

John



Kerry
for PRESIDENT

Talking Points

- ❖ John Kerry on the Economy
- ❖ John Kerry on Education
- ❖ John Kerry on the Environment
- ❖ John Kerry on Healthcare in New Mexico
- ❖ John Kerry on Homeland Security
- ❖ John Kerry on Iraq
- ❖ John Kerry on Jobs
- ❖ John Kerry on Medicare
- ❖ John Kerry on Seniors
- ❖ John Kerry on Veterans
- ❖ John Kerry on Women's Issues
- ❖ Some Suggested Resources

JOHN KERRY ON THE ECONOMY¹

George W Bush has chosen tax cuts for the wealthy and special favors for the special interests over our economic future. By borrowing from future generations to give tax relief to those who need help the least, **George W. Bush's economic policies have, for the first time in history, forced the federal government to spend \$1 billion more EACH DAY than it takes in.** John Kerry's priority will be middle class families who are working hard to cover the mortgage, pay the high cost of health care, child care and tuition, or just trying to get ahead.

Priorities

Reviving American Manufacturing: Over 2.7 million manufacturing jobs have been lost since President Bush took office. John Kerry will save jobs by ending the unpatriotic practice of U.S. corporations moving offshore simply to avoid paying their fair share of our nation's tax burden. **To create new manufacturing jobs Kerry will**

- provide new tax breaks to manufacturers who produce goods and create jobs in the United States
- provide relief for manufacturers that provide quality health care and retirement
- strongly enforce trade laws to assure that American industries are on a level playing field with our trading partners
- invest in research and development, give tax incentives to help industries upgrade, and work to assure a highly qualified workforce so that American manufacturing will be strong in the future.

State Tax Relief and Education Fund to Create Jobs and Stop Painful Budget Cuts The Bush economic approach has left states with nearly \$90 billion in budget deficits, forcing layoffs, education cuts, and tax increases – all of which hurt economic growth. **John Kerry will**

- create a new "State Tax Relief and Education Fund" that will help states so they don't have to make cuts that hurt our economy with an additional \$25 billion over two years.
- give additional money to states by fully funding the No Child Left Behind education law and special education.

Provide Tax Relief to Middle Class Families John Kerry believes that we should keep the middle class tax cuts that Democrats fought for in 2001 and 2003. **John Kerry wants to**

- protect the increases in the child tax credit
- protect the reduced marriage penalty
- protect the new tax bracket that helps people save \$350 on their first level of income
- give more tax breaks to the middle class with new tax credits on health care and college tuition.

Prepare Americans for 21st Century Jobs by Opening the Doors of College for All Over the past two years, the cost to attend a public four-year college has increased by 10 percent. **John Kerry's plan will**

- create a new "College Opportunity Tax Credit" that will make four years of college affordable for all Americans. He will
- provide a credit for each and every year of college on the first \$4,000 paid in tuition – the typical tuition for public colleges. The credit will
- provide 100% of the first \$1000 and 50% on the rest. It will also
- make this credit refundable so that it helps the most vulnerable students.
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Making Corporate America Live by America's Values Today, Americans who are working hard and playing by the rules are faced with higher health care costs, higher state taxes, higher college tuition and limited job opportunities. At the same time, many corporations are bending the rules and shirking their fair share of the burden - and **the Bush Administration is rewarding those who break the rules with lucrative government contracts.** **John Kerry will**

- fight for a government that rewards those who work hard and play by the rules and challenges those who don't.
- restore investor confidence with strong enforcement by the Securities and Exchange Commission
- will stop corporations from keeping bank Accounts in Countries like Bermuda to Avoid Paying Taxes.

Protect the American Worker John Kerry believes that ensuring there is a fair playing field for workers is important to a strong economy. **John Kerry**

- supports increasing the minimum wage and indexing it to inflation
- will improve workplace health and safety while fighting for fair overtime rules and a worker's right to join a union
- believes that workers need more protections against corporate fraud so they don't lose their lifetime savings because they are working hard for the wrong company.

Close the Pay Gap Women still earn, on average, only 73 cents for every dollar earned by men. John Kerry believes that we must expand opportunities for women and work to make equal pay for equal work a reality not a slogan. He would start by improving enforcement and disclosure about payment practices.

¹ Materials are quoted from <http://www.johnkerry.com>

John Kerry on Education²

John Kerry believes that we need to invest in our schools instead of giving tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans. That's why John Kerry is proposing a new 'Education Trust Fund' that means fully funding education. John Kerry also believes that given the demands of a global economy, every single child has to be able to reach high standards in order to prosper. John Kerry will support teachers, reduce class sizes, and rebuild crumbling schools.

George Bush has undermined public education and left millions of children behind by signing the No Child Left Behind Act and then breaking his promise by not giving schools the resources to help meet new standards. When it comes to education, George W. Bush has been the photo-op President. He stands next to children and teachers for a picture, but he doesn't stand with them when it comes to improving our public schools.

John Kerry has a real plan to improve K-12 education to make sure that every child gets the skills they need to meet the needs of the 21st Century economy. His National Education Trust Fund is Part of Kerry's Plan for First 100 Days.

John Kerry wants to support teachers and paraprofessionals with better training and better pay, with more career opportunities, more empowerment and more mentors. What the public schools of America need is an advocate in the White House. As President, that's what John Kerry will be.

