

McCain Lied about his Support of Veterans and Troops

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In Friday's debate John McCain said "I know the veterans, I know them well, and I know that they know that I'll take care of them, and I have been proud of their support and their recognition of my service to the veterans, and I love them, and I'll take care of them, and they know that I'll take care of them."

Truth be told, this is not the case. McCain has a lackluster voting record when it comes to veterans' issues, and America's veterans know it. The Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have given McCain a grade of "D" when it comes to voting in their interest. The Disabled American Veterans have given McCain a 20 percent rating when it comes to voting in the interest of disabled veterans.

McCain has voted 29 times against veterans' medical benefits. In April 2006, McCain joined only 13 other senators in voting against an amendment that would increase funding for the VA to provide outpatient care and treatment. Earlier that year, McCain voted against increasing funding for military and veterans' hospitals. This was money that could have been used to fix the problems at Walter Reed before it became a national disgrace.

McCain was a staunch opponent of the bipartisan Webb/Hagel GI Bill. This bill would have provided better educational opportunities to veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. McCain called this bill "too generous" and tried to introduce his own watered down bill. McCain didn't even bother to show

up to vote for the bill. After it passed the two staunchest opponents of the GI Bill, President Bush and John McCain, tried to take credit for its passage.

McCain has an equally bad record when it comes to supporting our active duty soldiers. McCain opposed the Webb/Hagel Dwell time amendment. This amendment would have ensured that for every day troops were deployed, they would spend one day at home.

This time would have allowed troops to decompress from combat stress and to focus on maintaining the equipment necessary to fight a war. Our troops and equipment are now dangerously overstretched.

McCain opposed the Bayh amendment that would have provided \$360 million for the procurement of up-armored humvees at a time when roadside bombs were killing American troops.

McCain voted to kill the Reed Amendment. This amendment would have begun to increase the size of the active army in 2003 and focused on stability operations.

McCain voted against the Dodd amendment that would provide an additional \$320 million in protective gear for our troops in harms way.

McCain also voted against a Landrieu amendment that would have given our National Guard and Reserve troops the equipment they needed to survive on the battlefield.

There is a distinct pattern in these votes, and that pattern shows that John McCain is no friend to veterans on Capitol Hill. He may say all he wants that he is, but that doesn't change the fact that he votes time and time again against the needs of veterans and active duty soldiers.