

No family should ever be faced with these questions. No mother or father should be faced with this pain and anguish. No family should be forced to compromise their values.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask the President and this body not to remove Mrs. Benitez, Maria Benitez, from her American citizen husband, her children, and her community. I respectfully ask that we do everything in our power to allow her the opportunity to remain a full and productive member of the United States of America. For the sake of the Benitez family and for the sake of millions of others in similar situations, let us work in a bipartisan fashion toward a much-needed, comprehensive, family-driven immigration policy in this country, because we need a system that allows people to come out of the shadows and work here legally, safely, and humanely. We need a system that regulates the future flow of workers so that it greatly enhances our border security through a combination of cutting-edge technology, improved cooperation, and increased resources.

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We need an immigration system that deals directly with the undocumented who are living, working, and contributing to a better and more dynamic America. We need a system that is tough and enforceable. We need a system that would eliminate the exploitation and abuses that are part of our underground economy.

Mr. Speaker, let us work together to create an immigration system that works for families, works for businesses, works for our community and does not take families like the Benitez family, and I want to reiterate, there are ten of thousands in the United States of America, American citizen husbands and American citizen wives being separated from spouses and from their American citizen children. Let us have real family values. Let us have an immigration system that keeps families united and together.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARCHANT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

U.S. MILITARY RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION, WHAT IS GOING WRONG?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I can remember what it felt like being here in this Congress as we were first debating the invasion of Iraq. And I remember asking the question, if it did not go

well, as the President of the United States and Secretary of Defense said it would, who would assume the long-term burden of security and policing in that country? And I can remember some very respected Members of this Chamber saying to me privately, do not worry, MARCY. You can buy your way to victory over there. You can buy anything you want. You can even buy people. You can even buy troops.

Now, 2 years later we witness daily the results of that arrogance. All the money being handed out, the billions of dollars on the streets, the Iraqi policing force cannot even get up three battalions to defend their own country. We ought to think about that. And filling the gap are our troops, God bless them, wanting to give to our Nation, upholding what this President and Congress has asked them to do, an administration that, in my judgment, has been far too careless and reckless with their lives.

Now we are being told that 160,000 Iraqis have now been trained, and yet all the professionals tell us if you can count three battalions over there that are ready to fight, you are doing well.

So tonight, Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the disturbing state of recruiting for our U.S. Armed Services, particularly in the United States Army, which is bearing the brunt of that conflict.

The newspapers report this week also that the applications for our Nation's service academies are down all over the country. This is not a good sign for regular order in our military.

While the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force met their recruiting goals just for the month of May, the Army fell woefully short. They were able to bring in just 75 percent of their monthly goal. Their target was 6,700, and they managed to recruit 5,039 young Americans. This is fully 1,661 recruits less than they need and that would meet the Army's goal to maintain their end-strength for this year.

Without any public notice, the U.S. Army lowered its recruiting goals in May, by the way, from 8,050 to 6,700; and I calculate that the Army thus fell 38 percent short of their real recruiting goal. And we ask our services how are they going to meet their ultimate goal for this year. They are currently 39,036 recruits away from hitting their ultimate number. And they have not had a monthly target that exceeded 8,000. So how on Earth do we expect that we can meet the goal of having units that are fully recruited?

In terms of year-to-day mission achieved, the Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Naval Reserve and Marine Corps were all nearly 20 percent below the number needed to achieve their yearly goals. So now we hear that the Army wants to offer an additional enlistment bonus of \$40,000 per recruit. And Army Times reports that the Army is proposing a pilot program to provide up to \$50,000 for home mortgages for those who sign up for active duty.

I have to tell you, being from a family of Marines and infantrymen, I do not think that the people of this country want to be bought either. There is a code in the military of duty, honor, and country. That is priceless. And to see these kinds of numbers being waved around cuts to the quick for a Member like myself. And throwing more and more money at our college students who are indebted, there is something that seems rather coarse and against the military code of honor that we have all come to respect and what we see the current Department of Defense doing.