John Kerry has a three-point plan to make kids safer and healthier and assure they enter school ready to learn. His plan includes a new Kids Safety Effort requiring safety labels for food allergens and mandatory testing of prescription drugs used for treating children; setting comprehensive standards for early childhood education; and providing health insurance for every child in America.

George W. Bush has made a mockery of the phrase 'leave no child behind.' The Bush Administration sought to cut funding for school reform and issued restrictive guidelines. Our public schools are too important to be left in the lurch without adequate resources. That is why John Kerry is proposing an Education Trust Fund that makes sure that we meet the promises in the No Child Left Behind Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. He has fought for mandatory funding for special education for years and as President he will ensure that we get it for all elementary and secondary education.

John Kerry will fix the one-size-fits all testing in the No Child Left Behind Law. He will make sure that we do not turn our schools into test-prep institutions -- that is not right for our teachers and it's not right for our children. Tests should be used to diagnose problems so we can fix them. They should not be used to punish our schools, our teachers, or our students. The quality of our public schools should not be determined by a "one-size-fits-all" testing plan. We need high quality assessments that reflect actual learning and we need to consider indicators of school performance other than simply test scores. The No Child Left Behind Act – and, in particular, the definition of Adequate Yearly Progress – needs to be reformed in order to meet that goal.

John Kerry will work to make early education available and affordable for every American child. John Kerry has supported increases in quality early childhood programs like Head Start and child care. His Early Learning Opportunities Act, which became law in 2000, helps families by expanding and coordinating early childhood development efforts.

John Kerry has been at the forefront of the fight to obtain federal funding for school construction. There is \$127 billion worth of school construction and emergency repair needs nationally. 14 million children are learning in substandard schools in need of major renovation. Half of all schools have at least one unsatisfactory environmental condition, such as polluted drinking water or soot-filled ventilation. At the same time the number of students is up 9% since 1990. John Kerry introduced legislation that would allow the federal government to issue \$24.8 billion in school modernization bonds to help states and school districts repair and build modern schools.

John Kerry opposes private school vouchers that will drain scarce funds from public schools. Instead, he supports efforts to increase resources to public schools to ensure all students have quality teachers, high standards, smaller classes, and safe, modern schools.

² (<http://www.johnkerry.com>)

JOHN KERRY ON HEALTHCARE IN NEW MEXICO

RISING HEALTH CARE COSTS HURT AMERICA'S FAMILIES

\$2,551 Estimated Total Family Premium Increase.

In New Mexico, the total family premium for health insurance has increased by \$2,551 to \$8,773. [2000 MEPS Data from the Agency for Healthcare Quality Research projected forward using KFF National Premium Increase]

Health Care Premiums Increased Four Times Faster than Workers' Earnings Last Year.

Health care premiums increased by 13.9% last year while workers' earnings increased by only 3.1 %. This is the fifth year in a row that premiums outpaced earnings. [Kaiser Family Foundation, "Trends and Indicators in the Changing Health Care Marketplace, 2004 Update"]

The Average Annual Health Care Premium Increase More than Doubled Under Bush. From 2000 to 2003

, the rate of health care premium increase more than doubled. From 1998-2000 the rate of increase was 5.3% and from 2000-2003 that rate was 12.7%. [Kaiser Family Foundation, "Trends and Indicators in the Changing Health Care Marketplace, 2004 Update"]

388,000 People Are Uninsured.

There are 388,000 people in New Mexico who do not have health insurance. [US Census, Current Population Survey, 2002]

94,000 Children Do Not Have Health Insurance Coverage.

There are 94,000 children in New Mexico that do not have health insurance coverage. [US Census, Children with Health Insurance: 2001, August, 2003]

GEORGE BUSH'S PLAN FALLS FLAT:

Only 22,828 More Insured Under Bush Plan.

According to George Bush's plan, only 22,828 more people will be covered in New Mexico. [Kenneth Thorpe, "Proposals for Covering the Uninsured and Reducing Health Care Costs from President Bush and Senator Kerry," 5/5/04]

JOHN KERRY WILL LOWER COSTS AND EXPAND COVERAGE:

\$1,000 Reduction in Health Care Costs.

Under John Kerry's health care plan, families will save up to 10% or \$1,000 in health care costs.

253,966 More People Will Be Covered Under Kerry's Plan.

By implementing John Kerry's health care plan, 253,966 more people in New Mexico will be provided health insurance coverage.

82,330 More Children Will Be Covered Under Kerry's Plan.

By implementing John Kerry's health care plan, 82,330 more children in New Mexico will be provided health insurance coverage.

