



## Senate Press Office

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## Give Thanks and Lend a Helping Hand

By Sen. Bill Heath



Thanksgiving is more than just a day of feasting. This holiday reminds us to put aside our personal and political differences for at least one day to pause with family, friends and neighbors to give thanks for all we have. We live in the greatest land on Earth and have many reasons to be thankful. Riches exist in a network of family and friends we depend on in times of hardship. Having wealth means being able to rely on faith and community. If you can count these among your blessings, you have much to be thankful for this year.

President Ronald Reagan once said, "Take full advantage of the wonderful life that lies in store for you. Rejoice in your freedom, and sample the full richness of the opportunities that lie before you. Help one another, trust in yourselves, and have faith in God, and you'll find more joy and happiness than you could imagine."

For some Georgians, it may seem that opportunities are less these days and your neighbors may need help and support now more than ever. Many families were displaced from the floods or foreclosures. Some have sons, daughters, spouses or other family members serving in our armed forces keeping each of us safe and protecting our freedoms. Others have had to tighten family budgets with job losses or reduction in pay. Times of such widespread hardship call for us to give more than a moment or two of thanks.

This year, help a neighbor in need. Contribute to a local food bank so others can have their own Thanksgiving meal. Many churches within our own communities coordinate Thanksgiving meals for those in need. Stop by and contribute with food or service. Give thanks to the military family down the street for their family member standing in harms way to protect our freedoms and keep us safe. Invite them to join your family for a meal. The Atlanta Community Food Bank is accepting Flood Relief Food Donations ([www.acfb.org](http://www.acfb.org)), United Way has established a Disaster Relief Fund ([www.unitedwayatlanta.org](http://www.unitedwayatlanta.org)), and donations to the Georgia National Guard Family Support Foundation will provide flood assistance to members of the Georgia National Guard and their families ([www.georgiaguardfamily.org](http://www.georgiaguardfamily.org)).

Take a moment to be thankful for our loved ones gathered with us. Remember and give thanks for those serving overseas to protect our homeland that cannot be with their families, but are doing their honorable duty to protect ours. Practice compassionate conservatism and good stewardship by helping those less fortunate through contributions to food banks, volunteering at a soup kitchen or simply praying for their assistance. We should also remember to be thankful that we live in a nation of democracy where we can voice our opinions and vote for our leaders.

I wish you and your family a safe and joyous Thanksgiving.

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*Sen. Bill Heath serves as Chairman of the Retirement Committee and Governor Sonny Perdue's Floor Leader in the Senate. He represents the 31<sup>st</sup> Senate District which consists of Haralson and Polk counties and portions of Bartow and Paulding counties. He may be reached at 404.651.7738 or by email at [billheath@billheath.net](mailto:billheath@billheath.net).*