

John Campbell on Veterans The Facts The Votes

Rep. John Campbell (R-CA 48) has failed our veterans. Time and time again he has voted against major legislation affecting them. On the single most important appropriation bill of our generation, the “New GI Bill” to increase funding for veterans’ health care and afford them a four-year public university education – a new GI Bill for our times – Campbell cast a *no* vote, failing our veterans and undermining their trust.. He rejected the bill on several occasions (since it came up several times in different versions) and the votes were not decided along party lines. Far from it. On his first chance to vote on the appropriation, at that time lacking the education component, Campbell was one of *2 noes against 409 yeas*.. He rejected the full appropriation *with* the education part again this June, as one of *12 noes against 416 yeas*. In between these two roll call votes there was another on the measure in which he just *declined to vote*. When veterans needed it the most, John Campbell betrayed them.

Below you will find a chart depicting the House of Representatives votes on veterans issues. Every substantive vote of John Campbell’s time in office is included. Left out are several symbolic resolutions, votes on amendments, and measures dealing with building or dedicating individual veterans dept. facilities. In it you will see that Campbell has opposed a wide variety of veterans’ legislation. He also has supported some, mainly those which cost little or nothing to implement, or simply renewed an existing program (such as cost-of-living raises), or in some cases helped resolve scandalous conditions in veterans healthcare. You will see a few egregious votes that stick out for their inexplicability, such as Campbell’s recent rejection of the “Homes for Heroes Act,” that would help low-income veterans find adequate housing during this time of turmoil in our real estate market. And you will notice a few votes on *small business* matters that, in fact, were primarily aimed at helping either small business to hire more disabled veterans or veterans to start and maintain small businesses. These are Campbell’s stealth votes which show he cannot be trusted with neither the welfare of our military veterans or the prosperity of our small businesses.

The chart allows you to decide for yourself by following links to the congressional web portal that features the bill in question, the roll call vote, and to descriptive material, often taken from the website TheWeekinCongress.com, which provides in-depth synopses of congressional legislation. Afterwards, we have provided our own analysis of Campbell’s woeful record on veterans.

Bill No.	Bill Title	Date	Roll Call Vote	Campbell
HR 6331	Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (Overriding Pres. Bush's Veto) Steve Young explains why this vote is important for veterans.	15 July 08	RC 491 Y: 383 N: 41	N
HR 3329	Homes for Heroes Act This bill reates a variety of services dedicated to helping low-income veterans afford housing.	9 Jul 08	RC 478 Y: 412 N: 9	N
HR 2642	Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act: "Agree to Senate Adt to House Adt No. 2 with Amendment." This bill provides a large increase in funding for veterans health care and support and includes a "new GI Bill" offering to underwrite four years of education for vets at public universities.	19 June 08	RC 432 Y: 416 N: 12	N
HR 2642	Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act: "Agree to Senate Amendment to House Amendment No. 1" This bill is an "emergency supplemental" spending measure for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.	19 June 08	RC 431 Y: 268 N: 155	N
HRes 1284	To consider Senate Amendments to HR 2642: Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations. This resolution allows for debate and a vote on the veterans funding bill, as amended again by the Senate.	19 June 08	RC 429 Y: 342 N: 83	N
HR 5856	Dept. of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Authorization and Lease Act. This bill authorizes funds for specific construction and refurbishment projects.	21 May 08	RC 349 Y: 416 N: 0	Y
HR 5826	Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2008. This bill grants cost-of-living raises for veterans disabilities payments and survivors' benefits. It would peg raises to the Consumer Price Index employed by the Social Security Admin.	21 May 08	RC 348 Y: 417 N: 0	Y

HR 3819	Veterans Emergency Care Fairness Act of 2008. This bill directs the Dept. of Veterans Affairs to reimburse veterans who receive emergency care at non-Veterans Dept. hospitals until such time as they can be transferred to veterans care centers. Previously, when patients were turned away from the Veterans Hospitals due to lack of space, they were forced to foot the bill themselves. This bill corrects that and similar problems.	21 May 08	RC 347 Y: 412 N: 0	Y
HR 2642	Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act: "On Agreeing to the Senate Amendment With Amendment No. 3" This bill provides a large increase in funding for veterans health care and support and includes a "new GI Bill" offering to underwrite four years of education for vets at public universities. See Steve Young's statement on Campbell's "non-vote" for the Daily Pilot following Campbell's non-excuse.	15 May 08	RC 330 Y: 256 N: 166	NV
HR 2642	Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act: "On Agreeing to the Senate Amendment With Amendment No. 2" This bill deals with managing our troops' deployment in Iraq and includes a prohibition on torture as well as provisions for exercising <i>better oversight</i> of military contractors.	15 May 08	RC 329 Y: 227 N: 196	NV
HR 2642	Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act: "On Agreeing to the Senate Amendment With Amendment No. 1" This bill includes emergency supplemental funding for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, calling for a little less money than Pres. Bush requested.	15 May 08	RC 328 Y: 141 N: 149	Y

Bill No.	Bill Title	Date	Roll Call Vote	Campbell
HRes 1197	Providing for Consideration of the Senate amendment to HR 2642, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act This resolution allows for debate and votes on the new version of HR 2642 as amended in the Senate.	15 May 08	RC324 Y: 221 N: 200	N

HRes 1197	Providing for Consideration of the Senate amendment to HR 2642, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (Ordering the question). This vote on parliamentary procedure had the practical effect of allowing or denying debate and voting on the essential veterans funding bill to reach the House floor.	15 May 08	RC 323 Y: 224 N: 195	N
HR 3793	Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act. This bill followed "revelations that US troops retired or separated from the Armed Forces due to a combat related injury were denied or asked to return sign-up bonuses.	18 Dec 07	RC 1176 Y: 405 N: 0	Y
HR 4253	Military Reservist and Veteran Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act of 2007. Renews existing programs and expands others to encourage veterans to start small business or help them prosper.	6 Dec 07	RC 1138 Y: 407 N: 2	Y
HR 513	National Heroes Credit Protection Act. Extends long overdue protection, ignored under previous Republican rule, preventing credit agencies and others from penalizing troops deployed abroad for their difficulties in maintaining good credit.	5 Nov 07	RC 1035 Y: 349 N: 0	Y
HR 3867	Small Business Contracting Program Improvements Act. The bill promises service-disabled veterans priority access to Small Business Admin. programs and opportunities.	30 Oct 07	RC 1017 Y: 334 N: 80	N
HR 327	Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act. Creates institutional improvements to deal with problem of veterans suicides. Little if any cost.	23 Oct 07	RC 987 Y: 417 N: 0	Y
HR 2642	Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations for FY 2008. This bill is the main funding legislation for veterans health care and support in this country. It included a significant increase in money over past Republican-sponsored veterans' bills since the start of the war in Iraq (March 20, 2003) to finally take into account the vast increase in casualties and problems encountered by returning soldiers in wartime.	15 June 07	RC 498 Y: 409 N: 2	N
HR	Early Access to Vocational Rehabilitation and	23	RC 414	Y

2239	Employment Benefits Act. This bill expands eligibility for permanently disabled veterans whose injuries were suffered or aggravated in the line of duty.	May 07	Y: 414 N: 0	
HR 2199	Traumatic Brain Injury Health Enhancement and Long-Term Support Act.. “An onslaught of traumatic brain injuries among returning troops prompts this bill that begins a program of assessment and treatment.”	23 May 07	RC 413 Y: 421 N: 0	Y
HR 1470	Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act. Requires the addition of chiropractic care to all veterans health centers before 2012.	23 May 07	RC 412 Y: 421 N: 0	Y
HR 612	Returning Servicemember VA Healthcare Insurance Act. Extends Persian Gulf war veterans’ eligibility to receive hospital or nursing care from two years to five.	23 May 07	RC 411 Y: 419 N: 0	Y
HR 67	Veterans Outreach Improvement Act. Instructs the Veterans Dept. to coordinate with other federal, state and local agencies to improve efforts to inform veterans of available services and benefits.	23 May 07	RC 410 Y: 421 N: 0	Y
HR 1332	Small Business Lending Improvements Act. This bill modifies lending by the Small Business Admin. for amounts under \$250,000 in rural and community programs. It is aimed primarily at attracting more doctors and dentists to rural areas; <i>encouraging veterans to start or maintain small businesses</i> , and fund projects at small companies to reduce energy consumption.	25 April 07	RC 263 Y: 380 N: 45	N
HR 1538	Wounded Warrior Assistance Act of 2007. This bill provides for a host of institutional and managerial reforms to the veterans healthcare system, aimed at clearing out the backlog of claims, including among other things: the hiring of new personnel to assure ease of access and quality of service, augmenting patients’ rights within the system, establishing a toll-free number for whistle-blowers, and creating more oversight on the system in general.	28 Mar 07	RC 208 Y: 426 N: 0	Y
HRes 274	To Consider HR 1538, The Wounded Warrior Assistance Act. A vote against this resolution would have quashed debate and a vote on the bill in question. (See above)	28 Mar 07	RC 204 Y: 243 N: 179	N
HR 1284	Veterans Compensation Cost of Living Adjustment Act. Directs the Dept. of Veterans Affairs to increase the rates of compensation for	21 Mar 07	RC 176 Y: 418 N: 0	Y

	service-disabled veterans and/or survivors' benefits. Does not set the rates but asks the Secretary of the Dept. to do so. No discernible cost estimated at the time of the vote.			
HR 797	Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act. This bill asks the Dept. of Veterans Affairs to study and assess the eligibility of veterans under the age of 65 to receive benefits for eyesight loss. It uses already existing funds.	21 Mar 07	RC 175 Y: 424 N: 0	Y
HR 327	Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act. This bill directs the Dept. of Veterans Affairs to study the problem of veterans' suicides. It incurs no discernible cost.	21 Mar 07	RC 174 Y: 423 N: 0	Y
HR 976	Small Business Tax Relief Act. This bill was designed to soften the impact of the increase of minimum wage on small businesses by providing tax incentives for them to hire members of disadvantaged groups, first among them: disabled military veterans seeking to make their transition back to civilian life.	16 Feb 07	RC 102 Y: 360 N: 45	N
H Con Res 5	Expressing support for the designation and goals of "Hire a Veteran Week"	31 Jan 07	RC 73 Y: 411 N: 0	Y
HRes 1070	A resolution enjoining employers and the public to hire wounded and/or disabled servicemembers and veterans and help in their transition to civilian life	5 Dec 06	RC 524 Y: 403 N: 0	Y
HR 6314	Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance Program Assistance. This bill renews an ongoing program for those veterans enrolled in Defense Dept. Biological and Chemical warfare testing program and renews several other programs.	14 Nov 06	RC 520 Y: 393 N: 0	Y
HR 4683	Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act. A synopsis.	27 June 06	RC 321 Y: 408 N: 0	Y
S 1235	Veterans Benefits Improvement Act. This bill increases the automatic maximum coverage for veterans life insurance programs from \$250,000 to \$400,000. It would allow a stillborn child to be claimed as an insurable dependent.	22 May 06	RC 177 Y: 372 N: 0	Y
HR 5385	Appropriations for military quality of life, military construction, Veterans Affairs and related agencies. Here is an analysis of the bill's funding shortfalls.	19 May 06	RC 176 Y: 395 N: 0	Y

HR 5122	National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007: Motion to Recommit with Instructions. A yes vote would have favored alleviating the financial burden that bureaucratic regulations place on widows and orphans of deceased or fully disabled military personnel..	11 May 06	RC 144 Y: 202 N: 220	N
HR 4939	Neugebauer Amendment to Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2006 ending Sept. 30. (Would eliminate funding for Hurricane Katrina relief under Title II. As a practicality, would eliminate funding for rebuilding/repair of damaged/destroyed military and veterans facilities, eg., the New Orleans Veterans Hospital)	16 Mar 06	RC 57 Y: 89 N: 332	Y *voted Y on HR 4939
HR 4939	Taylor Amendment to Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2006 ending Sept. 30 (Would finance construction of military commissaries used by over 20,000 veterans and their families and other facilities destroyed or damaged by Hurricane Katrina)	16 Mar 06	RC 54 Y: 250 N: 171	N *voted Y on HR 4939

First Things First – Campbell To Veterans: “~~Drop Dead~~” (oops, err, “Yer Outta Luck”)

Most veterans bills in Congress are designed to shore up or renew specific programs, grant cost of living increases, or pronounce symbolic resolutions of support. Each session, the bill that matters most is the one that *authorizes money* for the Dept of Veterans Affairs, health funding and construction. This June, the House of Representatives approved HR 2642, by far the most important bill on behalf of America’s veterans to be passed in years. John Campbell **opposed it every step of the way.**

The table above lists about 40 votes on veterans issues. A few of them were just symbolic and others may have been overlooked because they were hidden in bills ostensibly directed towards other matters. Out of these 40 votes, 15 of them pertained to HR 2642, properly known as the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Regardless of their positions on Iraq, Democrats have spoken as one on supporting our veterans. Steve Young has spoken out even more boldly, that “*America owes our veterans 100% because they gave 100%.*” Only a few extremists can muster an argument against funding for the care of our veterans. You may have seen their rantings in letters to the editor or a few blogs or heard them pontificating at the local bar, saying that we don’t owe these soldiers anything because they *volunteered* to serve and therefore

deserve what they get. These folks are either juvenile, hard core, me-firsters who selfishly turn their backs on their communities and resent contributing anything to the maintenance of our American way of life, or they are among the more serious libertarians who would like to roll back the institutions of our democracy to the way they were when Calvin Coolidge and Warren Harding were pilfering the pockets of the public, or even further back. There is no point in engaging them in argument. It is a lost cause, they will not be persuaded and you will be demoralized. In fact, no serious political leader has *spoken* out against more funding for our veterans. *But a very few have nevertheless voted against it -- including John Campbell.*

This is not surprising. During the period of Republican rule in Congress, they managed to bottle up veterans funding increases. In his first term in Congress, **John Campbell was a member of the Republican dominated House Veterans Affairs Committee** that, during his time, deflected attempts to raise more money for our veterans and ended up producing a bill that fell below even Pres. Bush's inadequate budget request. [[HR 5385](#)]

It just seems that these neo-conservatives have not wrapped their minds (and consciences) around the idea that when we go to war there are consequences and, first among them, a massive increase in physically and mentally wounded and disabled young people returning home from the conflict. Thus they have been profligate in flushing away taxpayers money in Iraq but here, in America, they have been miserly in *dealing with the consequences of their own decisions*. We expect our children to have a better sense of responsibility than the Republicans have shown in this regard.

When America elected a Democratic House majority in 2006, the new leadership made veterans issues a priority. In June 2007, the Veterans Affairs Committee, now without Campbell and others to obstruct the process, introduced a proper bill, one that not only upgraded and modernized the VA, but greatly increased funding for the first time in decades to take into account a new generation of gravely wounded and disabled veterans of a war already four years old at that time. (Recall, the invasion of Iraq was launched on March 20, 2003).

June 15, 2007 the funding bill came up for approval. There were many attempts to amend it. Nevertheless [during the debate, nary a word was spoken against the bill](#). Even the Republican leadership acknowledged that the new infusion of funds for veterans health and support, despite the fact it exceeded Pres. Bush's budget request, was nevertheless necessary and just. Everyone voted for it, *except for two congressmen*.

The final vote on HR 2642 was 409 to 2. John Campbell was one of the two who voted against supporting our veterans! How much farther from the American mainstream can you get?

Despite Campbell's opposition, the bill was sent to the US Senate where, in accordance with the provisions of our Constitution, that chamber had the opportunity to accept, reject, or amend the bill.

The Next Step – Campbell Opposes A New GI Bill

In the Fall of 2007, the Senate debated the bill and approved it with several amendments. After the differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill were hashed out in a conference committee that winter, the bill was returned to the House this Spring.

[The Senate added three amendments to the bill that essentially changed its character.](#) It became a tri-partite act in which only the third part dealt directly with veterans funding. The first amendment morphed into another emergency Iraq war funding bill. The second dealt with troop deployment in Iraq, diplomatic relations, the problem of jurisdiction over military contractors, the use of torture in interrogations and the like.

It is the third part that is important for veterans. It incorporated the increased veterans funding of HR 2642's original version, and added several other measures, such as one that plugged a loophole in Medicaid provisions that was damaging to disabled veterans; and another that doubled the military construction budget to increase maintenance so that the degradation of facilities like that seen at Walter Reed Army Medical Center doesn't occur again; most significantly, it enacted a *new GI Bill, that would assure veterans of four years of college as a way of reintegrating Iraq and Afghanistan veterans into the economy.*

Before any of these amendments could be considered, the House actually had to vote to "order the previous question," a parliamentary procedure to allow the legislation to be discussed. This passed [224 to 195](#), with John Campbell voting against it.