(from: <http://www.johnkerry.com>)

ENVIRONMENTAL POSITIONS OF JOHN KERRY

SUMMARY:

With a history of engagement that extends back to the first Earth Day in 1970, Senator Kerry is one of America's premier environmental leaders. His voting record has earned him the highest lifetime LCV ranking of all the presidential candidates, and he has taken a leadership role in promoting higher fuel efficiency standards for cars and trucks, combating attempts to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and in overturning efforts to weaken the Clean Air Act. On a range of domestic issues -from clean air to clean water to public lands -Kerry has repeatedly staked out pro-environment positions. His record on international issues is equally distinguished: he sponsored legislation to incorporate environmental protections into trade negotiations and has participated in international climate change negotiations beginning at the 1992 Earth Summit and extending through Kyoto. In his run for the presidency, Kerry has made the environment a central issue, devoting several significant forums to his plans for environmental

Energy	John Kerry led the fight to increase fuel efficiency of cars and trucks John Kerry was a key player in recent fights against drilling in the Arctic refuge
Global Warming	John Kerry strongly supports policies (like increased fuel efficiency) that would reduce greenhouse gases John Kerry supports re-engaging with the international community to go beyond Kyoto
Clean Air	John Kerry supports reducing pollution, including carbon emissions, from power plants John Kerry supports enforcing existing Clean Air Act rules for older plants
Clean Water	John Kerry opposes limiting the authority of the Clean Water Act
Public Lands	John Kerry supports wilderness protection and funding for federal land purchases John Kerry opposes the "Healthy Forests " plan action if elected. Kerry participated in LCV's June 2003 presidential environmental debate. (www.lcv.org)

Kerry General Statements on the Environment from lcv.org

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT: there are enormous problems overall in our health system as a consequence of it, the diseases that come from it, diabetes, heart disease, so forth. We drive up the cost of the medical system as a consequence of our bad practices. And I will lead on that. In my health care plan, I have a wellness education component to it which is critical, and a quality of care component which we have to do. . . . The governors of the country have come up with a smart program about so-called red zones with respect to forests. And this administration has ignored it. And they've gone the other way, by opening up forests to greater destruction, greater logging. (*Democratic Presidential Debate, NPR 1/5/04*)

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE: . . . “[**John Kerry**] will work to implement a plan to make the U.S. energy independent of Middle East oil in ten years—and create 500,000 jobs by investing in renewable energy sources, such as ethanol, solar, and wind.” (*Press Release, 12/8/03*)

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: “**George Bush has sat on his hands** while hard working and minority Americans have been victims of environmental injustice and had their health assaulted.” said John Kerry. “I will put environmental justice center stage with Environmental Empowerment Zones that will help communities help themselves. **I will reinvigorate action on environmental justice at the federal level with a new Assistant Administrator position for Environmental Justice at the EPA and I’ll revive the Office of Environmental Justice** . . . Our commitment to the environment is a compact with our children, our grandchildren and the generations beyond - to keep clean the water they drink, the air they breathe, the yards and parks in which they play and laugh, and the communities in which they live,” added Kerry. “And this commitment isn’t there just for the sons and daughters of privilege or those who live in certain neighborhoods. Our commitment is for all of America’s children and all of our people.” (*Press Release, 10/1/03*)

JOHN KERRY ON HOMELAND SECURITY

John Kerry has the courage to roll back George Bush's tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans so we can invest in homeland security.

Bush is Failing on Homeland Security Ninety Percent of Cities Have Not Received Funding. "A study last fall by the U.S. Conference of Mayors showed 90 percent of cities had not received their share of \$1.5 billion allocated by the nation's largest homeland security funding program. Moreover, an informal poll in 43 states recently showed that a third of counties nationwide still have not seen any federal funding for first responders, said Larry Naake, executive director of the National Association of Counties." [Associated Press, 2/12/04]

Bush repeatedly stonewalled the 9/11 Commission and Congressional efforts to understand the intelligence mistakes that led up to September 11th. In fact, the Bush Administration has not even completed the National Intelligence Review mandated at the beginning of the Administration. Nor has the Bush Administration taken the necessary steps to improve homeland security by making our ports safer.

John Kerry will improve intelligence; John Kerry will improve port security, and he will treat those who served fairly as part of his broad plan to improve security.

John Kerry's National Defense Initiative:

Americans showed on September 11th that they want to contribute to their communities and country. Yet the Bush Administration has asked little of Americans, instead, giving more tax cuts to the wealthy. John Kerry believes winning the war against terrorism will require tapping the best our country has to offer. He will start by:

- **Enlisting the National Guard in Homeland Security.** Homeland security should be a central mission of the National Guard. Guard members should be trained to serve as personnel in the event of an attack, helping evacuate or quarantine people, assisting in medical units; and helping communities set up and execute plans.
- **Expanding Americorps to Make Homeland Security a Core Mission.** Since 9/11, applications to Americorps have increased by 50 percent and applications to Teach for America have tripled. Unfortunately, the Bush Administration promised to double Americorps and then stood by as Congressional Republicans cut it in half. John Kerry believes that Americorps should be doubled and its mission expanded to include homeland security. Americorps members could be trained to help in emergency medical response, community planning, and other homeland security activities.
- **Creating a New Community Defense Service.** This service will be comprised of hundreds of thousands of Americans in neighborhoods all over the country. Volunteer Service Captains will receive training and education to assist their communities in the event of an attack. Service captains will act as a Neighborhood Watch. They will be trained to help identify local health professionals and experts in the area, provide information on local evacuation or quarantine plans, and stand ready to be of assistance to first defenders in the hours after an attack -- providing needed manpower to deal with the aftermath.
- **Calling on the Private Sector to Help Bring Technological Innovations to the War on Terrorism.** During World War II, the U.S. government brought together our greatest thinkers, scientists, academics and policymakers through the Manhattan Project to design new tools for warfare. John Kerry believes we need a similar effort to bring the advances of the 21st century to the War on Terrorism. This should include: gathering the nation's greatest scientists to develop needed vaccines and antidotes to the biological and chemical scourges (similar to the work that is already being done to protect troops on the battlefield from biological and chemical agents); partnering with the technology community to improve detection technologies and developing and implementing new security systems to prevent tampering with goods in transit

