



# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

**John Gage**  
National President

**J. David Cox, Sr.**  
National Secretary-Treasurer

**Andrea E. Brooks**  
National Vice President for  
Women and Fair Practices

Dear

This November, AFGE members will have an opportunity to elect a new president.

At this point, we do not know who the Democratic nominee will be nor has AFGE endorsed a Democratic candidate. But we do know that John McCain will be the Republican nominee.

As a decorated war veteran, John McCain commands our respect for his service to our country. At the same time, many of Senator McCain's positions on issues affecting federal employees and all working Americans are cause for serious concern. Based on Senator McCain's voting record and public comments, we believe he will take our country in the wrong direction by continuing far too many of the failed policies of the Bush Administration.

## **John McCain's Record Speaks for Itself:**

From 2001-2007, John McCain voted wrong on issues important to federal employees 90% of the time. **Over the past three years, McCain has voted against AFGE members 100% of the time. The Senator supported President Bush's positions 95% of the time in 2007 and an average of 89 percent over Bush's two terms in office.** (AFGE Voting Records 2001 – 2007; Congressional Quarterly Voting Study, 110<sup>th</sup> Congress)

### **Failing to Support America's Veterans**

- Senator McCain voted **against increasing funding for veterans health care** in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. (Senate Vote 40, 3/10/2004; Senate Vote 55, 3/16/2005; Senate Vote 41, 3/14/2006; Senate Vote 126, 3/29/2007)
- Senator McCain opposed an amendment to the FY 2007 Department of Defense Appropriations Bill that would have prevented the privatization of 350 federal employee jobs at Walter Reed Army Medical Center which contributed to the scandalous treatment of veterans at Walter Reed. (Senate Vote 234, 9/6/2006)
- Senator McCain opposed an amendment that would have provided an assured funding stream for veterans' health care that would take into account annual changes in veterans' population and inflation. (Senate Vote 63, 3/16/2006)

### **Soldiers Face Neglect, Frustration At Walter Reed**

**“Life in Building 18 is the bleakest homecoming for men and women whose government promised them good care in return for their sacrifices.”**

***Washington Post,***  
**3/18/07**

- Senator McCain opposed an amendment that would have prevented the Department of Veterans Affairs from privatizing jobs, many held by blue collar veterans, without first giving the workers a chance to compete. (Senate Vote 315, 9/6/2007)

### **Undermining Your Rights at Work:**

- Senator McCain opposed an amendment offered by Senator Claire McCaskill to the 9/11 Commission Bill that would have provided transportation security officers (airport screeners) with collective bargaining rights. (Senate Vote 64, 3/7/2007)
- Senator McCain voted against the Employees Free Choice Act which would level the playing field for workers trying to join unions. (Senate Vote 227, 6/26/07)
- Senator McCain voted for a national “Right-to-Work”(for Less) law that would undermine your rights at work, lower wages, and endanger safety and health standards. (Senate Vote 188, 7/10/96)

### **John McCain on Federal Employees:**

**“We must streamline our workforce...and not let good workers be crippled by the fine print of the latest union contract.”**  
*Government Executive, 5/21/07*

### **Supporting Contractors Over Federal Employees**

- Senator McCain voted for Bush’s plan to privatize and outsource hundreds of thousands of federal jobs. He voted for unfair rules **favoring contractors over government workers** and even voted to allow contracting of government employees working on the front lines of the war on terror. (Senate Vote 408, 10/23/2003; Senate Vote 168, 9/8/2004)
- Senator McCain voted for a base realignment and closure (BRAC) process that would have allowed privatization-in-place without letting federal employees compete for their own jobs. (Senate Vote 286, 9/25/2001)

### **Trading Away American Jobs**

- Senator McCain **voted for, and refuses to fix, NAFTA and the China Free Trade Agreements**, which lack sufficient labor protections. NAFTA alone resulted in the loss of more than one million, good paying American jobs from 1993 – 2004. (Robert Scott & David Ratner, “NAFTA’s Cautionary Tale”, Economic Policy Institute (EPI) 7/20/2005)
- Senator McCain **voted to weaken and waive “Buy American” laws**. (Senate Vote 135, 6/22/04; Senate Vote 191, 5/21/03)
- Top current advisors to Senator John McCain’s presidential campaign last year lobbied for European Aeronautic Defense & Space (Airbus) which beat Boeing to a \$35 billion Air Force Tanker Contract. The lobbyists include Tom Loeffler, McCain’s national finance chairman, and Susan Nelson, McCain’s finance director. Boeing says the

