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John A. Scocos Statement on POW-MIA Day

We take pause every year on the third Friday of September to observe POW/MIA Recognition Day in Wisconsin. This is a day to remember and thank all of those who have stood up and served our country honorably, specifically as American prisoners of war and those still listed as missing in action.

According to the Department of Defense Prisoner of War and Missing Personnel Office, 83,114 Americans are still missing from World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Vietnam War and the 1991 Gulf War. The United States continuously works to find these soldiers and return them home.

In each of our nation's conflicts, American prisoners of war have endured tremendous physical and mental hardships. As recently as Operation Iraqi Freedom the United States has recognized its troops as prisoners of war, but very quickly located and freed them.

Today as we recognize the service of those veterans who spent time as prisoners of war and those still missing in action, please take a moment to reflect on the service of all our veterans and the commitment they make to defend our great nation with everything they have, up to their lives and own personal freedom.

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(John A. Scocos is the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. He is an Iraq War veteran.)