*John Kerry believes we shouldn't be opening firehouses in Baghdad and closing them in Brooklyn.
Our first defenders should never come in last in the budget (JohnKerry.com.).*

JOHN KERRY'S 3-PRONG STRATEGY ON IRAQ

Coalition of U.S. Diplomats & Military Leaders calls for regime change

An unprecedented bipartisan coalition of 26 career chiefs of mission and retired four-star military leaders (calling itself "diplomats and military commanders for change") will launch a nationwide campaign to press for the need for change in U.S. foreign and defense policy because they are deeply concerned by the damage the Bush Administration has caused to our national and international interests. National Press Club Website June 17, 2004

KERRY'S PLAN ON IRAQ

"The administration that had proclaimed the United Nations all but irrelevant in its strategy statement of September 2002 now clamors for more U.N. involvement and more NATO troops to do what we cannot do alone: stabilize Iraq. . . . Bush has, with the greatest reluctance, moved closer to the policy that Kerry has been advocating all along: internationalizing the occupation. In his speech preceding his vote to authorize the war in the fall of 2002, Kerry stipulated that the success of any endeavor to remake Iraq depended on broad international involvement in that effort. Last September Kerry called for Bush to transfer authority in post-Hussein Iraq to the United Nations, as that would "enhance the credibility and legitimacy" of the campaign to create a new Iraqi order in the eyes of Iraq's citizens and the world".(Harold Myerson, Washington Post, 4/14/2004)

1. Make Iraq a Part of NATO's Global Mission

Every member of NATO has a huge stake in Iraq's future. NATO can take on this mission in phases, beginning with taking over responsibility border security in northern Iraq and/or the Polish sector, and training Iraqi security forces. This would free up as many as 20,000 American troops, open the door to participation by non- NATO countries and send an important message to the American people that we are not bearing the security burden in Iraq virtually alone.

2. Authorize a High Commissioner for Governance and Reconstruction

Such a High Commissioner, authorized by the UN Security Council, should organize the political transition to Iraqi sovereignty and the reconstruction of Iraq in conjunction with the new Iraqi government. Backed by a newly broadened security coalition, the High Commissioner will organize elections and coordinate reconstruction. The High Commissioner should be an individual who is highly regarded by the international community and all the Iraqi people. The High Commissioner should be directed to work with Iraq's interim government, the new US Ambassador, and the international community to ensure a process that continues to move forward toward sovereignty, while focusing on the immediate needs of the Iraqi people. While the process of establishing the High Commissioner is underway, we must fully support the efforts of Lakhdar Brahimi to set-up an Iraqi interim entity.

3. Launch a Massive Effort to Build an Iraqi Security Force

We need a massive training effort to build an Iraqi security force that can actually provide security for the Iraqi people. The effort to date has failed and must be rethought and reformed. Training must be done in the field, on the job as well as in the classroom. This key task should be part of the NATO mission, and units should be put on the street with backup from international security forces. The creation of viable Iraqi security forces — military and police — is crucial to a successful exit for us and other international forces.

Protecting Our Military Families in Times of War: A Military Family Bill of Rights

John Kerry has proposed a Military Family Bill of Rights that will provide our military families with competitive pay, good housing, decent health care, quality education for their children, first rate training, and the best possible weaponry, armor, and state-of-the-art equipment. *(from <http://www.johnkerry.com>)*

JOHN KERRY ON JOBS

THE BUSH JOBS RECORD

- **George Bush's jobs record is the worst postwar economic recovery in history** with only 142,000 private sector jobs created since the end of the recession, 4.4 million less than the historical average. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- **George Bush's Administration predicted that the tax cuts would stimulate the economy** and create 306,000 new jobs each month. Since the tax bill became law on May 28, 2003, the economy has missed this mark ten out of twelve months. (Council of Economic Advisers, 2/4/04, "Strengthening America's Economy"; Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- **George Bush faces the worst jobs record of any President who has run for reelection in nearly sixty years.** From January 2001 when Bush first took office until May 2004, the economy has lost 1.9 million private sector jobs. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- **"In every state but Nebraska and Nevada, jobs in higher-paying industries have given way to jobs in low wage industries."** (quoting the Economic Policy Institute) "Total payrolls are still nearly 1.2 million lower than when Bush took office. If government jobs are discounted private sector payrolls remain 1.9 million below their January 2001 level." (Washington Post, June 15, 2004, page A03)

THE MIDDLE-CLASS SQUEEZE UNDER GEORGE BUSH--RECORD DEBT IN NEW MEXICO:

In New Mexico last year 9,003 Households Filed For Bankruptcy, a 38% Increase from 2000. (US Courts, Administrative Office, Bankruptcy Statistics)

In New Mexico last year, 1 household went bankrupt every 58 minutes. (US Courts, Administrative Office, Bankruptcy Statistics)

Last year in New Mexico 3,000 More Children Saw Their Parents Go Bankrupt than Get Divorced. (US Courts, Administrative Office, Bankruptcy Statistics; Children Based on Elizabeth Warren and Amelia Warren Tyagi, *The Two Income Trap*, 2003; Centers for Disease Control, National Vital Statistics Reports; US Census Bureau)

