019	Army Master Sgt. Jose J. Gonzalez, 35, of La Puente, Calif., was killed during a raid alongside Afghan special forces in southern Faryab province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/us/green-beret-killed-in-afghanistan-last-week-was-veteran-of-seven-deployments-1.596136
29, Aug 2019	Army Sgt. 1st Class Dustin Ars, 31, died of wounds received in combat in southern Zabul province. [Never saw his second child.]	https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/green-beret-killed-in-combat-in-afghanistan-leaves-behind-daughter-pregnant-wife-1.596656
5, Sep 2019	Army Sgt. 1st Class Elis A. Barreto Ortiz, 34, from Morovis, Puerto Rico, died in a suicide blast in Kabul.	https://www.stripes.com/news/army/soldier-killed-in-afghanistan-was-compassionate-leader-say-those-who-knew-him-1.597820
18, Sep 2019	Army Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy M. Griffin, 49, was killed by small-arms fire in central Wardak province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/us/army-identifies-green-beret-killed-by-small-arms-fire-in-afghanistan-1.599290
28, Nov 2019	Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kirk Fuchsgame Jr., 25, was killed in a helicopter crash. The incident happened in eastern Logar province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/army/fallen-army-pilot-laid-to-rest-with-full-military-honors-1.618573
28, Nov 2019	Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 David C. Kowale, 33, was killed in a helicopter crash while providing security to ground troops in eastern Logar province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/apache-pilot-killed-in-afghanistan-gladly-and-willingly-accepted-risks-of-deploying-family-and-friends-say-1.609718
23, Dec 2019	Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Goble, 31, was Dec. killed in a roadside bombing in northern Kunduz province.	https://www.stripes.com/news/army/special-forces-soldier-killed-in-afghanistan-remembered-as-the-definition-of-a-patriot-1.612394

11. Jan. 2020	Staff Sgt. Ian P. McLaughlin, 29, Newport News, Virginia, killed by an improvised explosive device.	https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2020/01/12/soldiers-killed-by-bomb-blast-in-kandahar-identified/
11. Jan. 2020	Pfc. Miguel A. Villalobos, 21, Joliet, Illinois, killed by an improvised explosive device.	https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2020/01/12/soldiers-killed-by-bomb-blast-in-kandahar-identified/
27. Jan. 2020	Lt. Col. Paul K. Voss, 46, Yigo, Guam, killed in crash of an E-11A Battlefield Airborne Communications Node aircraft in eastern Afghanistan.	https://www.airforcemag.com/dod-identifies-airmen-killed-in-e-11-crash/
27. Jan. 2020	Capt. Ryan S. Plouffe, 30, Hudson, N.H., killed in crash of an E-11A Battlefield Airborne Communications Node aircraft in eastern Afghanistan.	https://www.airforcemag.com/dod-identifies-airmen-killed-in-e-11-crash/
8. Feb. 2020	Sgt. Javier Jagar Gutierrez, 28, killed in an insider attack in Nangarhar province.	https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/02/08/report-says-multiple-us-troops-killed-in-afghanistan-firefight/
8. Feb. 2020	Sgt. Antonio Rey Rodriguez, 29, killed in an insider attack in Nangarhar province.	https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/02/08/report-says-multiple-us-troops-killed-in-afghanistan-firefight/

Though not all of these service members may have been killed by Taliban for bounty money, they all deserve to be remembered. Their families, friends, and fellow service members deserve answers. All Americans deserve answers, accountability, and action.

When did Trump get a Presidential Daily Briefing on these bounties and what was his response that day? Why didn't the Commander-in-Chief take action after the intelligence community learned Russia had offered bounties on U.S. service members? Why have we heard multiple different excuses – didn't hear about, wasn't credible, didn't rise to level of action, it's a hoax – rather than the truth about what happened in the executive office when this intelligence was brought to Trump's attention?

What action will the Senate take, because the Senate under a GOP majority possesses the deciding votes for any action to be taken?

We need to do our part now to ensure a democracy. We shouldn't need to take an oath the way every service member and member of Congress and the president do to achieve this aim. We only need to take a few minutes before the Fourth of July holiday to do it. Let's roll.