

Democratic Rep. John Murtha of Pa. Dead

Written by Barthélemy Barbancourt
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[*A spokesman says Democratic Rep. John Murtha of Pennsylvania, a retired Marine Corps officer who became an outspoken critic of the Iraq war, has died . He was 77.*](#)

He had been suffering complications from gallbladder surgery.

In 1974, Murtha became the first combat veteran of the Vietnam War elected to Congress. He wielded considerable clout for two decades as a leader of the House subcommittee that oversees Pentagon spending. But frustration over the Iraq war led him to call for an immediate pullout of U.S. troops in 2005.

Murtha's congressional career was clouded by questions about his ethics — from the Abscam corruption probe in 1980 to more recent investigations into the special-interest spending known as earmarks and the raising of cash for election campaigns.