In 2003 the Average Household Debt in America was \$17,283 and the Average Credit Card Debt was \$9,205 (Federal Reserve, Consumer Credit Historical Data; Census Bureau)

RISING COSTS AND SHRINKING INCOMES FOR MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILIES:

Increased Health Insurance Costs: In New Mexico, the total family premium for health insurance has increased by \$2,551 to \$8,773. (2000 MEPS Data from the Agency for Healthcare Quality Research projected forward using KFF National Premium Increase)

Increased Health Gasoline Costs: In New Mexico, households with teenagers are paying \$930 more per year for gasoline since George Bush took office. They now pay on average \$2,952 per year (Department of Energy, Household Vehicles Energy Consumption 1994, Table 5.2, August 1997)

Increased Tuition Costs: Since Bush has taken office, tuition in New Mexico has increased by \$614 at four-year public universities. (American Association of State Colleges and Universities; National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges; Based on College Board Tuition Increase)

Increased Child Care Costs: In 2000, a family with 2 children under age 5 in full-time daycare was spending \$10,860 on child care; by 2004 that figure increased to approximately \$12,900 (Census Bureau, Consumer Price Index, Analysis by Amelia Warren Tyagi)

Decreased Family Income: Since George Bush has taken office, family income in America has dropped by \$1,462. (US Census Bureau)

Lower Wages: In New Mexico, average wages in industries that are growing pay \$8,338 less than in industries that are contracting. (EPI, "Average Wages in Growing and Contracting Industries, End of Recession Through November 2003)

- ❖ **John Kerry will jumpstart Job Growth**
- ❖ **John Kerry will make America More Competitive**
- ❖ **John Kerry will invest in the Jobs of the Future**
- ❖ **John Kerry will cut Taxes to Lower Education Costs**
- ❖ **John Kerry will save Families up to \$1000 on Health Care**
- ❖ **John Kerry will bring Down Gas Prices**
- ❖ **John Kerry will stand Up Against Abusive Financial Institutions**
- ❖ **John Kerry will help Families Struggling with the High Costs of Raising Children**

JOHN KERRY ON MEDICARE

John Kerry believes we should allow Americans to save 33 to 80% on prescription drugs by negotiating prices with pharmaceutical companies, reimport more affordable safe prescriptions, and giving HHS the power to negotiate discounts on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries throughout the country. (johnkerry.com)

Bush's Broken Promises on Prescription Drugs

George W. Bush promised to give seniors more affordable prescription drugs, but broke that promise by signing legislation that rewarded industry profits rather than America's seniors. On Capitol Hill, FDA Commissioner Mark McClellan reiterated the Bush Administration's opposition to allowing seniors to buy more affordable prescription drugs from Canada. The Bush Medicare reform explicitly does not allow Medicare to negotiate better prices for prescription drugs, or allow seniors to buy prescriptions from Canada, or anywhere else. (johnkerry.com)

John Kerry will fight to allow Medicare to negotiate better prescription prices for seniors and will fight to pass reimportation so seniors can get safe quality affordable prescriptions. (johnkerry.com)

John Kerry will direct his HHS Secretary to Assure Medicare Gets Real Discounts in Every Part of the Country. Medicaid gets a set discount of about 20 percent and the Veterans program negotiates discounts of about 40 percent discounts on prescription drugs. Kerry will direct his Secretary of Health and Human Services to make sure that seniors get at least the 20% discount and Medicare isn't paying more for prescriptions than the private sector in any region of the country. (johnkerry.com)

The BUSH Medicare Bill also takes away Choice and Rights that Seniors now enjoy! (johnkerry.com)

BUSH : TAKES AWAY DRUG COVERAGE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE IT: Experts believe that the Medicare bill will cause more than two million employees to lose retiree-based prescription drug coverage. It also takes away low-income protections from some beneficiaries and explicitly does not allow seniors to buy Medigap plans to help cover costs. *It will force all those people to buy expensive non-negotiated drugs through Bush's sole-source Medicare program! (johnkerry.com)*

BUSH : FORCES SENIORS INTO HMOS: Under the Republican reform bill, a senior could be forced in an HMO because they cannot afford the excessive premiums charged by the private plan monopoly. (johnkerry.com)

The Medicare Bill was passed by deception. Congressional Democrats and Republicans didn't want to vote for a bill that would cost over \$400 billion. Now the Bush Administration has had to admit that it silenced William Foster, the CBO actuary who estimated it would cost at least \$530 billion. Now, even Trent Lott (R.-MS.) has said (Davis/Wegner, Congress Daily, 1/30) that the revelations confirm his "concerns that it was going to be way more expensive than we were told last year. The bad news is that I don't think this is going to be the end of it. I think it's going to be more." He ventured a guess that it could end up closer to \$600 or \$800 billion. **All because of a legislative prohibition on negotiating price with the pharmaceutical industry!** (kaisernetwork.org)

THE MEDICARE INDEX by Sherrod Brown and Stephen Doyle (<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/28>)

"Here are some key details omitted from President Bush's speech [January 2004 State of the Union address]:

- Estimated increase in drug industry profits: **\$139 billion**
- Drug industry political contributions to Republicans **\$21.7 million** (74%) to Democrats (2002) **\$7.6 million** (26%)
- Average markup on United States drug prices relative to Canadian drug prices: **45 percent**
- Additional payments from government to insurance industry to participate in Medicare: **\$14.2 billion**
- Insurance industry political contributions to Republicans **\$24.9 million** (69%) to Democrats (2002) **\$11.7 million** (31%)
- Medicare administrative costs: **2 percent** Average administrative costs of H.M.O.s: **15 percent**
- Compensation package, including stock options, for the chief exec of one Medicare H.M.O. (2002) **\$529 million**

John Kerry's Compact with the Greatest Generation

Priorities

Protect Medicare and Social Security

- ***John Kerry will never balance the budget on the backs of America's seniors*** Many politicians have supported major cuts that cause premium increases and cutbacks in benefits. John Kerry won't.
- ***Quality Care in All Parts of the Country – Rural and Urban*** Medicare has different policies that are sometimes unfair to parts of the area. Kerry will make sure that seniors get quality care no matter where you live.
- ***Won't Force Seniors into an HMO*** Many politicians have plans to push seniors into HMOs to get prescription drugs or affordable premiums. John Kerry will assure that seniors can pick the health care that's right for them.

Affordable Prescription Drugs

- ***Cutting Cost of Prescription Drugs*** Prescription drug costs are increasing at almost 20 percent which is gouging seniors and making health care more expensive, at the same time pharmaceutical companies are paying executives millions. Kerry has a plan to cut the greed out of prescriptions drugs to make them more affordable.
- ***A Real Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit*** Many politicians have a prescription drug plan to benefit pharmaceutical companies not seniors. John Kerry supports a real meaningful affordable drug benefit that:
 - Doesn't force seniors into HMOs
 - Is run by Medicare – not private insurance companies who can charge seniors whatever they want.
 - Doesn't undermine drug coverage that seniors have today.
 - A real benefit available to every senior that helps those with average costs and those with the highest drug costs.

Quality Options for Seniors with Long-Term Care Needs

- ***Assure Quality Nursing Homes Care*** Assure that seniors who live in nursing homes receive quality care, with adequate inspections, reimbursements, and more training for health care workers.
- ***Protect Medicaid Support*** Protect Medicare support from politicians who want to block grant this program that helps one out of two seniors in nursing homes.
- ***Give Seniors More Options*** Allow Medicaid to pay for more alternative care outside of nursing homes to allow more Americans to age in their own homes.
- ***Support Caregivers*** Support caregivers (both paid and unpaid, formal and informal) who provide the bulk of the support for those with long-term care needs.

Ask America's Greatest Generation to Help the Next

- ***100,000 Older Americans in Service*** For 10 hours of service a week, members will earn up to \$2,000 a year tax free that they can apply to an education grant for a grandchild or other family member, another young person.
- ***Older Americans in Our Schools*** When seniors spend time tutoring, they free up over-strained teachers to teach, and children get extra help learning.
- ***Seniors Helping Each Other*** Members will be able to offer seniors support to live independently by helping them pick up their prescriptions or checking in on them to make sure they are doing alright.

(SOURCE: <http://www.johnkerry.com>)

John Kerry Will Fight for America's Veterans

"When I was in Vietnam I learned a lot about the promises that soldiers make to each other. The Marines have a promise to never leave behind their dead. In this country, as citizen soldiers, we need to make the commitment to each other that we will never leave our veterans behind." - John Kerry

Priorities

John Kerry will deliver the health care and prescription drugs that veterans need. He will grant full concurrent receipt to disabled veterans and fairly compensate soldiers and their families for their valiant service. For John Kerry, this is about keeping America's promise. It is about national obligation. And it is about love of country and the help and honor we owe to those who defend it.

John Kerry will Provide Mandatory Funding of Veterans Health Care. He will end the game of playing politics with funding for veterans health care. He will insist on mandatory funding for veterans health care. In a Kerry Administration, veterans will get the appointments they need with VA doctors and the federal government will invest the resources necessary to make sure that no veteran has an unmet health care need.

By the Bush Administration's own estimate, their policies will exclude approximately 500,000 veterans from the VA healthcare system by 2005. Bush also proposed increasing fees and co-payments in an effort to shift the burden for care onto the backs of veterans and drive an additional million veterans from the system. Bush has frozen whole classes out of the VA system.

John Kerry Will Grant Full Concurrent Receipt to Disabled Military Retirees. John Kerry believes military retirees who have a service-connected disability should receive both military retired pay and disability compensation. Currently, military retirees are required to pay for their own disabilities because every dollar in VA disability compensation they receive is deducted from their military retirement pay. No other category of federal employee is subject to this kind of unfairness and it must stop. Yet the Bush administration has turned its back on veterans. John Kerry believes there are plenty of places to cut back in government – but disabled vets are not one of them. As president, he will provide full concurrent receipt.

John Kerry Will Make the Veterans Administration Responsive. John Kerry will streamline the VA so that veterans hear back about their status and receive benefits they are eligible for in a timely manner, supporting legislation, appropriations, and other steps as needed so that such decisions are made promptly and fairly. Under George Bush, 280,000 veterans await their disability rating. In addition, some 108,000 other veterans are waiting to hear back on appeals of rating decisions.

