

Senator John McCain  
241 Russell Senate Ofc. Bldg.  
United States Senate  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator McCain,

I am no longer one of your constituents, but I grew up in Arizona and had been proud to call you "my senator" long after I moved to California. I shook your hand in 1993 after my Mountain View High School team won second place in the National Academic Decathlon. I grew up next door to Corporal John Tyler, a Harrier test pilot who claimed to know you and always spoke of you with the highest praise. I was a supporter in your 2000 election campaign, and have been a Republican voter in all presidential elections until 2004. Even after leaving the Republican party I've admired your past stances on campaign finance reform and your reputation as a sensible moderate in a climate where ideologues dominate.

I am extremely disappointed in your "detainee legislation compromise" bill. I'll ignore the semantic argument about whether what we plan to do is "torture" and whether it benefits our national interests to publicly acknowledge our endorsement of these practices to ask one question. Do we care that we are interrogating the right people? Detainees - American or foreign, civilian or military - MUST have the right to challenge their detention in court and see the evidence against them. It is as much in our interest as theirs to know that we are interrogating the right people. Torturing the wrong people is a victory for the terrorists, who know that we're wasting our efforts on the wrong people even if we don't because we don't allow them to prove their innocence. You didn't just sign this essential right away – you voted against habeas by voting against Specter Amdt. No. 5087 which would have restored a prisoner's right to prove that we're holding and torturing the wrong man.

I'm incredibly concerned about President Bush's massive buildup of unchecked Presidential power. I am also quite concerned that someone would add so much unchecked power to an office that he aspires to hold. All powers, including Bush's present power and your future power, must be checked and balanced by fellow public servants. I can no longer support someone who not only fails to check those powers but certifies, endorses, and extends them. Your "interrogation compromise" is a disappointment in every way, even moreso that the responsible party is someone I considered my hero. If you cannot see the wisdom of supporting the right to habeas corpus which has been a mainstay of common law in the western world since 1679 I will support candidates who do, such as Hillary Clinton who co-sponsored the habeas-restoring Amendment 5087 that you voted against.

Respectfully,