

domestic violence a factor in issuing health, life and accident insurance. This is terribly wrong. Domestic violence is not a "preexisting condition" and it is not brought on by a victim's behavior. It is brought on by the batterer and he or she is the one who should be penalized, not the victim.

Health care plans should not exclude or limit the ability of domestic abuse survivors to acquire health insurance—nor should insurance plans apply "preexisting condition" exclusions to conditions that result from domestic violence.

While it is encouraging that some insurance companies are beginning to change their underwriting practice as they become educated about domestic violence, I believe that a national solution is needed. Women who have survived the violence and the brutal beatings of domestic violence need the assurance that no matter what state they reside in they and their children will not be denied coverage based on a prior domestic violence situation. A situation that was not in any way their fault.

Case after case can be cited in which insurance companies denied insurance benefits to a victim of abuse. For instance, a woman in California was repeatedly turned down for health insurance coverage following a review of medical records which detailed beatings by her husband. In Minnesota, a women's shelter was told that it was considered uninsurable because its employees are almost all survivors of domestic violence. In the state of Washington, a child was twice denied health insurance because he had been sexually abused in a day care facility and a woman in the same state had her homeowner's policy cancelled. The letter of cancellation noted five claims over the last twelve years, specifically the letter pointed out the most recent one involving "a domestic violence situation of individuals that are living with" the insured. The angry ex-wife of the woman's boyfriend's brother damaged the door.

I have introduced this legislation today because I believe that denying insurance to victims of abuse only compounds the victim's problematic circumstances. Again, domestic violence is a national problem, and we should not allow insurance companies to make matters worse for victims by excluding them from insurance coverage. I am confident that this legislation will give victims the assurance they need that their insurance policies will be there for them in their time of need.

CONGRATULATIONS MR. AND MRS. JOHN IZZO

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 1996

Mr. PAYNE of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor a very special couple, Frank and Ruth Izzo of Elizabeth, NJ. On June 8, Mr. and Mrs. Izzo will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

Frank Izzo served his country with distinction in Germany and France during World War II, as a member of the United States Army. Ruth Izzo worked for a pharmaceutical company for 13 years. The Izzos have two children, Marlene and Anthony. In the tradition of his father, Anthony dutifully served his country

in Vietnam and became a decorated veteran of that war. The Izzos have four grandchildren—Darla, Robert, Frank, and Christopher—from their daughter Marlene.

Mr. Speaker, it is my feeling that we can all look to this couple for inspiration. In a time when divorce rates are astoundingly high and society is suffering as a result of this, the Izzos show us that it is possible for married partners to work, raise children, and remain happily committed to each other. I would like to wish them many more years.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 1996

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, due to a commitment in my district, on Thursday, May 23, I was unable to cast my floor vote on rollcall Nos. 192 through 195.

As a strong supporter of a clean minimum wage increase, I would have voted as follows: "aye" on rollcall 192, "no" on rollcall 193, "no" on rollcall 194, and "aye" on rollcall 195.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. THELMA SCOTT NEWMAN

HON. FRANK TEJEDA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 1996

Mr. TEJEDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of Mrs. Thelma Scott Newman, who served our country and her community in ways too numerous to mention. Mrs. Newman passed into eternal rest on May 18, 1996, but she certainly will not be forgotten, neither by her family nor by the many whose lives she touched and enriched with her spirit and wisdom.

Mrs. Newman was born in rural Gonzales, TX, the first child of the late Jordan D. and Eliza Jones. I cannot mention Mrs. Newman's early life without remarking on the great obstacles that she and her fellow African-Americans faced and the struggles they undertook to overcome those barriers. But Mrs. Newman rose above obstacles and struggles and grew into a kind and loving woman who gave devotedly to her family, her country, and the community.

Mrs. Newman married Joseph A. Scott, Sr., and their union was blessed with a son, Mr. Joseph A. Scott, Jr. Additionally, she was blessed with two grandsons and two granddaughters, seven great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends. She was extremely proud of her family, and her love for them is evident today in their many achievements and successes.

Mrs. Newman was the kind of person whose strong faith and love of her fellow man urged her to go above and beyond the call of duty in giving back to the community. She became a nurse and in that capacity she worked for the Federal Government for 43 years and took up the cause of healing the sick and comforting the afflicted. And she had a special gift for communicating with young people. She always

had the time to listen to them and give them her encouragement to work hard and succeed. Her ability, her faith, and her gifts are measured today in the lives of many young people who spoke to her, listened to her, and went on to achieve great things.

