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CONGRESSMAN DAVE LOEBSACK (IA-02)
HONORING THE VETERANS AND GOLD STAR FAMILIES OF THE
SEPTEMBER 20, 2012 QUAD CITIES HONOR FLIGHT

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Today I have the great honor of welcoming to our nation's capital ninety-two Iowa veterans of the Greatest Generation and forty-three Gold Star family members who will be escorting them on their visit. This is truly a special Honor Flight because it is bringing together World War II and Korean War veterans with families who have made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The 43 Gold Star family members travelling to our capital today represent 24 fallen servicemembers. I can think of no greater honor than to join them and our World War II and Korean War veterans at the National World War II Memorial during their visit and to personally thank Iowa's, and our nation's, heroes – our veterans and the families who have sacrificed so greatly on behalf of our country.

When our country was threatened, our World War II and Korean War Veterans rose to defend not just our nation but the freedoms, democracy, and values that we hold dear. The Greatest Generation did not seek to be tested both abroad by a war that fundamentally challenged our way of life and at home by the Great Depression and the rebuilding of our economy that followed. But, when called upon to do so, they defended and then rebuilt our nation.

This generation of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans is no less humbling in their service and sacrifice. They have fought overseas for over a decade so that we may live in peace here at home. While our country may never be able to repay the debt we owe our Gold Star families, we must uphold the promise that we will never forget the ultimate sacrifice made by their loved ones.

I am tremendously proud and humbled to welcome the Quad Cities Honor Flight, our World War II and Korean War veterans, and our Gold Star families to our nation's capital today. On behalf of every Iowan I represent, I thank them for their service and sacrifice.