

OBAMA VS. MCCAIN ON VETERANS ISSUES

- Obama believes America has a sacred obligation to our veterans. He is committed to creating a 21st Century Department of Veterans' Affairs that provides the care and benefits our nation's veterans deserve and has a record of supporting initiatives to improve veterans care and benefits.
- McCain has voted against billions of dollars in additional funding for veterans health care, and he recently said that he wants to ration veterans' health care to those with combat injuries. And while Barack Obama was a strong and consistent supporter of Senator Jim Webb's bipartisan legislation to update the GI Bill for a new generation of America's veterans, McCain initially refused to support the bill.

ISSUE	OBAMA	MCCAIN
VETERANS HEALTH CARE	<p>Obama Repeatedly Voted For Increased Funding for Veterans Health Care. Obama has consistently supported providing billions of dollars for veterans health care programs.</p> <p>Obama Will Fully Fund VA Medical Care. As president, Obama will fully fund the VA so it has all the resources it needs to serve the veterans who need it, when they need it.</p> <p>Obama Will Pass On-Time VA Budgets. As president, Obama will meet early in the budgeting process each year with congressional leaders to ensure the VA budget is always given "must-pass" status.</p> <p>Obama Will Allow All Veterans Back into the VA. Barack Obama is committed to ending the unfair ban on healthcare enrollment of certain groups of veterans, including "Priority 8" veterans who often earn modest incomes.</p> <p>Obama Will Restore Competence to VA Planning. Barack Obama will establish a world-class VA Actuary and Planning Division to anticipate the needs of our veterans.</p>	<p>McCain Said Veterans' Health Care Would Be His Top Domestic Priority But He Has Repeatedly Voted Against Increases For Veterans Health Care. McCain said that improving veterans' health care would be his top domestic priority as president, but during his Senate career, he has repeatedly voted against increases for veterans' health care, including measures to increase veterans' health care paid for by rolling back tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.</p> <p>McCain Wants To Ration Veterans Health Care to Vets With Combat Injuries Which Could Significantly Narrow The Number Of Veterans Eligible To Use The VA. McCain's call to "concentrate" veterans' health care on people with injuries that "are a direct result of combat" raises questions about his commitment to funding the ailing VA system. The VA does not currently distinguish between combat wounds and other service-related conditions. The executive director of Veterans for Common Sense said that McCain wants to significantly narrow the number of veterans who could use the VA.</p>
BRAIN INJURY / MENTAL HEALTH	<p>Obama Voted For Millions For Mental Health And Brain Injury Services For Veterans. Obama voted for \$2 million for traumatic brain injury research and \$500 million for services for veterans with mental health issues.</p> <p>Obama Will Improve Mental Health Treatment. As president, Barack Obama will improve mental health care at every stage of military service—recruitment, deployment, and reentry into civilian life. He will increase</p>	<p>McCain Voted Against Millions For Mental Health And Brain Injury Services For Veterans. McCain voted against \$2 million for traumatic brain injury research and \$500 million for veterans with mental health issues paid for by deferring tax cuts for those making more than \$1 million per year.</p>

	screening and training, embed more mental health professionals with troops and fight stigma against mental health treatment.	
MILITARY EQUIPMENT	<p>Obama Supported Millions For Troops' Safety Equipment And Vehicles. In 2005, Obama voted for \$360 million for armored vehicles for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, he voted for additional funding to replace or repair equipment for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.</p> <p>Obama Will Rebuild and Repair the Military. Barack Obama supports plans to increase the size of the Army by 65,000 troops and the Marines by 27,000 troops to reduce strains on military families. He will invest in our troops to ensure they have the equipment, skills and training to fight and win the 21st century's complicated conflicts.</p>	<p>McCain Opposed Additional Funding For Troops' Safety Equipment And Vehicles. In 2005, McCain voted against \$360 million for armored vehicles for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, he has voted against additional funding to replace or repair equipment for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, and he even voted against a proposal to provide additional funding for troop safety equipment, including body armor.</p>
VETERAN VOTE RATINGS	<p>Obama Received An 80% Rating From The "Disabled American Veterans" In 2006. In 2006, Obama supported the interests of the Disabled American Veterans 80% of the time.</p>	<p>McCain Received A 20% Rating From The "Disabled American Veterans." While McCain claims that he has received a perfect rating from every veterans group, in 2006, the Disabled American Veterans rated him as supporting the interests of their organization only 20% of the time.</p>
THE GI BILL	<p>Obama Co-Sponsored And Consistently Supported The Bipartisan Legislation To Update The GI Bill. Obama was proud to stand with Sen. Webb and a bipartisan coalition to give our veterans the support and opportunity they deserve. The bill improved tuition assistance to give Iraq and Afghanistan veterans a real chance to afford four years of college. The bill was designed to promote recruitment and minimize loss of retention.</p>	<p>McCain Initially Opposed The Bipartisan Legislation To Update The GI Bill. McCain initially opposed Sen. Webb's GI Bill because he thought it was too "generous" and would "encourage" enlisted soldiers to leave the military. After being criticized, McCain changed his position and said that he would support the GI Bill, and claimed that he had only opposed it earlier because it did not allow members to transfer their benefits to their families.</p>

PAID FOR BY CAMPAIGN FOR CHANGE, A PROJECT OF THE FLORIDA DEMOCRATIC PARTY (WWW.FLADEMS.ORG), AND NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE.