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**CONTACT:** Nicholas Shuminsky  
651-647-2653

## **McCain Severely Out of Touch on Issues that Matter to Minnesotans: *Misleads Public on Veterans Support, Fails to Denounce Gramm Remarks***

(Saint Paul, MN) – In advance of Senator John McCain’s visit to his headquarters in Saint Paul, Alliance for a Better Minnesota today called on McCain to demonstrate some real “straight-talk” about his record on veterans health care and to denounce the callous remarks made by top economic advisor Phil Gramm.

"Whether it's the economic challenges working families are facing or the care we provide to our returning veterans, Senator McCain is clearly out of touch and misses the mark," said Denise Cardinal, executive director for Alliance for a Better Minnesota. "He misled a town hall audience on his record of consistently not supporting improvements to veterans' health care system and yesterday his closest economic advisor Phil Gramm said Americans are "whiners" and belittled the struggles Minnesotans face when shopping for groceries, filling up their gas tanks, or keeping their homes."

On Monday of this week, McCain falsely claimed that he “[received every award](#) from every major veteran’s organization in America,” and continued to dodge questions on his votes against expanding health care for returning veterans. On Wednesday of this week, McCain’s “mentor” on economic issues echoed McCain’s views, claiming that most of Americans’ economic concerns are part of a “mental recession.” During his June visit to Saint Paul, Alliance for a Better Minnesota joined Minnesota veterans in calling for McCain to withdraw his opposition to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century G.I. Bill for America’s troops.

### **McCain and Gramm Agree: Economic Woes are “Psychological” and “Mental”**

**McCain:** "He's probably the smartest – not just economist, but politician – there is."  
- *John McCain on Phil Gramm, [Houston Chronicle, 2/25/08]*

**Gramm:** "You've heard of mental depression; this is a mental recession. ... We have sort of become a nation on whiners. ... You just hear this constant whining, complaining about a loss of competitiveness, American in decline. ... We've never been more dominant."  
- *Top McCain Economic Adviser Phil Gramm [Washington Times, 7/9/08]*

**McCain:** "Now, as far as putting additional money in American taxpayers' pocket, that's fine, because a lot of this is psychological, a lot it's psychological. Because I believe the fundamentals of our economy is still strong." - *John McCain, [Town Hall Meeting, West Palm Beach, Florida, 1/25/08]*

**McCain:** "But I think psychologically — and a lot of our problems today, as you know, are psychological — the confidence, trust, the uncertainty about our economic future, ability to keep our own home. This might give them a little psychological boost." - *John McCain, [Fox News, 4/16/08]*

## Phil Gramm: McCain's Economic "Mentor"

**Gramm is National Co-Chairman Of McCain's Campaign.** Former Texas Senator Phil Gramm is the general co-chairman of McCain's presidential campaign. [[JohnMcCain.com](http://JohnMcCain.com), accessed 6/3/08]

**McCain said Gramm Was His "Mentor" On Economic Issues.** New York Times business and economics columnist David Leonhardt wrote, "Mr. McCain begins the story of his economic education in 1982, when the country was in recession and he was first elected to the House. Once in Congress, he worked with Jack F. Kemp and Phil Gramm, who conservatives who were also in the House then, and Martin Feldstein, a Harvard economist who was an aide to President Ronald Reagan, to pass tax cuts and spending restraints. Mr. McCain said that Mr. Gramm – 'a guy who taught economics for 12 years at Texas A&M' and has endorsed Mr. McCain – had been an especially important mentor." [New York Times, 1/26/08]

**McCain: As President "I Would Rely On" Gramm.** John McCain said, "But I as president, as every other president, rely primarily on my secretary of the Treasury, on my Council of Economic Advisers, on the head of that. I would rely on the circle that I have developed over many years of people like Jack Kemp, Phil Gramm, Warren Rudman, Pete Peterson, and The Concorde Group." [New York Post, 1/26/08]

## McCain Misleading Voters on his Record of Not Supporting Veterans Health Care

**McCain Has Voted To Cut, Eliminate, or Gut Veterans Health Care Funding At Least 29 Times.** [HR 4939, [Vote #111](#), 5/4/06][HR 4939, [Vote #98](#), 4/26/06][SCR 83, [Vote #70](#), 3/16/06][SCR 83, [Vote #67](#), 3/16/06][SCR 83, [Vote #63](#), 3/16/06][SCR 83, [Vote #41](#), 3/14/06][HR 4297, [Vote #15](#), 2/13/06][HR 4297, [Vote #7](#), 2/2/06][S 2020, [Vote #343](#), 11/17/05][HR 2863, [Vote #251](#), 10/5/05][HR 2528, [Vote #242](#), 9/22/05][HR 2361, [Vote #165](#), 6/29/05; HR 2361, [Vote #166](#), 6/29/05; HR 2361, [Vote #168](#), 6/29/05][HR 1268, [Vote #90](#), 4/12/05][HR 1268, [Vote #89](#), 4/12/05][SCR 95, [Vote #40](#), 3/10/04][S 1689, [Vote #379](#), 10/14/03][SCR 23, [Vote #81](#), 3/25/03][S 2168, [Vote #185](#), 7/7/98][S 936, [Vote #168](#), 7/10/97][HR 3666, [Vote #276](#), 9/5/96][HR 3666, [Vote #275](#), 9/5/96][HR 2099, [Vote #466](#), 9/27/95][HR 4624, [Vote #256](#), 8/4/94][HR 1335, [Vote #97](#), 4/1/93][S 2884, [Vote #226](#), 8/4/90][HR 2519, [Vote #132](#), 7/17/91]

**McCain Voted Against A \$20 Million Increase In Healthcare For Veterans.** In 2006, McCain voted against an amendment that would add \$20 million for veterans' health care facilities. [HR 4939, [Vote #111](#), 5/4/06]

**McCain Was One of 13 Senators To Vote Against Increase In Veterans' Healthcare.** In 2006, McCain was one of 13 senators to vote against an amendment to add \$430 million for outpatient and inpatient health care and treatment for veterans. [HR 4939, [Vote #98](#), 4/26/06]

**McCain Voted To Cut Funding For Veterans' Healthcare.** In 2006, McCain voted against an amendment to strike a provision in the 2007 Budget that will hold farm programs, veterans, Social Security, and Medicaid hostage to rising health care costs by creating automatic cuts once an arbitrary level of spending is reached in the Medicare program. [SCR 83, [Vote #70](#), 3/16/06]

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