

As we gather with our families and friends on this Memorial Day to celebrate the traditional start of the summer season, let us take the time to recognize the significance of this holiday and honor the memories of those who have valiantly given their lives for the principles of democracy and freedom.

Throughout the world, the people of our nation have fought to preserve the fundamental American ideals found in our Declaration of Independence of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” These are universal truths on which our country was founded, and which the men and women in uniform of our nation have always fought to maintain.

Just this past Tuesday, May 20th, I joined the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners in awarding a Medal of Valor to the families of Captain Andrew M. Pedersen-Keel and Specialist Gerardo Campos. Both were Miami-Dade County natives killed in action while on duty in Afghanistan. Their commitment to our nation can never be repaid.

Today, we remember Captain Pedersen-Keel, Specialist Campos, and all the men and women who have died on battlefields around the world, and here at home. We are eternally grateful for your sacrifice. Our prayers are with you, and your loved ones.

And to our fellow County employees who have lost loved ones in uniform, we extend our gratitude and prayers to you and yours.