Even her years of rest and retirement, Mrs. Scott always had time for what was most important to her: Her family, her church, and her community, especially the young people. She worshipped and shared fellowship with the minister and congregation of New Light Baptist Church. She was a leader in the deaconess board of the church and a past president of the tithing department of the Eastern District Association. She gave her time and her love to the ideal neighborhood guild, the Greater San Antonio workshop, the United Home Owners' Improvement Association, the T.E.L. Guild, and the Mother's Service Organization. In recognition of all that she did for her community, the Thelma Newman Circle was named in her honor.

It was my great privilege to know Mrs. Newman personally. I can say without hesitation and with all my heart that Mrs. Newman was a source of inspiration and light to all who knew her. Her faith and her courage were very great, and she always looked for ways to uplift the downtrodden and lead the community. She will be missed by all those who knew her, but her example will live on in our hearts as a great American who stood as a strong and powerful voice for faith and pride and the values of the community.

AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR FACILITY PROJECTS AND MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, FISCAL YEAR 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. KAREN L. THURMAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 1996

Mr. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the authorization of major facility projects and major medical facility leases for Department of Veterans Affairs, fiscal year 1997 (H.R. 3376).

Channeling funds to modernize and renovate existing VA medical facilities is good policy. Furthermore, I firmly believe that the VA should employ strategic planning tools when allocating resources to VA facilities. However, I must point out that, if Congress does not compel the VA to enact the plan outlined in this bill, it simply becomes another ineffectual study. The bill before us today does not go far enough. H.R. 3376 requires the VA to develop a 5-year strategic plan for its health care system without compelling them to enact it.

For years, the VA has studied the problem of resource allocation and, accordingly, developed the Resource Planning and Management [RPM] system. The aim of the RPM was to better allocate resources among its medical facilities across the country. The RPM system classifies each patient into a clinical care group, calculates average facility costs per patient, and forecasts future workload. While the aim of the 1994 measure was on target, the

results continue to be unsatisfactory. According to the GAO (March 19, 1996), " * * * although RPM lets VA identify inequities in resource distribution, VA has, so far, chosen not to use the system, to help ensure that resources are distributed more equitably."

In an April 13 interview with Florida Today, Department of Veterans Affairs Under Secretary for Health Kenneth Kizer admitted what the veterans in Florida, Georgia, Arizona, Nevada, North Carolina, Virginia, Washington, South Carolina, New Mexico, Hawaii, Alaska, New Hampshire, Colorado, Maine, and Vermont already know. In commenting about the current state of the VA health care system, Kizer observed, "Are resources equitably allocated in the VA now? The answer is no."

The facts speak for themselves. For example, between 1980 and 1990, my home State of Florida experienced an explosion of growth in its veterans population—a net increase of almost 350,000 veterans, or 96 veterans per day. In contrast, between 1985 and 1990, the VA's budget allocation in the southern region—which includes Florida—showed no increase.

Some States carry an unfair financial burden. While some may disagree about the cause of the veterans influx into various States, many agree, and the facts support, that some States shoulder the burden more than others. During debate of the fiscal year 1996 VA-HUD-independent agencies appropriations, Representative LEWIS of California also agreed and stated, in our colloquy on the House floor, that the committee "has long been concerned about the VA's resource methodology," and he recognized that there was an "uneven access to VA care."

In March, Senators GRAHAM and MCCAIN attempted to address this problem by offering an amendment to the fiscal year 1996 omnibus appropriations bill (H.R. 3019) which called for more equitable distribution of money based on where veterans live when they receive care. Unfortunately, this provision was stripped from H.R. 3019 in conference.

Requiring the VA to develop a plan to reallocate resources makes good sense—which is why I support H.R. 3376. Nevertheless, it does not go far enough. Congress needs to do more than ask for additional resource reallocation plans and, instead, compel the VA to implement those in which they have already invested. That is why on April 25 I introduced legislation (H.R. 3346) which would require the VA to develop a plan to link the allocation of its resources to facility workloads. This measure would require the VA to operate within the new 22 veterans integrated service networks [VISNs] and based on the RPM system—in which the VA has already invested a great deal of time and money. Moreover, H.R. 3346 would require the Secretary to implement the plan within 60 days of submitting it to Congress.

While the provisions in H.R. 3376 relating to resource allocation differ slightly from H.R. 3346, they are certainly a movement in the right direction. But, I urge Congress to go wholeheartedly in that direction and give our Nation's veterans the health care they deserve. Addressing the chronic under-funding and fiscal inequities which exists in veterans' health care should be one of our utmost responsibilities.

