

Memo

To: Disabled American Veterans
From: John Russonello and Christina Lien
Re: Findings from Veterans Health Care Funding omnibus
Date: August 29, 2008

Americans believe that providing medical care to injured, sick and disabled veterans should be near the top of our nation's priorities, and three-quarters of the public think the federal government is not doing enough to support military veterans.

A large majority of the public favors a proposal to prevent funding delays of veterans' health care programs and five in ten say that they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supported this change in funding.

Two other proposals, one to increase funding for screening and treatment of traumatic brain injury and mental health issues for soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and another to extend financial benefits to caregivers of severely disabled veterans, attract support from large majorities of Americans.

These are among the key findings of a nationally representative telephone survey of 827 adults conducted by Belden Russonello & Stewart on an omnibus questionnaire for the Disabled American Veterans between August 20 and August 24, 2008. The margin of sampling error for a sample of this size is ± 3.4 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

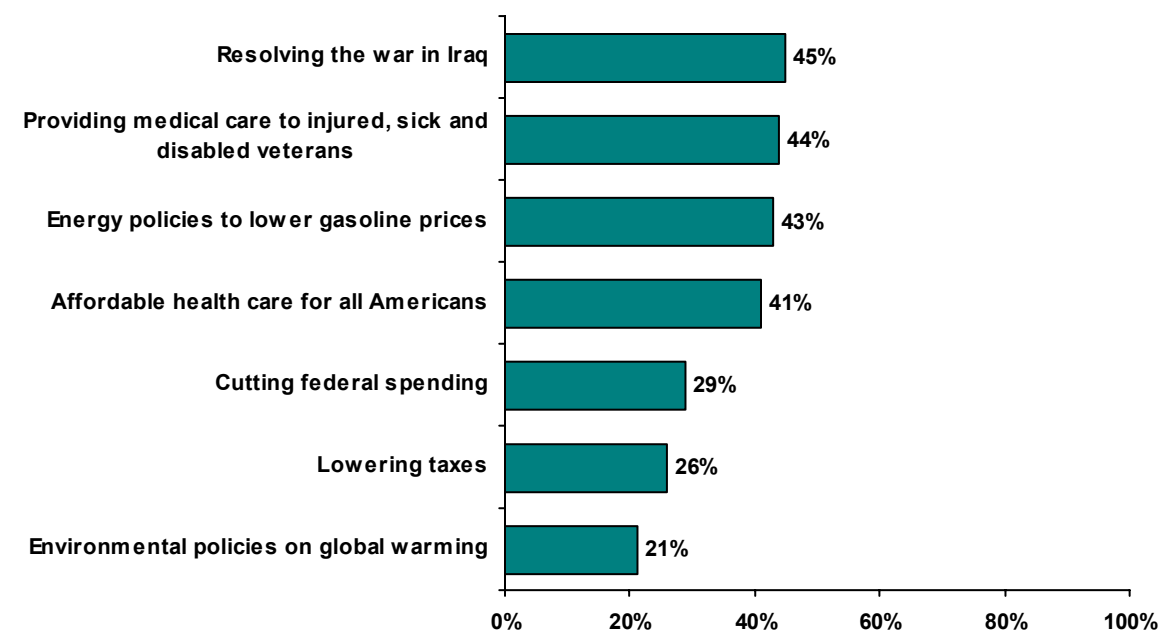
Key Findings

1. Americans prioritize caring for disabled veterans highly, in line with resolving war in Iraq and lowering gas prices

Over four in ten Americans (44%) say that providing medical care to injured, sick, and disabled veterans should be a “top priority” for the next President and Congress. Similar numbers highly prioritize resolving the war in Iraq (45%) and energy policies to lower gasoline prices (43%). Slightly fewer (41%) believe affordable health care for all Americans is a top priority, and fewer than three in ten highly prioritize cutting federal spending (29%), lowering taxes (26%), or environmental policies on global warming (21%).

Issue Priorities

% saying “top priority”



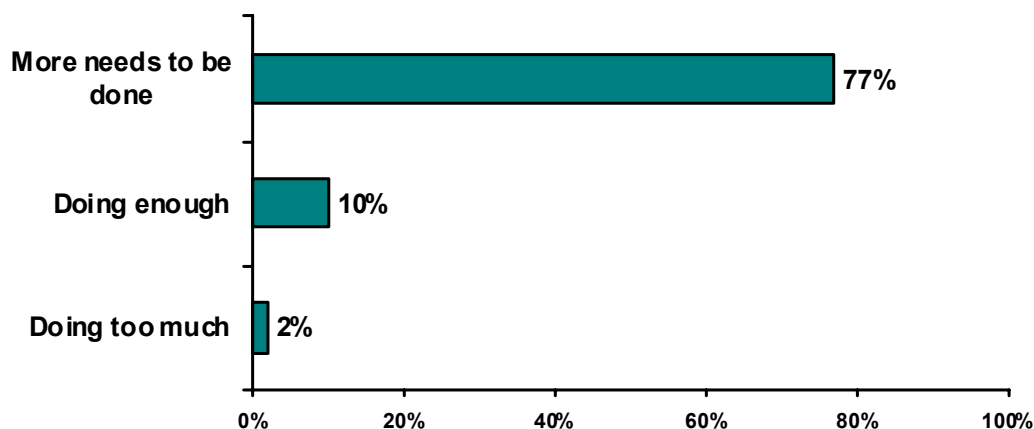
For each of the following issues facing the next President and Congress, how high a priority should each of the following issues be: a top priority, high, middle, low, not a priority at all.

2. More needs to be done to support military veterans

Three-quarters of Americans (77%) believe that the federal government needs to do more to support military veterans. One in ten (10%) says that the government is doing enough and just 2% say that too much is done for veterans.

Large majorities of all subgroups agree that more needs to be done to support military veterans; however, there are some differences between political parties and age groups. Middle-aged Americans are more likely to say that more needs to be done (45-54, 84%; 55-64, 88%) to support veterans. Republicans are more likely than others to say that enough is being done (20%).

Federal Government's Support for Military Veterans



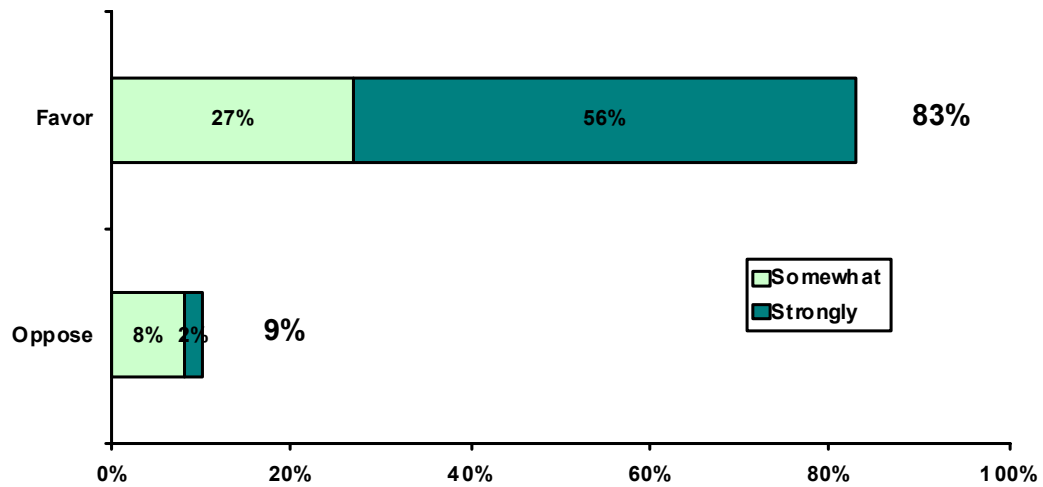
Q8. Do you think that the federal government today is doing enough to support military veterans, are they doing too much or do you think more needs to be done to support military veterans?

3. Most Americans favor advanced funding for veterans' health care and would be more likely to vote for politicians who do too

More than eight in ten Americans (83%) favor requiring Congress to determine the budget for veterans' health care one year in advance to prevent delays. Over half (56%) "strongly" favor the proposal. Just nine percent oppose changing the way health care programs for veterans are funded (2% strongly oppose).

Political independents are more likely than others to support the change in funding (91%), as are middle-aged Americans (45-54, 91%; 55-64, 88%), and those who are highly educated (college graduates, 90%; post grads, 88%).

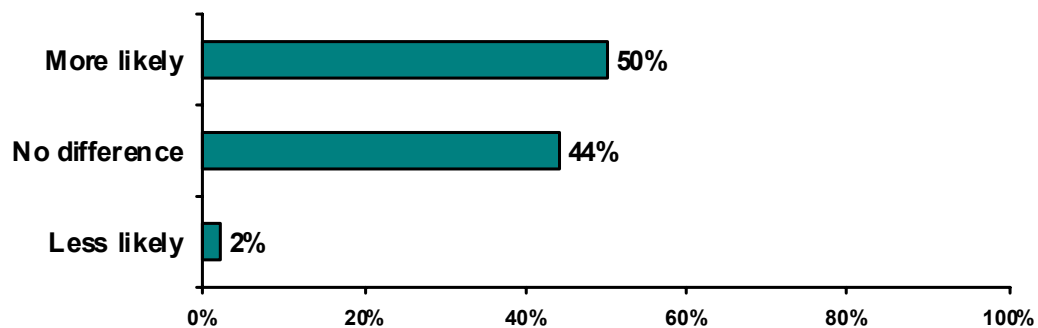
Support for Advanced Funding



Q9. Each year Congress determines funding for veterans' health care programs. Congressional approval is often late, causing delays in funding these programs. To prevent delays would you favor or oppose a proposal requiring Congress to determine funding for veterans' health care programs one year in advance? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

Half of Americans (50%) say that they will be more likely to vote for a Senator or representative in Congress who supports changing the way veterans' health care programs are funded. Over one-quarter (27%) would be "much" more likely. Four in ten (44%) say it would make no difference and just 2% say that support for reforming the funding process would make them less likely to vote for a candidate.

Impact of Support for Advanced Funding on Vote



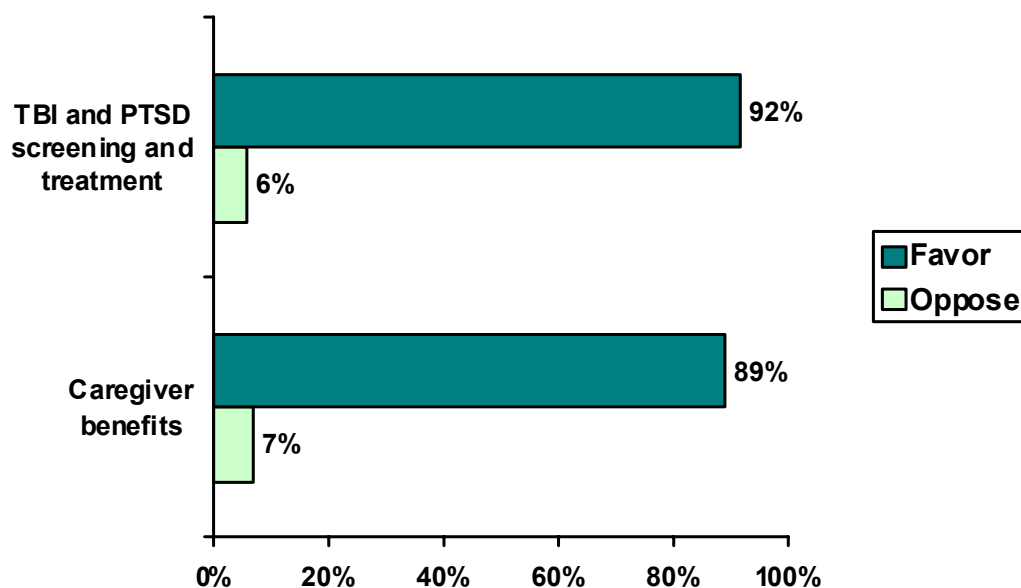
Q10. If your representative in Congress or Senator supported guaranteeing funding levels for veterans health care one year in advance, would you be more likely or less likely to vote for him or her, or would it make no difference to you? Would that be much (more/less) likely or somewhat?

4. Large majorities support other proposals extending benefits and treatment for veterans

A recent front-page article in the *New York Times* details the serious health implications for soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with undiagnosed and untreated brain injuries. This survey shows unequivocally that Americans want the government to take action now to address this problem. More than nine in ten Americans (92%) say that Congress should take action this year to increase funding for the diagnosis and treatment of traumatic brain injury and mental health issues such as post traumatic stress disorder. Just 6% oppose Congress taking action.

Americans are also strongly supportive of extending VA benefits such as tuition support, job training, and employment assistance to the caregivers of severely disabled veterans. Nine in ten Americans (89%) favor extending these benefits to help these caregivers financially support the veteran in their family. Just 7% oppose the proposal.

Support for Caregiver and Traumatic Brain Injury Proposals



Q12. It is estimated that as many as 400,000 veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan have suffered mild traumatic brain injuries or mental health problems such as post traumatic stress disorder resulting from their service. Would you favor or oppose Congress taking action this year to increase funding specifically for the diagnosis and treatment of these conditions?

Q11. Most family caregivers of severely disabled veterans currently do not receive any financial assistance from the VA to help them care for the disabled veteran in their family. Would you favor or oppose giving family caregivers VA benefits such as tuition support, job training and employment assistance to help them provide for the veteran in their family?

Crosstab Tables

The following tables show the survey results by several demographic subgroups including registered voters, gender, age, party identification, and military veterans. In reading these data, when the percent sign (%) appears at the top of a column, the numbers add vertically; when % appears at the left of a row, the numbers add horizontally. An asterisk (*) indicates less than 1%; a double hyphen (--) indicates zero. Due to weighting, rounding, omission of "don't know," "refuse," or other responses, percentages may add to more or less than 100%.

Issue Priorities

For each of the following issues facing the next President and Congress, how high a priority should each of the following issues be: a top priority, high, middle, low, not a priority at all. Q6. Resolving the war in Iraq Q3. Providing medical care to injured, sick and disabled veterans Q1. Energy policies to lower gasoline prices Q4. Affordable health care for all Americans Q7. Cutting federal spending Q5. Lowering taxes Q2. Environmental policies on global warming

	Iraq	Veterans	Gas prices	Health care	Cut spending	Lower taxes	Global warming
Total	45%	44%	43%	41%	29%	26%	21%
Registered voters	46%	45%	43%	42%	31%	26%	21%
Men	44%	44%	43%	35%	27%	24%	20%
Women	46%	44%	43%	47%	30%	28%	23%
Republicans	36%	38%	45%	25%	33%	26%	6%
Democrats	53%	46%	42%	53%	27%	26%	32%
Independents	42%	44%	42%	40%	29%	24%	20%
18-34	40%	34%	29%	32%	17%	20%	18%
35-44	45%	43%	51%	50%	26%	22%	18%
45-54	49%	51%	53%	53%	36%	37%	21%
55-64	55%	46%	53%	43%	38%	28%	30%
65+	40%	53%	40%	34%	35%	28%	21%
Military veterans	41%	44%	41%	33%	28%	26%	19%

Federal Government's Support for Military Veterans

Q8. Do you think that the federal government today is doing enough to support military veterans, are they doing too much or do you think more needs to be done to support military veterans?

	Doing enough	Too much	More needs to be done	DK/REF
Total	10%	2	77	11
Registered voters	9%	2	80	8
Men	9%	1	75	14
Women	10%	2	79	9
Republicans	20%	--	64	17
Democrats	6%	3	82	10
Independents	9%	1	83	7
18-34	9%	4	69	18
35-44	10%	1	76	13
45-54	8%	--	84	8
55-64	8%	--	88	5
65+	16%	1	77	6
Military veterans	9%	--	87	4

Support for Advanced Funding

Q9. Each year Congress determines funding for veterans' health care programs. Congressional approval is often late, causing delays in funding these programs. To prevent delays would you favor or oppose a proposal requiring Congress to determine funding for veterans' health care programs one year in advance? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	Favor (net)	Oppose (net)	Favor strongly	Favor somewhat	Oppose somewhat	Oppose strongly	DK/REF
Total	83%	9	56%	27	8	2	8
Registered voters	86%	8	61%	25	6	2	6
Men	81%	11	55%	26	7	3	9
Women	85%	8	57%	27	8	*	7
Republicans	80%	13	57%	23	12	1	7
Democrats	79%	11	57%	23	8	3	10
Independents	91%	7	54%	37	5	1	2
18-34	78%	16	44%	34	14	2	6
35-44	81%	9	56%	25	6	3	10
45-54	91%	5	66%	25	3	2	3
55-64	88%	6	67%	21	5	1	5
65+	78%	6	57%	22	5	1	16
Military veterans	92%	4	69%	23	2	2	4

Impact of Support for Advanced Funding on Vote

Q10. If your representative in Congress or Senator supported guaranteeing funding levels for veterans health care one year in advance, would you be more likely or less likely to vote for him or her, or would it make no difference to you?

