

# Connecticut Democrat dismisses furor over lie

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WEST HARTFORD, Conn. — Senate candidate Richard Blumenthal on Tuesday said he had "misspoken" in claiming more than once that he served in Vietnam, dismissing the furor that threatened to endanger a seemingly safe Democratic seat as a matter of "a



Richard Blumenthal

few misplaced words."

At a news conference backed by veterans, the popular Connecticut attorney general and front-runner to replace the retiring Sen. Christopher Dodd, said he meant to say he served "during Vietnam" instead of "in Vietnam." He said the statements were "totally unintentional" errors that occurred only a few times

out of hundreds of public appearances.

The campaign crisis erupted after The New York Times reported Monday that Blumenthal had distorted his military service. The story included quotes and a video of Blumenthal saying at a 2008 event that he had "served in Vietnam." It also cited several instances of media reports — apparently uncorrected by Blumenthal — that described him as a Vietnam veteran.

Blumenthal underwent six months in Marine boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., and served six years in the Marine Reserve, beginning in 1970, none of it overseas. Before that, Blumenthal got five deferments to avoid going to war between 1965 and 1970.

The controversy has raised Republican hopes of taking Dodd's seat and chipping away at Democrats' Senate majority.

## Drop out of Senate race

Richard Blumenthal is the Connecticut Democrat candidate for the U.S. Senate next November. However, a series of false statements and lies about having served in Vietnam as a Marine might be his downfall. He now admits that as Marine Reservist he never set foot in the jungles of Vietnam and that he was never spat upon when he returned because, in fact, he never left.

He has apologized to his constituents for his deception, but I suggest he save his apologies for a more deserving group of patriots. There is a memorial in Washington, D.C., known as "The Wall," Mr. Blumenthal. Sometime late at night take a walk around the wall and reflect on what you see and feel. Engraved into the cold black granite slabs you will find the names of 58,261 Vietnam War dead, including eight women. More than 25,000 of those killed were just 20 years old or younger, including one

15-year-old. There are 38 sets of brothers listed. More than 17,000 of those killed were married, meaning they left behind 17,000 young widows to suffer in lonely sadness with their children.

Ask yourself what kind of a person would pretend to have fought beside these fallen heroes for the shallow purpose of promoting your political career. Have you no shame?

In the quiet stillness of the night reflect on the heartbreak, memories, tears and patriotism surrounding you, including the more than 300,000 wounded. On your way home drive among the thousands of white crosses in Arlington National Cemetery. Perhaps then you will finally grasp the gravity of your fraud and the bitterness so many people feel toward you.

Show some respect for your country and the memory of those you have insulted through your deception. And drop out.

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