



## **The Democratic Party:** **Real Values—Fighting for Veterans and Seniors**

“...values spoken without actions taken are just slogans. Values are...what we live by. They’re about the causes we champion and the people we fight for”  
John Kerry, Nomination Acceptance Speech, DNC Convention 7/29/04

### **George Bush Has Broken His Promises To Support America’s Veterans**

Did you know that Veteran health care is declining under George Bush?

- ❖ The Bush administration opposed giving members of the National Guard and Reserves access to the U.S. military’s health insurance system. 1 of 5 Guard members has no health insurance at all!
- ❖ The Bush administration is closing seven Veterans Hospitals.
- ❖ Bush proposed doubling prescription drug costs, including both a new \$250 enrollment fee and a co-pay increase.
- ❖ VA spending fails to grow with health care costs - Bush’s requested annual spending percentage increase (5.4%) falls short of the 13% hike needed just to maintain status quo.

And George Bush has reduced government support for service members and their families:

- ❖ The Pentagon tried to cut pay for the troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, until the Democrats intervened, and the Pentagon gave in!
- ❖ Bush’s 2004 Budget cut \$200 million from education funds for military children.
- ❖ Bush’s 2004 tax cut failed to extend a child tax credit for 200,000 low-income military families, including those serving in combat zones.
- ❖ Some children of soldiers serving in Iraq rely on charity, with more than 600,000 pounds of food and other necessities delivered to more than 6,200 military families at 12 bases in early 2003.
- ❖ Bush threatened to veto the \$87 Billion 2003 Defense Authorization Bill if it included new benefits for disabled military retirees. These benefits would have allowed disabled vets to receive military retirement benefits and VA disability benefits at the same time.

### **George Bush’s Medicare Plan Is Failing America’s Seniors**

Bush’s highly touted Medicare prescription drug plan is a raw deal for Seniors:

- ❖ Medicare is banned from negotiating drug prices and prohibited from importing Canadian drugs
- ❖ Coverage of needed drugs is not guaranteed, and neither is the price.
- ❖ 6.1 million low-income seniors will be worse off, because of new monthly co-payments for prescriptions, and because Medicaid may not be used to supplement Medicare benefits.
- ❖ 2.5 million retirees with prescription drug benefits from employers are at risk of losing coverage.

But Bush’s Medicare plan is good for the drug companies, in a case of “I’ll scratch your back”:

- ❖ From 2000-2003 pharmaceutical companies invested over \$40 million in GOP federal campaigns.
- ❖ Lack of price controls in Bush’s plan will give enormous profits to drug companies (\$139 billion).

**Those Who Have Served Our Nation Deserve Better**  
**John Kerry’s Actions Will Speak Louder Than Words!**

## Keeping our promise to veterans, service members and military families

- Kerry's Plan provides mandatory funding for veterans' health care, so that the estimated 500,000 veterans who will be locked out of VA health care by 2005 will instead be covered.
- Kerry's Plan will permanently extend eligibility to the military's health care system, TRICARE, to reservists and the National Guard. Given that we are now sending these service people overseas to fight in record numbers, it's the least we can do.
- Kerry's Plan ends the Disabled Veterans' Tax, so they can receive both retirement and disability payments.
- Kerry's Plan provides support to veterans to help them find housing and jobs (an estimated 23% of homeless men are vets).

## John Kerry will form a real compact with the Greatest Generation

- Kerry's Plan creates a real Medicare drug benefit that won't force seniors into HMOs, is run by Medicare instead of private insurance companies, and provides real relief to every senior, no matter where they live.
- Kerry's Plan cuts prescription drug costs by requiring the Secretary of Health & Human Services (HHS) to negotiate better prices, rather than paying the highest; the plan also allows reimportation of safe, FDA-approved drugs (drugs are 33% to 80% cheaper in Canada).
- Kerry's Plan will provide for and support more options for long-term care.

"We have a sacred obligation to do our part for those who have borne the burdens of battle. This is about the character of our nation and who we are as a people. It is about keeping America's promise, about love of country, and the debt we owe to those who defend it"

John Kerry, the Democratic Party Presidential Nominee

## **Real Values Means Real Action** **John Kerry and the Democrats:** **Honoring Our Veterans; Valuing Our Seniors**

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For more information:

<http://www.johnkerry.com/issues/veterans/>

[http://www.johnkerry.com/issues/health\\_care/medicare.html](http://www.johnkerry.com/issues/health_care/medicare.html)

<http://sccdp.org/health.php>

<http://sccdp.org/talkingpoints.php?linkID=talkingpoints/DemocratsFightForVets.htm>