	More likely	Less likely	No difference	DK/REF
Total	50%	2	44	5
Registered voters	52%	2	41	4
Men	48%	2	47	4
Women	52%	2	41	5
Republicans	50%	1	45	4
Democrats	49%	3	42	7
Independents	50%	2	46	2
18-34	40%	3	53	4
35-44	43%	1	51	5
45-54	60%	2	35	3
55-64	63%	3	29	4
65+	52%	2	39	7
Military veterans	67%	2	29	2

Support for Increased Funding for TBI and PTSD

Q12. It is estimated that as many as 400,000 veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan have suffered mild traumatic brain injuries or mental health problems such as post traumatic stress disorder resulting from their service. Would you favor or oppose Congress taking action this year to increase funding specifically for the diagnosis and treatment of these conditions?

	Favor	Oppose	DK/REF
Total	92%	6	2
Registered voters	95%	4	2
Men	90%	9	1
Women	94%	4	2
Republicans	85%	12	3
Democrats	97%	3	*
Independents	91%	7	2
18-34	89%	11	--
35-44	95%	4	1
45-54	93%	5	2
55-64	93%	4	3
65+	93%	3	4
Military veterans	94%	5	2

Support for Extending Financial Benefits to Caregivers

Q11. Most family caregivers of severely disabled veterans currently do not receive any financial assistance from the VA to help them care for the disabled veteran in their family. Would you favor or oppose giving family caregivers VA benefits such as tuition support, job training and employment assistance to help them provide for the veteran in their family?

	Favor	Oppose	DK/REF
Total	89%	7	4
Registered voters	88%	7	5
Men	86%	9	5
Women	91%	5	3
Republicans	84%	13	3
Democrats	92%	4	4
Independents	88%	7	4
18-34	90%	6	4
35-44	88%	10	2
45-54	86%	10	3
55-64	91%	5	5
65+	86%	6	7
Military veterans	91%	5	4

DAV - Funding for Veterans' Health Care Programs

Interviewing conducted August 20-24, 2008.

N = 827 general population adults nationally

Margin of sampling error is ± 3.4 percentage points.

Data are weighted for selection probability and on several key demographics to match the U.S. population as a whole.

Percents may add to 99% or 101% due to rounding.

* indicates less than 1% , -- indicates zero.

For each of the following issues facing the next President and Congress, how high a priority should each of the following issues be: a top priority, high, middle, low, not a priority at all.

	Top priority	High	Middle	Low	Not a priority at all	DK/REF
1. Energy policies to lower gasoline prices	43%	39	13	2	1	1
2. Environmental policies on global warming	21%	34	25	10	9	2
3. Providing medical care to injured, sick and disabled veterans	44%	46	8	1	1	1
4. Affordable health care for all Americans	41%	36	13	5	3	2
5. Lowering taxes	26%	34	27	6	5	3
6. Resolving the war in Iraq	45%	35	14	3	2	1
7. Cutting federal spending	29%	38	23	4	3	4

8. Do you think that the federal government today is doing enough to support military veterans, are they doing too much or do you think more needs to be done to support military veterans?	Doing enough Too much More needs to be done DK/REF	10% 2 77 11
---	---	----------------------

9. Each year Congress determines funding for veterans' health care programs. Congressional approval is often late, causing delays in funding these programs. To prevent delays would you favor or oppose a proposal requiring Congress to determine funding for veterans' health care programs one year in advance? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?	Net Favor Net Oppose Strongly favor Somewhat favor Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose DK/REF	83% 9 56% 27 8 2 8
--	---	--------------------------------------

10. If your representative in Congress or Senator supported guaranteeing funding levels for veterans health care one year in advance, would you be more likely or less likely to vote for him or her, or would it make no difference to you? Would that be much (more/less) likely or somewhat?	Net more Net less Much more Somewhat more No difference Somewhat less Much less DK/REF	50% 2 27% 23 44 1 1 5
---	---	--

11. Most family caregivers of severely disabled veterans currently do not receive any financial assistance from the VA to help them care for the disabled veteran in their family. Would you favor or oppose giving family caregivers VA benefits such as tuition support, job training and employment assistance to help them provide for the veteran in their family?	Favor	89%
	Oppose	7
	DK/REF	4

12. It is estimated that as many as 400,000 veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan have suffered mild traumatic brain injuries or mental health problems such as post traumatic stress disorder resulting from their service. Would you favor or oppose Congress taking action this year to increase funding specifically for the diagnosis and treatment of these conditions?	Favor	92%
	Oppose	6
	DK/REF	2

13. Are you or is anyone in your household a military veteran?	Yes, respondent	15%
	Yes, household member	16
	No	69
	DK/REF	*