Next the House had to vote on another parliamentary item, a resolution simply allowing itself to debate the issue. This too passed, [221 to 200](#). **Again, John Campbell sided with the minority in voting to refuse even to consider increasing funding for veterans.**

With these preliminaries out of the way, the House debated and voted on the three amendments on May 15, 2008.

The amendment that cut funding for the war from Pres. Bush's request failed, [141-149](#). On this, John Campbell actually broke party ranks and voted for the measure.

The amendment that banned torture during interrogations and insisted that military contractors respect American law and be held liable for profiteering passed, [227 to 196](#). *John Campbell missed this vote.*

Finally the amendment to approve veterans' funding as well as the new GI Bill came up for a vote and passed, 256 to 166 . <i>John Campbell was absent from this vote too!</i>

Campbell voted on the first amendment, which took place at 3:30 PM. But he failed to vote on the second one, recorded at 3:37. And then he dropped the ball and was absent

from the vote in support of our veterans at 3:45. It should be pointed out that Campbell had time [at 3:00 to express his opposition to the GI Bill on his blog](#).

Perhaps Campbell had a temporary flight of good conscience, deciding a non-vote on veterans was better than a negative outright betrayal. No matter, for soon thereafter he spelled out his opposition to the GI Bill in a written “[debate](#)” with Steve Young in the *Daily Pilot*. Campbell tries to hide his animosity under a rag tag cloak of [excuses](#).

But Steve Young points out: “On May 15, John Campbell again missed the opportunity to stand behind our veterans. Despite his Memorial Day homage to “never forget our veterans,” he did so when he “Did Not Vote” on the 2008 GI Bill [HR 2642]. He was in Congress that day — he voted on six other matters (including three bills authorizing the mint to issue commemorative coins) but *did not vote* on this bill so important to veterans.

The 2008 GI Bill roughly matches the original, which financed the college educations of more than 7 million WWII veterans. The new bill will provide a monthly cost-of-living stipend and cover the full cost of in-state tuition at a public college for veterans who have three years’ service after 9/11.

Our veterans didn’t give a fraction in Afghanistan and Iraq. They gave 100%. Shouldn’t our GI Bill give 100%? I support our veterans and the 2008 GI Bill. Rather than just posing in front of our troops, I will stand behind the veterans and their benefits.”

In Conclusion: John Campbell, Extremist

The final act, of late, in the continuing saga of Congressman Campbell against the veterans, occurred on June 19. The Senate took the two House amendments that had passed on May 15, rewrote them, and now [divided the bill into two \(instead of three\) parts: a war funding act and a veterans funding bill – including the GI Bill](#). As per usual procedure, the House had to vote on how much time to allot for debate on the issue, ([House Resolution 1284](#)) and, once again, *Campbell voted against considering the bill and in favor of stifling debate*. The resolution passed anyway, [342 to 83](#).

Next the House voted on emergency supplemental funding for the war effort. Campbell voted against this, too. It also passed, [268-155](#). (Funny. Hasn’t Campbell accused Democrats in the past who voted against funding our troops of favoring “defeat.” But when he does it because he objects to some pork barrel additions – imagine! – it’s suddenly ok. . .)

Finally, the veterans funding portion of the bill came up for a final vote. Despite their presumed opposition, the Republicans realized the need to support our troops. They voted along with the majority. HR 2642, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act passed with an overwhelming mandate, [416 to 12](#). **Campbell was only one of twelve politicians to oppose the bill. He is an extremist.**

Forget what Campbell says. Look at how he votes. End of story.

Campbell's First Term Votes

In Campbell's first term, the 109th Congress 2nd term, (2005-6), [the Disabled American Veterans lists 4 key votes on vets issues:](#)

- 1) Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance Program Extension (Nov 14, 06) RC 520. Campbell voted yes.
- 2) Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2006. (June 28, 06) RC 321. Campbell voted yes.
- 3) Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act. (May 22, 06) RC 177. Campbell voted yes.
- 4) National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 On Motion to Recommit with Instructions. (May 11, 2006) RC 144. Campbell voted no.

