
REPUBLICANS BREAK THEIR PROMISES TO THE MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM IN NEBRASKA

Men And Women in Uniform from Nebraska Need Our Support

Nebraska has 5,210 men and women fighting overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan and 159,486 veterans.

Nebraska has 1,532 members of the National Guard and Reserves fighting overseas in Iraq, as well as 3,678 from the active duty military. [DOD Legal Residence/ Home of Record for Service Members Deployed, 4/05; VA 10/04]

Veterans and members of the National Guard and Reserves face difficulties accessing health care. Over 500,000 veterans nationwide are locked out of the VA health care system altogether, including 5,257 in Nebraska because of arbitrary enrollment requirements put into place by the Bush Administration. The Administration admitted that they had underfunded veterans' health care by \$3.7 billion over the next two years. About 20 percent of all reservists do not have health insurance at all – approximately 1,425 in Nebraska, leaving them and their families without coverage when they leave active duty. [68 Fed Reg 2670, 2671 1/17/03; VHA Policy & Forecasting 2/24/03, Projected to FY2005; Based on NGA, 4/25/05 and GAO, 9/02; Washington Post, 6/24/05; AP 6/28/05]

Disabled veterans in Nebraska face delays, barriers to getting benefits they earned. More than 3,492 veterans in Nebraska are still subject to the disabled veterans' tax, which forces veterans to sacrifice one dollar of their pension for every dollar they receive in disability benefits. In addition, there is a huge backlog of almost 500,000 compensation and pension claims, including those from veterans of the current war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Disabled veterans in Nebraska are still waiting approximately 140 days for their disability assessment. [Democratic Staff, House Government Reform Committee / Democratic Leader's Office, 6/05; Waiting Times for VA Disability Assessments, 7/04]

Republicans Have Failed Our Military and Veterans

Senator Hagel Voted Against Increased Funding for Humvee Armor For Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. [Roll Call #108, SA 520 4/21/05]

Senator Hagel Voted Against Improving Health Care for Veterans. Senator Hagel voted against making a portion of VA funding mandatory or automatic, like other health related programs. Hagel also repeatedly voted against efforts to increase overall funding for veterans' medical care by almost \$2 billion. Just this week Republicans admitted that they had underfunded veterans' health care by \$3.7 billion over the next two years. [#145 S 2400, 6/23/04; #89 and #90, HR 1268, 4/12/05; #40, SCR 95, 3/10/04; Washington Post 6/24/05; AP 6/28/05]

The Bush Administration Broke Their Promise to Our Troops

Bush Opposed Better Healthcare For Troops And Veterans, Underfunded Veterans Health Care by \$3.7 billion Over Two Years. OMB Director Josh Bolten opposed the allocation of "an additional \$1.3 billion for VA medical care and the provision that would expand benefits under the TRICARE Program." Just this week the Administration admitted that they had underfunded veterans' health care by \$3.7 billion over the next two years. [Foxnews.com, 10/21/03; BVA legislative bulletin; CQ, 10/20/03; Washington Post, 6/24/05; AP 6/28/05]

Bush Proposed New \$250 User Fees and Double Prescription Drug Co-Payments For Veterans. Bush's 2006 budget would more than double the co-payment charged to veterans for prescription drugs and would require some to pay a new user fee of \$250 a year for their health care. It would also increase the co-payment for a month's supply of a prescription drug to \$15, from the current \$7. At least 200,000 veterans would be driven out of the system entirely, including 9,757 in Nebraska, and it would cost Nebraska veterans remaining in the system more than \$5,164,754 over five years. [New York Times, 2/7/05; Office of Democratic Leader Pelosi; Budget of the US Government, 2/05]

Bush Budget Retains Disabled Veterans' Tax, Does Not Do Enough for Troops And Families. The Bush 2006 budget includes no targeted pay raises for senior noncommissioned officers, petty officers and warrant officers; has no money to fund the 2006 costs of proposed increases in death benefits; and would make no further progress in eliminating the so-called disabled veterans' tax, which requires military retirees to forfeit a dollar of retired pay for every dollar they receive in veterans' disability compensation. [Army Times, 2/21/05]