John Kerry Will Properly Compensate Soldiers and Their Families for Their Service . John Kerry believes that we need to treat our troops and their families with respect, dignity, and fairness in what they are paid, where they live, and where their children go to school. We need to make sure our troops are paid enough so that we address problems of retention and enlistment – and we should improve active duty housing for soldiers and their families. And as someone who has helped lead the fight on Gulf War Illness, John Kerry knows we have to be much more aggressive on health screenings for troops. They are required by law and they need to be given. John Kerry will also bolster the Family Assistance Centers and Programs on every military base so that they can provide information and services to families of deployed, wounded, and killed service members.

John Kerry Will Support Members of the National Guard and Reservists. John Kerry understands the sacrifices made by our country's citizen soldiers. He has proposed providing penalty free withdrawals from individual retirement accounts to help guard and reserve families meet the unexpected expenses associated with deployments. John Kerry will provide help to small businesses through a tax credit to make difference in salary for a reservist called up to active duty.

John Kerry Will Ensure Military Reservists Have Health Care. He supports legislation to provide access to TRICARE for military reservists. This will improve the readiness of reservists called to active duty and provide for the care of their loved ones without the current disruptions that often occur when a reservist is called to active duty. For families that do not live near a TRICARE provider, have children or special medical needs, it may be impractical to use TRICARE provider. In these cases, Kerry supports allowing reservist families to keep their civilian insurance through paid for COBRA payments.

(SOURCE: <http://www.johnkerry.com>)

JOHN KERRY ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

John Kerry has an unparalleled record working on behalf of women in this country. As a prosecutor in Boston, he established one of the country's first offices to assist rape victims. One of his first statements in the Senate defended a woman's right to choose. He cosponsored and helped pass the Violence Against Women Act. He worked to expand the rights of women in the workplace and pass the Family and Medical Leave Act to help working parents balance work and family. As President, John Kerry will stand with women to guarantee that they have the ability to go as far as their talents can take them.

Priorities:

- ❖ Expand Economic Opportunity for Women As the top Democrat on the Senate Small Business Committee, John Kerry has been hailed as the Senate's leader on initiatives that assist women-owned businesses – beginning with the Boston Center for Women and Enterprise, a national model Kerry championed. He has been at the forefront of defending affirmative action, helping women-owned businesses in government contracting and making start-up and venture capital available to woman entrepreneurs. As a candidate, John Kerry has appointed women to the top tiers of his campaign, just as a Kerry Administration will have women of all colors and from all backgrounds in positions of authority across the federal government. And as President he will work to expand the number of women-owned businesses and eliminate the glass ceiling that has kept talented women out of the top positions in government and corporate America.
- ❖ Make It Easier To Balance Work And Family John Kerry cosponsored the original Family and Medical Leave Act, which has given millions of American workers the chance to take time off for the birth of a child or to care for a sick child or family member. John Kerry believes that we should not only protect Family and Medical Leave but should expand it to help more Americans balance the needs between work and family.
- ❖ Protect the Right to Choose John Kerry believes that women have the right to control their own bodies, their own lives, and their own destinies. He believes that the Constitution protects their right to choose and to make their own decisions in consultation with their doctor, their conscience, and their God. He will defend this right as President. He recently announced he will support only pro-choice judges to the Supreme Court. Kerry also believes that we should promote family planning and health plans should assure women contraceptive coverage.
- ❖ Close the Pay Gap Women still earn, on average, only 73 cents for every dollar earned by men. John Kerry believes that we must expand opportunities for women and work to make equal pay for equal work a reality not a slogan. He would start by improving enforcement and disclosure about payment practices.
- ❖ Fight Violent Crime Against Women John Kerry was an original cosponsor of the Violence Against Women Act, which has provided over \$1 billion for battered women's shelters, hotlines, and other crucial resources. The Violence Against Women Act also significantly strengthened federal law by including several new federal crimes and enhanced penalties for acts of domestic violence. John Kerry will take this commitment to the White House and support those working to help crime victims and put attackers behind bars.
- ❖ Open College Opportunities for Women For over 30 years, Title IX has helped open the doors of opportunity in education for millions of girls and young women. Title IX has enabled greater numbers of women and girls to participate in sports, receive scholarships, and obtain other important benefits that result from participating in sports. Despite this progress, the Bush Administration is considering many proposals to change Title IX that could undercut participation opportunities and scholarship dollars for women and girls, as well as other Title IX protections. John Kerry will defend Title IX and work to expand college opportunities for women.
- ❖ Protecting Women's Health John Kerry has worked to ensure women receive access to health care, and he has focused particular attention on breast cancer research and funding. Kerry was an original cosponsor of the Women's Health Equity Act, which ensures women of all ages receive information and access to the highest quality and most advanced health care. He has worked to require health plans to cover hospital stays for breast cancer treatment and to preserve and increase funding for breast and cervical cancer research. Kerry supports requiring insurance plans to cover contraception and he will continue to fight for a meaningful Patient's Bill of Rights, which would ensure women direct access to their OB/GYNs.

(SOURCE: <http://www.johnkerry.com>)

SOME SUGGESTED RESOURCES

³**John Kerry: Presidential Candidate**

A Call to Service: My Vision for a Better America is John Kerry's autobiography.

In *A Call to Service*, Kerry formally introduces himself to the nation. In a book rich with autobiographical details that explain the experiences behind the ideas, Kerry offers his vision for America. *(from the book description)*.

The New War: The Web of Crime That Threatens America's Security is also by John Kerry (written in 1998).