I do not fault the young men and women of our country when they balk at joining the Armed Forces this year, be it active duty, Guard or Reserve. This is not what they had been led to believe would happen in Iraq. They have seen over 1,700 Americans perish, 12,861 soldiers terribly wounded. And we have seen 70 daily attacks on average now in Iraq.

And 67 percent of our active duty Army troops have been deployed at least twice since 2001, and 30 percent of our National Guard and 24 percent of our Reserve troops were deployed more than once in the same time frame. This has been so hard on families.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue later this week with additional information on what is happening in our beloved Armed Forces in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the disturbing state of recruiting for the U.S. Armed Services, particularly in the United States Army. Post reports today that applications are down at our nation's service academies as well.

On Friday June 10th, the Department of Defense released the May recruiting and retention statistics for the active and reserve components. These numbers display a negative pattern for certain components of our forces—one that is very distressing to this Member of Congress.

While the Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force met their recruiting goals for the month of May, the Army fell woefully short. They were able to bring in just 75 percent of their monthly goal—5,039 of the target 6,700.

This is a full 1,661 recruits less than the Army needs and means that the Army must to maintain their end-strength for FY 2005. And this percentage is mild compared to what it should have been.

Without any public notice, the U.S. Army lowered its recruiting goals for May from 8,050 to 6,700. Using these numbers, I calculate that the Army would have fallen 38 percent short of their recruiting goal. Thirty-eight percent Mr. Speaker. This raises many, many questions. Why was this target goal lowered with no explanation? How does the Army expect to meet their congressionally mandated end-strength totals in the last four months of this fiscal year?

The Army is currently 39,036 recruits away from hitting this number. That is just under 10,000 new recruits per month. Mr. Speaker, the Army has not recruited this many people in a single month all year. They have not had a monthly target that exceeded 8,000. How on earth do they expect to make this happen?

And this shortfall is just for the active duty component. The Army Reserve recruited 82 percent of their May monthly goal, the Marine Corps Reserve just 88 percent of their monthly goal and the Navy Reserve brought aboard 94 percent of their monthly goal.

This is not a new trend. As of March 31st, four of the Reserve components were still falling significantly short of their recruiting objectives. In terms of year-to-date mission achieved, the Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Naval Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve were all nearly 20 percent below the number needed to achieve their yearly goals. This information should be frightening to every Member of Congress. Not only is the shortfall affecting the active duty components, it is trickling down to our Guard and Reserve as well.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this speaks volumes. So what steps have been taken to increase recruiting for the services?

The Army wants to double the enlistment bonus for certain hard to fill jobs to \$40,000 (as reported by USA Today on June 10) and the Army Times reports that the "Army is proposing a pilot program to provide up to \$50,000 in home mortgage help for those who sign up for active duty." All this on top of having spent nearly \$200 million on positive and upbeat television ads and increased their recruiter pool by 1,000. Moreover, the Army National Guard has announced that they will add another 500 recruiters for a total plus-up of 1,900 (to 4,600) in 2005. The Army Reserve is adding 734 for a total of 1,774.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that simply increasing the number of military recruiters and throwing more and more money in the faces of our nation's high-school and college students is going to solve the recruiting shortfall.

No, we need to dig deep to understand the factors that are causing these shortfalls and address the situation there.

A Congressional Research Service report on this very issue notes that the United States has become embroiled in several major military operations overseas "that have dramatically increased the operations tempo of the military services. This has been especially true in the Army, which has shouldered the bulk of the manpower burden associated with the occupation of Iraq. Additionally, more military personnel have been killed or wounded in Iraq than in any other conflict since the Vietnam War. Many observers have expressed concern that the current operations tempo, and the level of casualties in Iraq, might lead to lower recruiting and retention rates, thereby jeopardizing the vitality of today's all volunteer military."

There cannot be any disagreement that the Global War on Terror (specifically operations in Iraq and Afghanistan) has taken its toll on military recruitment and retention. And I'm not sure that anyone over at the Department of Defense is listening.

I don't fault young men and women when they balk at joining the armed forces this year—be it active duty, guard or reserve. This is not what they had been led to believe would happen in Iraq.

Not when we have seen more than 1,700 Americans perish in Iraq since March of 2003. Not when 12,861 soldiers have been wounded in action.