There may have been other votes on veterans, issues, but under Republican House domination, many of them were handled by voice vote (or kept bottled up in committee) The four votes listed are the ones singled out on the DAV website. The first three passed and the last failed. Campbell voted with the Republican majority each time and thus garnered a 75% rating on the DAV scorecard. These votes however do not indicate how much the Democrats were calling for greater benefits but, unwilling to shaft veterans, supported the best possible outcome under the Republican controlled House. Of course, the Republicans and the Bush administration have a poor record managing veterans and soldiers' healthcare in general. The wretched state of Walter Reed Hospital is merely the tip of the iceberg.

Campbell's single "no" vote is instructive. He cast it to stymie a motion to recommit, which is sort of a last ditch tool afforded the minority in the House to modify a bill after all amendments have been voted on but before the final vote. This one was dedicated to alleviating the financial burden that bureaucratic regulations placed on *widows and orphans* of deceased or fully disabled military personnel. They receive pensions under the Defense Dept.'s Survivor Benefits Program. Out of this group, some of them also receive benefits under the Veterans' Administration Dependent and Indemnity Compensation Program. In an all too typical and thoughtless clerical maneuver, this latter group is required to have their Survivor Benefits reduced by the amount of their Indemnity Compensation.

The motion was introduced because a House Bill to the same effect had been kept from a House vote by the Republican leadership, **during the time that Campbell sat on the House Veterans Affairs Committee**. Debate on the motion was brief: the extra burden was called a "Military Families Tax" that cost the over 50,000 affected families a reduction of \$993 per month. There was no substantive debate from Campbell's side because in those days of Republican rule, they didn't bother: they had the votes to stifle debate, change the subject and send the motion down to defeat.

Campbell's "Stealth Votes" Against Veterans

Some of Campbell's votes against veterans slip through the cracks, as it were. For instance, there is his **no** vote on the Taylor Amendment to HR 4939, The Emergency Supplemental Appropriation for FY 2005-6 (end Sept. 30) on March 16, 2006 [[Roll Call Vote 54](#)]. This amendment was passed by Congress with bipartisan support. It was designed to increase military construction funding for expenses incurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In particular, it expressly aimed to rebuild *commissaries* at Air Force and Naval bases destroyed by Katrina in Gulfport, Miss. **Campbell voted no.** (He did vote in favor of the larger bill in which the amendment was, ultimately, included).

Campbell voted in favor of the Neugebauer Amendment to the same bill. This amendment would have eliminated funding for Hurricane Katrina relief under Title II. Though the terminology is opaque, it would have *effectively eliminated funding for rebuilding or repairing destroyed and damaged military and veterans facilities in the Hurricane zone*, eg., the New Orleans Veterans Hospital. Luckily the amendment failed, no thanks to Campbell and his [yea vote](#). For those with the stomach to do so, a review of Campbell's negative voting record on Hurricane Katrina relief would doubtless prove enlightening.

As the two examples above show, not every vote on veterans issues is clearly labeled as such. In these cases, Campbell often tries to get away with voting against veterans, hoping that no one will notice because the bills' titles don't refer specifically to them.

Campbell voted against [HR 976](#), the Small Business Tax Relief Act, on Feb 16, 07 (See [Roll Call Vote 102](#)) This bill was designed to soften the impact on small businesses of the recently passed increase in the minimum wage. It specifically authorized a tax credit for hiring disabled veterans under the following conditions: "[if the veteran is receiving food stamps, is entitled to a service-connected disability and is being hired on a date not more than 1 year after having been discharged or released from active US military duty or has aggregate periods of unemployment equal to or greater than 6 month during the year ending on the date of hiring.](#)" Campbell was one of only 45 House members to vote to kill the bill, against a majority of 360. Heartless.

Campbell voted against [HR 1332](#), the Small Business Lending Improvements Act, on April 25, 07 (See [Roll Call 263](#)). [The bill seeks to modify small business lending by targeting "lending amounts under \\$250,000 to rural and community development programs."](#) It specifically "[carries forward a program aiming to increase medical professionals in shortage areas, increases veterans access to small business startup funding, authorizes for loans projects that reduce energy consumption by at least ten percent . . . The bill is in response to a reduction in available capital to small businesses due to increase interest and lending rates and the expected return of veterans in significant numbers who want to start a small business.](#)" Taken together with his previous stealth vote, Campbell's **no** on this bill (one of 45 against 380 yeas) shows his contempt for veterans *and* small businesses alike!

