



## ***Honoring the Service of our Nation's Military and Veterans***

Senator John Cornyn learned the value of patriotic service to our country from his father, who spent 31 years in the military, beginning as a B-17 pilot in World War II. Growing up in an Air Force family and moving from base to base, he saw first-hand the caliber of those who dedicate years to defending freedom at home and abroad.

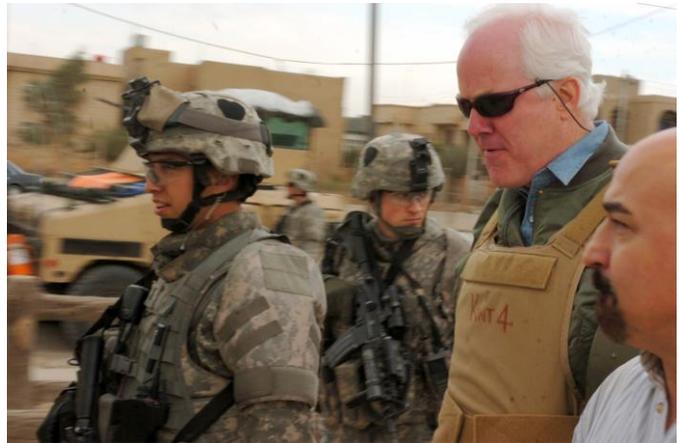
Senator Cornyn knows that our nation can never do enough to repay those who have selflessly served and sacrificed for our country. He is dedicated to making certain that our nation's active duty, National Guard, and Reserve military forces get the best training, equipment, and education, and that our veterans receive the health care access, services, and benefits they deserve.

**Over the past six years, Senator Cornyn has steadfastly supported our veterans and military personnel and strongly advocated on their behalf.**

- ✓ Voted to authorize **concurrent receipt** of military retirement benefits and VA disability compensation for retirees with at least a 50% disability. Worked to allow the **immediate payment of concurrent receipt for the most severely disabled veterans.**
- ✓ Supported the **elimination of the "Widow's Tax"** that reduced the Survivor Benefit Plan for widows at age 62.
- ✓ Supported the **America's Fallen Heroes Act** prohibiting demonstrations at military funerals held at national cemeteries, in order to preserve the dignity of our fallen troops.
- ✓ Supported **expanding the eligibility for TRICARE** to all members of the Selected Reserve.



- ✓ Successfully fought to **expand current G.I. Bill** educational benefits for service members and, for the first time, to allow service members to **transfer unused educational benefits through the G.I. Bill to their spouses and children.**



- ✓ Helped **expand Combat Related Special Compensation** to all military retirees whose disabling condition was due to combat or combat-related operations.

- ✓ **Increased the maximum coverage of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance and Veterans' Group Life Insurance** from \$250,000 to \$400,000 and increased the DoD-provided death gratuity from \$12,420 to \$100,000.

- ✓ Worked to **secure pay raises and increased benefits** for military personnel.

- ✓ Successfully fought to **expand access to VA health care for Texas veterans** by urging the VA to establish new community-based outpatient clinics in Texas.

- ✓ Supported **authorizing the construction of six new national cemeteries** and making permanent the **State Cemetery Grants Program**, which assists states in establishing veterans' cemeteries.

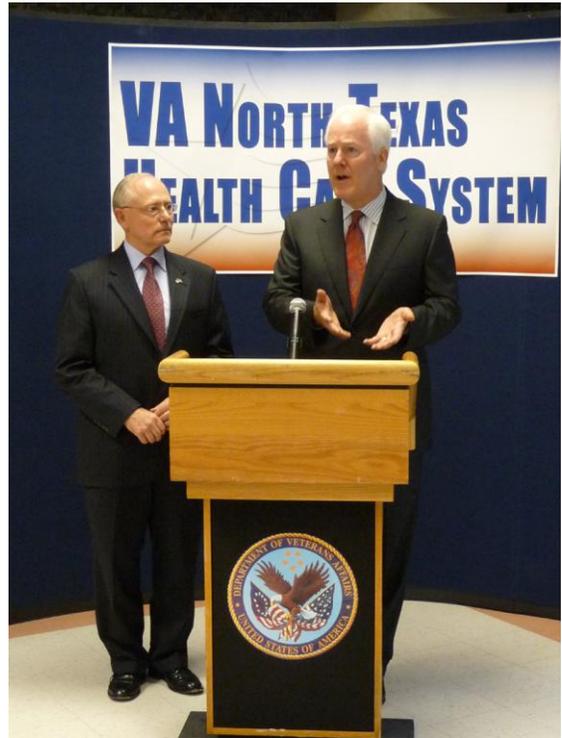
- ✓ Supported a **constitutional amendment prohibiting the desecration of our most revered national symbol, the American flag.**