### **McCain Advisors Lobbied For Foreign Company’s DoD Tanker Deal**

**Top current advisors to Senator John McCain lobbied for a European Airbus deal that could cost 44,000 new and existing American jobs.**  
*Associated Press, 3/11/2008*

overseas deal will cost 44,000 new and existing jobs at the company and suppliers in 40 states. (*Newsday.com*, 3/17/08; *New York Times*, 3/11/08; *Associated Press*, 3/11/08)

### Straight Talk or Flip Flop?

- Senator McCain voted against President Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy in 2001. **But in 2005, he flip-flopped — voting for an additional \$58 billion in tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.** He also would “slash the corporate income-tax rate from 35% to 25% at a cost to the Treasury of \$100 billion a year” and supports making permanent the 2001 tax cuts he originally opposed — despite massive deficits and critical underfunding and understaffing of virtually every government program. (*Wall Street Journal*, 3/03/08; Senate Vote 170, 5/26/01; Senate Vote 347, 11/18/05)

### **Privatizing Social Security**

**“I’m totally in favor of personal savings accounts... along the lines that President Bush proposed,”**  
*Wall Street Journal*, 3/3/08

### Privatizing Social Security and Raising the Retirement Age

- Senator McCain has consistently supported President Bush's discredited scheme to privatize Social Security. The Senator backs a plan to divert Social Security payroll taxes to fund private accounts which would prevent America from fulfilling its promise to seniors, survivors and the disabled. John McCain also supports reducing the growth in Social Security benefits and would consider raising the retirement age to 68. ( Senate Vote 49, 3/15/05; Senate Vote 68, 3/16/06; *Wall Street Journal*, March 3, 2008)

### Health Care That Costs More and Delivers Less

- Senator McCain's health care proposal **encourages employers to stop offering health care**, pushing workers into the unregulated private insurance market to fend for themselves. **Health care premiums would become part of your taxable income.**
- Senator McCain's health care proposal would only provide a modest tax credit for health premiums but it would cover less than half the average health premium, meaning more out of pocket costs and a higher taxable income.
- Unlike the health coverage he gets as a Senator – or that he would as President — **Senator McCain's health plan would not cover pre-existing conditions**, jeopardizing health care for millions of working families. (*The Commonwealth Fund, Envisioning the Future*, 1/08; *Los Angeles Times*, 11/20/07; *Presidential Candidate Forum: John McCain*, 10/31/07; *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), Administration's Proposed Tax Deduction for Health Insurance Seriously Flawed*, 7/31/07; *CBPP, GAO Study Confirms Health Savings Accounts Primarily Benefit High-Income Individuals*, 9/20/06; *Kaiser Family Foundation and HRET, Employer Health Benefits 2007 Annual Survey*)

### A Failing Record on the Environment

- **Senator McCain received a score of zero on the 2007 National Environmental Scorecard compiled by the non-partisan League of Conservation Voters.** ([www.lcv.org](http://www.lcv.org); Cloture vote on H.R. 6, the energy bill, 6/21/07, Vote 225; Passage of H.R. 6, the energy bill, 6/21/07, Vote

226; Maintaining Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) in H.R. 6, 2/7/07, Vote 416; Eliminating subsidies for oil companies, 12/13/07, Vote 425; Loosening public health and environmental regulations on refineries, 6/13/07, Vote 210).

### **The Wrong Vision for the Future**

John McCain's record speaks for itself. As with President Bush, he sees government and government employees as the problem. He is willing to outsource jobs, undermine the civil service, deny federal employees and other workers their rights, and privatize public programs. Senator McCain also fails to understand the broader economic challenges facing working families. While the average worker faces rising prices for gas, food and health care, John McCain is supporting an economic vision that favors the wealthy over average people. On the campaign stump his answer to the country's economic woes is to cut budget earmarks. That's equivalent to everyone turning out their bathroom night light to stop global warming.

**Senator McCain is not a candidate with a bold vision for the future. He is a candidate with too much allegiance to a nightmarish past.**


This year AFGE members have the opportunity to elect a new president who believes in the dignity of your work and the value of the government programs that you deliver every day. We also have the opportunity to elect larger majorities of lawmakers in the House and Senate who will work *with us* to protect and revitalize the civil service while fully funding and staffing critical federal programs.

**It's our turn in 2008. Together we will make a difference.**

In solidarity,



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***P.S. We Need You! Please fill out the enclosed volunteer card and return it to AFGE today.***

*For more information on the presidential candidates and federal employee issues visit the AFGE website at [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org). Click on the "Legislation & Politics" pull down tab and then click on "Elections".*

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# Walk-Knock-Talk '08

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