Kerry argues that there must be far more international cooperation in stopping crime, as criminals often operate outside the nation which they are devastating. This book shows clear evidence that Kerry was attuned to the international tentacles of terrorism and its links to organized crime. Given that he had earlier unraveled the BCCI banking scandal and the secret Iran-Contra network as a Senator, one can see a clear theme: Kerry has a prosecutor's nose for the behind-the-scenes networks that the US must go after to be successful in the war on terrorism. *(from a review on amazon.com)*

Tour of Duty: John Kerry and the Vietnam War by Douglas Brinkley

Covering more than four decades, *Tour of Duty* is the definitive account of John Kerry's journey from war to peace. Brinkley has drawn on extensive interviews with virtually everyone who knew Kerry well in Vietnam, including all the men still living who served under him. Kerry also entrusted to Brinkley his letters home from Vietnam and his voluminous "War Notes" -- journals, notebooks, and personal reminiscences written during and shortly after the war *(from the book description)*.

John F. Kerry: The Complete Biography by The Boston Globe Reporters Who Know Him Best

This is the work of those members of the press who have followed Kerry for most of his career, know him inside and out, and continue to maintain neutrality as members of the press. While Kerry's approved biography paints him as a hero, it is expected. The pleasant part about this book is that even through the warts, this guy really is the real deal. *(from a review on amazon.com)*

The Candidate: Behind John Kerry's Remarkable Run for the White House will be released in July of 2004.

'2004 Democratic Presidential Candidates: Senator John Kerry - Public Papers, Speeches, Work in Congress, Senate Roll Call Votes (101st to 108th)' is a CD-ROM of 25581 pages.

Kerry's Opponent: Bush - Recommended Reading

House of Bush, House of Saud: The Secret Relationship Between the World's Two Most Powerful

Dynasties by Craig Unger

Investigative journalist Unger pieces together the highly unusual and close personal and financial relationships between the Bush family and the ruling family of Saudi Arabia—and questions the implications for Bush's preparedness, or possible lack thereof, for September 11. *(Publishers Weekly)*

American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune, and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush by Kevin Phillips

Phillips believes we are facing an ominous time: "As 2004 began, [a] Machiavellian moment was at hand. U.S. president George W. Bush... was a dynast whose family heritage included secrecy and calculated deception." *(Publishers Weekly)*

The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill by Ron Suskind

This is a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter's explosive account of the inner workings of the George W. Bush administration, the most secretive White House of modern times. *(Publishers Weekly)*

Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror by Richard A. Clarke

From the first thrilling chapter, which takes readers into the White House center of operations on September 11, through his final negative assessment of George W. Bush's post-9/11 war on terror, Clarke, the U.S.'s former terrorism czar, offers a complex and illuminating look into the successes and failures of the nation's security apparatus. *(Publishers Weekly)*

³ Materials have been extrapolated from reading lists on amazon.com

Worse Than Watergate: The Secret Presidency of George W. Bush by John Dean

makes a strong argument that the secrecy of what he dubs the "Bush-Cheney presidency" is "not merely unjustified and excessive but obsessive," and consequently "frighteningly dangerous."
(*Publishers Weekly*)

Plan of Attack by Bob Woodward

Woodward delivers an engrossing blow-by-blow of the run-up to war in Iraq. In November 2001, just months after September 11, Woodward reports, Bush pulled aside defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld and asked him to secretly begin updating war plans for Iraq. (*Publishers Weekly*)

The Great Unraveling: Losing Our Way in the New Century by Paul Krugman

Krugman document his opposition to the governance of George W. Bush and his "bad economics wrapped in the flag" (*Publishers Weekly*)

AND MORE READING ON GWB. . .

'Stop Bush in 2004 : How Every Citizen Can Help'

'Weapons of Mass Deception: The Uses of Propaganda in Bush's War on Iraq'

'Big Bush Lies: The 20 Most Telling Lies of President George W. Bush'

'The Five Biggest Lies Bush Told Us About Iraq'

'The Lies of George W. Bush: Mastering the Politics of Deception'

'Big Lies: The Right-Wing Propaganda Machine and How It Distorts the Truth'

'Fraud: The Strategy Behind the Bush Lies and Why the Media Didn't Tell You'

'W: Revenge of the Bush Dynasty'

WEBSITES:

<http://www.johnkerry.com> (the Candidate's site)

<http://www.issues2002.org> (provides voting records of legislators)

<http://www.factcheck.org> (non-partisan site sponsored by the Annenberg Foundation regarding Bush & Kerry ads)

<http://www.moveon.org> (non-partisan but definitely progressive organization for change)

<http://www.americacomingtogether.org> (another non-partisan, progressive organization engaged in major voter registration and education drive)

<http://www.presidentmatch.com> (provides comparison of Kerry v. Bush)

<http://www.lcv.org> (League of Conservation Voters on environmental records)

<http://www.punkvoter.com> (another comparison site)

<http://www.bushgreenwatch.org/> (The name says it all.)

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/>

<http://www.observer.com/pages/story.asp?ID=9227> (in-depth review of Fahrenheit 9/11 with lots of the facts)

<http://www.misleader.org> (a project of MoveOn.org, provides "A daily chronicle of Bush Administration distortions)

DAILY READING The following are free online:

<http://www.abqtrib.com>

<http://www.csmonitor.com>

<http://latimes.com>

<http://www.nytimes.com> (requires a free log-in)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com> (requires a free log-in)