- ✓ Cosponsored the ***Military Citizenship Act***, expediting the naturalization process for men and women serving in the U.S. military who are not U.S. citizens.

- ✓ Made housing more affordable for Texas veterans through an expansion of the **Qualified Veterans Mortgage Bond (QVMB)** program.

- ✓ Cosponsored the ***Dignified Treatment of Wounded Warriors Act***, which:
  - Mandates development of a policy for the care of injured service members during their transition from the military to civilian life (and the VA health care system) to ensure no service member “falls through the cracks.”
  - Requires development of a uniform electronic health record for use between the VA and DoD, to create a seamless transition to VA care.
  - Provides enhanced health care and benefits to injured service members.
  - Reforms and improves the DoD Disability Evaluation System.
  - Requires the DoD to establish centers of excellence for Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).



Sen. Cornyn meets with former VA Secretary James Peake at the Dallas Veterans Affairs Medical Center in August 2008.

- ✓ Sponsored the ***Veterans' Housing Benefits Enhancement Act*** to ensure that troops/veterans with severe burns and other traumatic injuries are eligible to receive the same benefits for housing and automobile adaptation grants as other disabled veterans.
- ✓ Cosponsored the ***Rural Veterans Health Care Improvement Act***, which would improve the ability of the VA to pay travel expenses for veterans who are forced to travel great distances to VA facilities.

- ✓ Cosponsored the ***Veterans' Mental Health Outreach and Access Act*** to require the VA to help Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom veterans and their families gain access to mental health care and readjustment services, especially for those who do not live near a VA facility.



- ✓ Supported the ***Mental Health Care and Other Improvements Act of 2008***, to improve veterans' mental health and substance abuse care, enhance mental health outreach, and improve VA research on PTSD and TBI.

Senator Cornyn is a member of the Senate's **Army Caucus, Air Force Caucus, Reserve Caucus, National Guard Caucus, and the USO Congressional Caucus.**

- ✓ Cosponsored the ***Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury and Health Programs Improvement Act***, requiring the VA to develop personalized plans for the rehabilitation of veterans with TBI (using both VA and non-VA facilities) prior to their discharge from inpatient care.

- ✓ Cosponsored the ***Honoring Our Nation's Obligation to Returning Warriors Act***, which gives active-duty troops the same access to community-based counseling centers that our veterans now use; increases the number of behavioral health specialists to serve troops and veterans; extends survivor benefits to families of military personnel who commit suicide; and better prepares troops for combat deployment through improved prevention, early detection, intervention, and treatment of PTSD.

#### Senator Cornyn continues to work in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress to support veterans.

- ✓ Supporting legislation to **improve veterans' mental health care**, including “invisible” wounds of war such as PTSD & TBI.
- ✓ Re-introducing the ***Military Voting Protection Act*** to ensure that troops serving overseas have their votes counted by requiring **express shipping** of our **overseas troops'** completed **absentee ballots**.
- ✓ Leading Congress' efforts to investigate the rising trend of suicides among military personnel, including military recruiters, in order to ensure continued visibility and action on this issue, which is critical to the health of our all-volunteer force and our continued success in the Global War on Terrorism.
- ✓ Sponsoring the ***Ensuring Safe Facilities and Equipment for American Troops Overseas Act*** to require DoD



to impose stricter safety standards for our deployed troops' overseas facilities.