

is over 10 years, by the way. So we are making no dent whatsoever. It would not even cover the 3.8 million who lost coverage since President Bush came into office.

Furthermore, the CBO determined the President's associated health plan proposal would actually increase health care premiums for a majority of employees working in small firms and would cause about 10,000 individuals to lose their coverage. So the second element of the President's proposal, beyond the tax credit, is going to actually increase the uninsured and increase premiums. It is hard to see how that will be helpful in this overall health care crisis.

We could begin to address these difficult issues by acting on health care in the way that a number of people put forward and, most particularly, Senator KERRY has put forward. His plan would reduce health care costs for those with health insurance and expand coverage to 27 million Americans who currently lack it. Senator KERRY's commonsense proposal builds on existing successful health care programs such as SCHIP, State Children's Health Insurance Program; mandates coverage for all children; and provides incentives to States to expand coverage to uninsured adults. The Kerry plan would not only expand access to health coverage, it would reduce premiums by about 10 percent for those with insurance. He does this by making the Federal Government a secondary insurer, whenever an individual's health care costs exceed \$50,000 in a year. So it is a catastrophic backstop that the Federal Government takes up and covers 75 percent of those costs above that level. It would reduce costs by 10 percent for everybody who has insurance. It is a very simple but important concept to add to the expansion of coverage the Senator has talked about.

We can provide coverage to more than half of those currently uninsured through these steps. I think we must take those programs and even expand them to make sure everybody has coverage. Expanding health coverage is not cheap, but the cost of refusing to expand access to health insurance is enormous as well, and it affects every one of us. We all pay more for health care because hospitals and other providers are forced to increase prices to compensate for those without coverage who use the services. They are mandated to do that at hospitals. We all pay higher State and local taxes to compensate providers who provide precare to those without coverage. We all know that. Emergency rooms, charity care—all of those places where we build up these costs. It is important that we understand the cost-benefit of actually having health insurance programs that work to take care of that and to eliminate some of those costs.

According to the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, we spent \$41 billion in this Nation last year for uncompensated care for the

uninsured. We hear about it from our hospitals, local providers. They give out care, and the total is \$41 billion, according to the Kaiser Commission. The annual cost, by the way, of that program I just talked about with the Kerry proposal is \$35 billion. So you have a cost-benefit tradeoff. If you could take care of the uninsured, you could take a big bite out of that \$41 billion of uncompensated care. We would have to spend the money. Some folks would say we don't have the budget room. We don't have the budget room to pay for the \$41 billion that we have. I think we can make major inroads if we work on it.

There are savings to be had if we are prepared to do it. I think making sure that we move on to preventive care, in conjunction with health care access, will make a huge difference in making sure that people deal with diabetes before it is chronic and critical, deal with hypertension before it is chronic and critical. All of these things will make a huge difference. People will deal with these in the normal course of preventive care as opposed to emergency or critical or chronic problems.

Madam President, there is a lot to be dealt with on this topic of access to health care in this country. We need to have that debate. Senator KERRY has laid down an incredibly important proposal—one that is self-financed by the costs that it would defray from the unreimbursed costs going through the system. We need to address these 44 million Americans and address the pressure that middle-class, moderate Americans are feeling every day as they see this 13-percent increase in health care.

I hope we can have a real debate on this floor so that we can move forward to take care of those 44 million uninsured and not have proposals that are dead on arrival, that have no real impact, maybe addressing 2 million of the 44 million and not even dealing with the numbers that are increasing. As we sit here and talk about it today, 3.8 million new Americans have gone on to the uninsured rolls since this administration has been in office. We need to address that problem and the other 40 million that are without health insurance. There are proposals that make sense. It is time to address it. I hope we can have that debate.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, how much time do we have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 17 minutes remaining on your side.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I come to the floor, first of all, to thank my colleagues for pointing out what is happening in every State in America today. People are struggling to get health care. My mother used to say, "If you have your health, you have everything." I thought, as a child, what does she mean? Now, as I get older, I realize she is right because when your family gets stricken with a disease, with a problem that makes them hurt and un-

productive, your world really falls apart.

