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McCaul Asleep at the Switch for Veterans : by Ted Ankrum

Just as Representative McCaul was [asleep at the switch when it came to preserving thousands of Jobs at the BAE](#) Sealy, Texas military truck plant, he was asleep again when it was time to stand up for the wounded warriors in his District. In 2004, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs announced that there would be 5 VA outpatient Clinics to augment the Michael E. DeBakey VA Hospital in Houston. The clinics were to be in Galveston, Texas City, Conroe, Katy, and Tomball. The latter two are in Mr. McCaul's Congressional District 10. Any veteran in the Houston area knows how overcrowded the VA Hospital is, with almost a year-long wait for an initial appointment. These outpatient clinics are intended to move routine care out of the Hospital and closer to the veteran, so that the VA Hospital can concentrate on specialty care and to reduce the hours of travel time many veterans must spend to get to the central Houston location of the VA Hospital.

The first two of these outpatient clinics went into operation in 2005 in Galveston and Texas City. I made a campaign issue of the delay in getting the Katy and Tomball clinics in operation when I ran against Mr. McCaul in the 2006 election. The Conroe clinic was up and running in Rep. Kevin Brady's District in 2007, but still nothing of the two in Mr. McCaul's District. Finally, in 2010, it took Democratic Congressman Chet Edwards of Waco to put the Katy and Tomball clinics in the first two-year VA appropriation; an initiative he had long championed and was able to do with President Obama's support. The Secretary of Veteran's Affairs announced that these two clinics would be in operation in 2011. Thankfully, when Rep McCaul reported this announcement on his McCaul Minute website on Aug 3, he did not take any credit for helping make it occur.

This lack of concern for Veterans has been a pattern for Mr. McCaul. One County Texas Veterans Commission Counselor reported to me that Mr. McCaul had washed his hands of helping one veteran to clear his record, when he heard that drugs were involved. Has he not heard of PTSD? We made dueling Memorial Day speeches, [mine](#) in Caldwell and [his](#) in Brenham. In his report of his speech on his McCaul Minute website on June 1, he said he was "paying tribute to the brave men and women who have made the

ultimate sacrifice". What he did not mention was that just before Memorial Day, he voted NO to providing new mine resistant ambush protected combat vehicles, NO to new funding for countermeasures for roadside bombs, and NO to replacing the National Guard and Reserves equipment that had been sent to Iraq and Afghanistan (HR 5136).

In the eight counties of which Congressional District 10 is a part, the VA paid over 1.4 Billion dollars in disability compensation to our wounded warriors last year. This is just one indication of the contribution that the citizens of Texas make to our country's defense, and the sacrifices they, and I, made in that service. I will not say that Mr. McCaul's lack of support for those wounded warriors is due to his never having served, because I know of many people who do support the troops while never having served themselves.

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