As if to prove his animosity, Campbell voted no on yet another small business bill: [HR 3867](#), the Small Business Contracting Program Improvements Act, which passed the house by a vote of 334 to 80 on October 30, 07. (See [Roll Call Vote 1017](#)) It is difficult to fathom what Campbell had against the bill – which the Congressional Budget Office determined had no discernible cost. Follow the link below for a full summary of the legislation, but briefly stated:

The bill aims to help small businesses owned and operated by service-disabled veterans to procure contracts with the Federal government by simply changing the wording in a previous law from “service-disabled vets *may* be considered preferentially,” to ‘*shall*’ be considered as such. It also **makes it unlawful** for anyone to misrepresent themselves as service-disabled veterans in order to gain preferential treatment. [The bill directs the head of the Small Business Administration “to provide service-disabled small business owners information and assistance concerning federal contracting, advise and assist other agencies to expand procurement opportunities and make training in the procurement process available to service-disabled veterans.” It requires *background checks on applicants for procurement contracts and assurances that the applicant does not lack business integrity. For existing contractors, no further contracts can be awarded without the background check. The Administrator must also perform random background checks on awardees to determine any lack of business integrity. Finally, “the President is directed to annually set government-wide goals for procurement contracts awarded to small businesses controlled by service-disabled veterans to include goals for prime contractors to use service-disabled veteran businesses to ensure their maximum participation in government procurement contracts.”*](#)

It’s hard to see what’s not to like with HR 3867. It contains other provisions, but its main goal is to help disabled vets. Yet lacking the term *veterans* in its title, Campbell seems to have felt that no one would notice his stealthy *no* vote. Until now. (As if to prove this point, Campbell voted with the majority *one week later* to approve [HR 4253](#), the Military Reservist and Veteran Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act of 2007. Would he have done the same if the “Military Reservist and Veteran” part had been left out of the title?)

Another stealth vote against veterans is his rejection of [HR 6331](#), the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act on July 15, 08. The measure had been vetoed by Pres. Bush and had come back to the House for a vote to override the veto. The override succeeded, [383 to 41](#), with Campbell ditching the bipartisan majority to vote no. The reason why Medicare is important for veterans is that one of the main health benefit programs pegs its payouts to Medicare rates. A vote *against* the bill was a vote in favor of cutting those payouts to veterans for healthcare by 10.6%. For more on this vote, [see Steve Young’s explanation](#).

Now Let’s Be Reasonable

Campbell has not always scorned our veterans. He has joined the majority to support them under certain conditions. Scan his yea votes on the chart above and you will find that the bills he favors tend to have been passed by unanimous votes, that they cost little, simply renew established programs, or that they fix problems that had become embarrassing scandals for the Republicans.

In 2007 Campbell voted in favor of [HR 327](#), a Veterans Suicide Prevention Act, legislation that incurred no cost, but simply directed the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to study the problem of veteran suicide. [HR 797](#) was the Veteran Vision Equity Act, to make sure veterans receive benefits for eyesight loss, a program that will use already existing funds. A unanimous House passed a cost-of-living increase for veterans compensation, [HR 1284](#).

So, yes, Campbell *will* sometimes vote for veterans, when the bill incurs no cost, no muss, no fuss.

Campbell joined a unanimous House vote to support was [HR 1538](#), the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act of 2007. This was a reform bill dedicated to fixing up the mess that seven previous years of Bush/Republican House rule had left of the military and veterans healthcare system. In general, it tried to take into account the massive onslaught of new trauma cases – physical and mental – that have accompanied our wounded warriors home from the Middle East. It was aimed at fixing problems like those exposed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Campbell voted for this because it would have been too shameful to oppose it. Is that too harsh an evaluation? Well before the vote on the act, House procedure dictated a vote on a *Resolution* merely to consider the bill. Campbell **voted against that**. Only after the defeat of the parliamentary maneuver to forestall the bill did Campbell switch and vote in its favor, lest he be accused of lacking basic decency.