Not when last month saw approximately 70 daily attacks by insurgents in Iraq.

Not when 67 percent of Active Duty Army troops have been deployed at least twice between 9/01 and 1/05.

Not when 30 percent of National Guard and 24 percent of Reserve troops were also deployed more than once in that same time-frame.

Not when we are sending troops to Iraq without the best armor, vehicles and equipment possible.

And not when this Administration routinely shortchanges the amount of money we should spend on Veterans in this nation all while mismanaging an unpopular war.

Mr. Speaker, our recruiting problems stem directly from the Administration's poor plan for Iraq. The young men and women in this great nation are not opposed to serving our nation in times of need. We know they are quite willing to sacrifice for the greater good. But I think it is undeniable that they do not believe protecting the oil pipelines by Iraq and unilaterally and preemptively attacking a nation that posed no strategic threat to the United States is a part of the greater good.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EFFECTS OF ACCUTANE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I come here tonight concerned about drug safety and to speak out to protect our children from the acne drug Accutane. As a legislator, I have called for more restrictions on the distribution and use of this drug, which is known to cause severe birth defects and a form of impulsive behavior and depression in patients taking this drug.

This drug has devastated my family with the loss of our son BJ and more than 268 other families who have lost their young son or daughter while he or she was taking Accutane.

News stories persist concerning the safety of our prescription drugs. When an FDA safety reviewer, Dr. David Graham, testified before the Senate Finance Committee this past winter, he stated, "I would argue that the FDA as currently configured is incapable of protecting America against another Vioxx." He went on to tell the Senate Finance Committee that "there are at least five other drugs on the market today that should be looked at seriously to see whether they should remain on the market." He cited the acne drug Accutane.

Why Accutane? Accutane is the poster child for why we need an independent body to approve and review drug safety. Accutane causes horrendous birth defects and may cause psychiatric disorders such as depression and suicide. It is linked to over 268 suicides, according to the FDA.

A recent study here by Dr. J. Douglas Bremner demonstrates how Accutane affects the brain, possibly causing impulsive behavior due to changes in the orbitofrontal cortex. This is the front part of the brain. This is an area known to cause or mediate depression.

As Dr. Bremner showed us in his study of the brain, there is a decrease in the metabolism of the brain. This chart here is of two PET scans of the same person's brain. The PET scan on your left establishes a baseline for the person before they took Accutane.

Now look at the second PET scan of the same person after 4 months on Accutane. Notice in the first scan before the Accutane the color red representing brain activity in the front part of the brain.

Now, on the second PET scan, the post-Accutane one, notice very little red, representing decreased brain activity in the same person after 4 months on Accutane therapy. Accutane decreases the metabolism in the front part of the brain, the area we know that mediates depression.

Dr. Bremner has concluded that this one patient here, there is a 21 percent decrease in brain metabolism in this patient. This change in the brain only occurred in Accutane patients.

Dr. Bremner performed PET scans on other non-Accutane patients who were taking a different oral antibiotic for acne. None of these patients experienced any brain changes.

Dr. Bremner also found that one-half of his Accutane patients in this study experienced a brain change, those who complained of severe headaches. Is it the excessive dosage found in the current formula of Accutane that is the cause of the change in the brain that we see in this PET scan?

The medical evidence is clear that Accutane causes changes in the brain, and this may be what leads some people to take their lives.

Let us join with Dr. Graham, the Centers for Disease Control, and other health care groups that have expressed strong concerns about the safety of this drug and who have called for Accutane to be withdrawn from the market as far back as 1990.

Let us pull Accutane from the market at least until we have all the answers surrounding this powerful drug. At the very least, the FDA should immediately require a large-scale review and study on the drug's effects on the brain.

Is this change of metabolism we see, that we see here, is it reversible? Will the brain repair itself? What amount or what dose of Accutane is safe? What amount or what dose of Accutane can be safely taken so the human brain is not affected? Has the FDA done enough to protect the American people, especially our young people, from the side effects of Accutane? Has the FDA seriously looked at Dr. Bremner's study and similar studies in animal testing, all of which demonstrate Accutane affects the brain?