So, clearly, health care is a very big issue as we go into this election season. It should be a big issue every day here. We don't see the majority bringing up any kind of legislation to make life easier for people, in terms of their health care. We cannot even get enough votes to extend unemployment compensation for people who have been unemployed. So it is something for the people of America to think about.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, since the war in Iraq, I have been coming to the floor to pay tribute to fallen soldiers, heroes from my State. Today, I do that. Unfortunately, there are well over a hundred gone in our State. Today, I want to pay tribute to the 10 young Americans killed since April 26. All of them are either from California or based in California.

SSG Abraham D. Penamedina, age 32, died April 27 when his patrol came under sniper fire in Baghdad. He was from Los Angeles.

LCpl Aaron Austin, age 21, died April 26, due to hostile fire in Al Anbar Province. He was assigned to Camp Pendleton.

SGT Adam Estep, age 23, died April 21, when a rocket-propelled grenade hit his patrol in Baghdad. He was from Campbell, CA.

SPC James Beckstrand, age 27, was from Escondido, CA. He died in Baghdad while part of a dismounted improvised explosive device sweep patrol when a vehicle approached his unit and the driver detonated a bomb.

SPC Trevor Wine, age 22, died May 1, from injuries sustained on April 30, when his convoy vehicle hit an improvised explosive device in Tikrit. He was from Orange, CA.

SPC Ramon Ojeda, age 22, died May 1, when his convoy was attacked in Al Amarah. He was from Ramona, CA.

PFC Lyndon Marcus, Jr., age 21, was from Long Beach, CA. He died May 3, in Balad, Iraq, when his military vehicle rolled over into a canal.

SGT Marvin Sprayberry III, age 21, died May 3, in Balad, Iraq, when his military vehicle rolled over into a canal. He was from Tehachapi, CA.

Cpl Jeffrey Green, age 20, was assigned to Camp Pendleton, CA. He was found deceased on May 5, in the Euphrates River in Al Anbar Province. The cause of his death is under investigation.

Cpl Dustin Schrage, age 20, was found deceased on May 6, in Al Anbar Province. The cause of his death is under investigation. He was from Camp Pendleton, CA.

Madam President, 172 soldiers, who were either from California or based in California, have been killed by serving their country in Iraq. I pray for these young Americans. I pray for their families. I pray for their friends.

My heart goes out to all of our soldiers, to all of them. It is because of

my love for them and the country's love for them as they face danger at every turn that I call on this administration to finally get a doable, believable, well-thought-out plan and exit strategy for our troops.

From day 1, we really scorned the international community. The coalition the President talks about, when we really look at the numbers, we are still carrying the burden of well over 90 percent, probably 95 percent, both in the number of troops there and in the cost to our taxpayers, which is ever increasing.

Our troops were told they would be liberators, not occupiers. It has not gone the way they were promised. Even their stays in Iraq have been extended and extended. They are exhausted.

I was pleased that my amendment to repay counties and cities that are paying the full salaries of guardsmen and reservists—at least reimburse them for 50 percent of the cost—was adopted.

Because, in my opinion, this administration never had a plan from day 1, except for a brilliant military strategy which worked very well in the invasion part of this war, I believe our troops are in grave danger. Because nothing was expected to happen to them that has happened to them, they did not even have the equipment, they did not even have the training they needed. They are underequipped, they are ill trained, and that leads me to the prison scandal.

I saw those photos yesterday, and I still cannot get them out of my mind. I did not see them all because I physically and mentally could not see any more of them, about 15 minutes' worth of the photos.

What has made our country great has been our constant and consistent support for human rights. What has made our country great has been our respect for humanity. We have been a beacon of hope, not a beacon of fear, in the world. People have always looked up to America. We have been mighty, we have been strong, and we have been firm. Nobody is as strong as we are. No one can touch us militarily. That is clear.

We have never, ever had a scandal like this where our people who say they were under direct orders did such despicable, brutal, terrifying acts against other human beings. People say there are despicable acts happening on so many sides, and they are so right. There are acts that are beyond description, such as what happened to young Mr. Berg and Danny Pearl. Does it make us any stronger, any more a leader to turn our backs on years of human rights, years of Geneva Conventions? Does it make us better? Does it make us stronger? Or does it make us more like them, those who have no respect for humanity?