Before Memorial Day 2007, Campbell voted to support several other bills that entailed little or no cost. [HR 67](#) and [HR 2239](#) requested the Veterans Dept to improve their management of vocational training programs and expand eligibility (clearing up clerical loopholes); and [HR 1470](#) added chiropractic care to the therapies made available at veterans medical centers. [HR 612](#) increased the eligibility for Gulf War veterans to receive veterans hospital or nursing care from two years to five years following their discharge from service. [HR 2199](#) set aside funds to study and improve care for traumatic brain injury care. It is simply a fact of warfare that brain injury cases which in previous wars would have resulted in death can now be treated by remarkable advances in US military medical care. But at home the veterans hospitals have not been prepared for the influx of new cases. This scandalous state of affairs had to await the election of a Democratic lead House of Representatives and Campbell joined everyone else and assented to the bill.

In October, 2007, Campbell again agreed to vote yes on [HR 327](#), the Veterans Suicide Act, again, a no-cost deal. In November 2007 he voted yes on [HR 513](#), which fixed a problem the Republicans had let fester: there had been no law preventing credit agencies from penalizing soldiers for tardiness and delinquency due to the fact that they *were*

deployed in war zones and paying their monthly bills was the last thing on their mind. The legislation does not excuse the soldiers from paying their debts. It simply stops the credit agencies from black-marking their credit records for debts incurred during their periods of deployment. Another low cost bill that Campbell agreed to was [HR 4253](#), to renew and even expand some programs designed to help veterans start or manage small businesses. He also voted yes on [HR 3793](#), another piece of reform legislation designed to correct another problem that Republican politicians had ignored during their period of House rule: a disreputable practice in which soldiers who had to leave the service due to battlefield wounds or other service related injuries were denied (or forced to return) their sign-up bonuses. The Army's argument was that these veterans had not served their full agreed upon tours of duty. The counter-argument: duh! *They were wounded in action.* They deserve the sign-on bonuses used as a recruitment tool to get them to come or return to Iraq despite the Bush Defense Dept's cold-hearted, mean-spirited, bureaucratic bungling.

Before Memorial Day 2008 Campbell supported several other unanimous votes in favor of veterans: [HR 3819](#), another reform bill aimed at making sure that when vets need emergency medical attention, but are *turned away* from a veterans hospital due to *lack of space*, the Veterans Dept. will still reimburse their emergency care when they have to check into civilian hospitals (until such time as they can be transferred to a veterans facility). **Previously they had been forced to foot the bill themselves!** This is the sort of . . . stuff . . . that has been happening to veterans over the past few years, including the period when Campbell was sitting on the formerly Republican-run House Veterans Affairs Committee. When the Democrats were elected the majority and Campbell left the committee, reform measures could finally be realized. He also voted in favor of [HR 5826](#), the annual cost of living adjustment for veterans compensation, as well as a facilities construction bill, [HR 5856](#), which contained expenditures for repairs such as seismic upgrading for hospitals, etc.

So, yes, there were *some* veterans bills that Campbell agreed to: with exceptions noted, the no-cost or low-cost bills. The annual renewal acts. And the house-cleaning measures taking care of glaring lapses in veterans healthcare that have proved too embarrassing to the Bush administration.

The Ironies

On [Dec. 5, 2006](#) and [Jan 31, 2007](#), Campbell voted to support House and Congressional *symbolic* resolutions in favor of encouraging employers to hire disabled veterans. On [Feb. 16, 2007](#), Campbell voted against the Small Business Tax Relief Act, which would have given tax incentives for employers to hire disabled veterans.

On [Mar 28, 2007](#), Campbell voted to quash a House vote on reforming veterans healthcare. That same day, having failed to forestall the vote, he switched and voted in favor of the bill.

Simply Despicable

Occasionally Campbell's hostility to spending any money on veterans overrides his sense of shame. An egregious instance of this was on July 9, 2008 when he was [one of nine members](#) to vote against the [Home for Heroes Act](#), a bill to help low income veterans gain adequate housing, a particularly pressing issue during this time of crisis in the home loan business.

Conclusion

Campbell has an awful record on veterans. He cheers on the war but does not support the warriors. The bills he has supported have all come at little or no political cost. The bills he has opposed are precisely those that veterans need the most.