TRIBUTE TO LT. GEN. HOWARD D. GRAVES

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 1996

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, the retirement of Lt. Gen. Howard D. Graves, 54th Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point is announced with deep appreciation for and pride in his distinguished career of more than 35 years.

Lieutenant General Graves has concluded his career by making important contributions in the arena of strategic defense of the Nation as well as in the all-important area of developing military leaders for the next century. His outstanding leadership, his wisdom, his clear vision for the future, and his strength of character, all contributed to General Graves' exceptional impact on the American profession of arms. His creativity and enthusiasm supported an outstanding performance of duty throughout a career that reflects the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.

Commissioned a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers upon graduation from the Military Academy in 1961, he began a career that took him through numerous and challenging command, staff, and academic positions, culminating in his assignment as Superintendent of the Military Academy. Those assignments have included overseas tours of duty in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, and Germany; plus several tours of duty in Washington, DC. They have been among the most demanding positions in the U.S. Army, and his performance has been uniformly exceptional, representing the finest of the commissioned officer corps.

Selected as a Rhodes Scholar while at the Military Academy, General Graves earned a master of arts degree in international relations from St. Johns College, Oxford University in 1994. During his first active Army assignment, he commanded Company A, 307th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division in 1965 to 1966, for which he was cited for his professionalism and leadership during ground combat against an armed enemy in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. His successful command led to selection as operations officer and later Assistant Chief of Staff of the 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC, from 1966 to 1967.

General Graves was chosen to return to Oxford University in 1968, where he began work on a master of literature degree in modern history.

Subsequently, he was assigned as operations officer of the 8th Engineer Battalion (Airmobile), and later assistant division engineer, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in the Republic of Vietnam. While in that combat environment, General Graves was cited for his exemplary professionalism and initiative, and his professional competence and outstanding achievement. Subsequently, General Graves was selected to attend the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, and was next assigned to the faculty of the U.S. Military Academy from 1970 to 1973, working as associate professor, executive officer, and assistant professor of the Department of Social Sciences.

Demonstrating his extraordinary ability, General Graves was assigned to Washington,

DC., as Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense from June 1974 to November 1975. During that period he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and selected to command the 54th Engineer Battalion, V Corps, U.S. Army Europe from 1976 to 1978, earning praise for making that battalion the best in the 130th Engineer Brigade. Following battalion command, he attended the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, and continued serving as special assistant to the deputy commandant of the War College.

From February 1980 until June 1982, General Graves commanded the 20th Engineer Brigade, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC. Then, from July 1982 to July 1983, he served as assistant division commander (Support), 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS. In July 1983 he became Deputy Chief of Staff, Engineer, U.S. Army Forces Command, Fort McPherson, GA until July 1984.

Promoted to brigadier general, he was assigned to Washington, DC, in July 1984 in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, where he served as Deputy Director, Strategy, Plans and Policy Directorate, with additional duty as Assistant Army Operations Deputy, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Cited for his significant contributions on critical and sensitive issues of national security policy, national military strategy, and Army plans and policies, he demonstrated totally selfless service and his complete dedication.

General Graves' exceptional ability led to his selection as Vice Director of the Joint Staff, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, where he served from August 1986 to October 1987. He was promoted to major general and assigned as Commandant, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, in 1987. While there, he contributed to the Army and the Nation by initiating important improvements in the curriculum and by developing and mentoring the Army's senior leaders.

In July 1989, General Graves was promoted to lieutenant general and named Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In that position he was principal advisor to the chairman and served the Nation in the highest level diplomatic negotiations before, during, and after Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, working closely with the Secretary of State. He was recognized by all who worked with him for his loyalty, leadership, personal integrity, and professional competence.

As a result of a career of exceptional service to the Army and the Nation, he was selected to be Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, an assignment that has demanded gifted leadership, intellect, and character. With his guidance, the Military Academy staff continued to develop and improve its performance, while General Graves has been instrumental in influencing critical support from and promoting positive relationships with West Point's diverse constituencies, including Congressional and Department of Defense leadership, outside organizations, graduates and friends of the Academy, and parents of cadets. His success in achieving economies and efficiencies, particularly in moving forward the multimillion dollar revitalization projects so critical to the future of the facilities master plan, has helped to ensure the continuation of the Academy's role as the world's premier leader development institution. His energetic, personable, and cooperative approach has created a spirit of trust, reflecting