This is America. When I was a little girl, my parents said: We are different than everyone else. If someone hurts us, we will fight back, but we will do it within the context of humanity.

Those acts that I saw against other human beings—some women, some who were never even charged with anything but were just being detained—the most horrendous sexual humiliation and, in some cases, attacks, I can tell you, most of us would have fainted if it was done to us, fainted rather than be conscious, rather than be knowing, rather than be debased. Most of us would want to be dead.

Our President must take responsibility. He is the Commander in Chief. President Truman did not say, "The buck stops anywhere else." It stops at the desk of the President. He is the head of the military.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 10 minutes.

Mrs. BOXER. I ask for an additional 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, landing on a carrier in good times is understandable. Many Presidents have done that. Unfortunately, for this one, he had a sign that said "Mission Accomplished," and that was not to be. I understand wanting to land on a carrier in dress in good times.

By the way, that was a moment when the whole world was with us, and he could have again engaged the international community, but he said no. They did not support us in the invasion, and they were not going to have any of the contracts. It was going to be kept for the people in this country, the Halliburtons, essentially. No, we could not share the glory of the moment—a horrific mistake, I think, when history is written.

I do not fault a President for landing on a carrier in good times. I do not fault a President—all of them have done it—for marching in parades with the heroes, the people who chose to fight for their country. Every one of us loves to stand for them, every one of us feels stronger, every one of us feels taller, every one of us feels proud. I do not fault the President for wanting to stand next to heroes, many of whom signed up. I do not blame him. But when things go wrong, that is the time when a real leader steps forward. A real leader would stop his ordinary schedule. A real leader would not be climbing into a campaign bus. This is my opinion, and this is my country, and this is what I think. A real leader, when faced with a crisis such as this, would stop everything.

We do not know how far up this goes. Today I read Secretary Rumsfeld told the committee he felt the rules of the prison were fine. After I came out of seeing those photographs, I said to myself and then I verbalized it to some of my colleagues, I do not want those photos seen by anyone in this country who has a pulse and a heart, but I have changed my mind.

If Secretary Rumsfeld says he thought the rules in the prison were fine, then I want the people of America to see what happened under the rules of

those prisons. We cannot baby the people. We must allow them to see what has happened.

It is a sad day in America when I am in a car with my 9-year-old grandson and I have to turn the radio off of even a music station because I fear they might have a news break and he is going to hear something that is going to make him frightened.

It is a hard time for our country, but we have had these hard times before. We have had the hard times domestically. We have had the hard times during war. After 9/11, I think the heart of this country was broken. We are facing a new enemy. It is going to be a long-term battle. I gave the President full authority to go get those people, the al-Qaida. Instead of doing that, he made a u-turn and went into Iraq with no plan, and we are paying a price.

Those young people who are saying they were not trained, we will find out if that is a fact, but these are tough times. The thing that keeps me going is the greatness of the American people, the wisdom of the American people, the strength of our Constitution and our ability to face these things head on. That is where I will close today.

The American people need to see the truth. They are told by Secretary Rumsfeld that what went on in that prison, that the rules of engagement in that prison, were fine with him.

I want to clarify that. He did not say what went on in the prison was fine with him. He said the rules that governed the prison were fine with him. What I am saying is those rules that allowed this behavior, one prisoner being pulled by a belt over and over again, his head slammed against a steel door, his hands behind his back, others being forced into positions that I will not describe, being harmed in the most vulnerable ways imaginable. No, I did not want people to see it, but now I fear they must see it.

All the talk about the privacy of the people, absolutely if they see it they cannot see faces. That is for sure.

I did not expect to be here today even talking about this. I came to talk about another subject, but when I heard the Secretary of Defense defend the rules of that prison I felt I had to come and tell the people of this country, and the good people of my State who have sent me here twice, I think they need to see it for themselves.

Do not take my word for it. Do not take the word of another Senator who says, oh, God, they are making such a fuss over this; what is all the outrage about. That is another reason they should see the pictures. Do not believe me. Do not believe that other Senator. Believe your eyes, believe what you see.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.