

His actions are of conspicuous valor and, therefore, worthy of the Medal of Honor.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that the legal barriers that have prevented these heroes from being recognized will be lifted in legislation soon to be enacted by Congress.

As a result, these heroic individuals will soon be recipients of the Medal of Honor and we have set the record straight and we have touched for a moment that which is at the heart of our pride in being American.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

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

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise once again on the floor of the House of Representatives to call upon this House to pass prescription drug coverage for senior citizens and those who are disabled under Medicare and to work for other strategies to lower the cost of prescription drugs for all family members.

Today in particular, I am rising to read a letter, as I am every week now rising to share a letter from one of my constituents in Michigan. This week I would like to read a letter from a 76-year-old woman who is a breast cancer survivor from Fenton, Michigan. She is the widow of a disabled veteran.

I want to speak more about the fact that we need to be focused on our veterans who do not have prescription drug coverage and are struggling to pay the cost of their medications. Now, as we are approaching Memorial Day, we need to be honoring them by addressing this serious health care issue.

But first let me read the letter.

Dear Mrs. Stabenow, I am writing to you concerning the high cost of prescription drugs, which, I believe, you are on a campaign to cut the cost of for senior citizens who are on a fixed income and need these drugs.

I am the widow of a disabled veteran, who, at the age of 32, was on total disability. I went to work to help out, as we needed the extra money. We had two children. My mother lived with us and took care of the children.

My mother became too ill to take care of them, so I had to quit my job and stay home. It was hard financially, but we managed to get by, living on a strict budget. My husband's disability was a condition that he needed me around him all the time. When the boys got older, I tried to work again, but my husband begged me to stay home with him, which I did.

My husband died when he was 50. I was able to save a little money, which I intended to use to enjoy a little more life than I had been able to.

In 1995, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, which I went through and got on with my life. In December 1999, I had another mastectomy, which I hope I will recover from as well as I did in the case of my first mastectomy.

Since the time I was diagnosed with cancer, the cost of my drugs has spiraled up and up. I live on a fixed income. I also have to

pay for health insurance. Believe me, I am not complaining, "poor little me." There are many people worse off than me, and this is why I am writing. Maybe my letter will help others.

I will give you an estimate of what I am paying every month for drugs.

She proceeds through a long list. Her cancer medication is \$180 for 31 tablets. Her high blood pressure medication is \$21 for a month's supply. Her blood thinner medication is \$20 for a month. Nasal spray is \$58 for a month. And on and on.

The total for each month for my constituent is \$377.85 and it continues to go up and up, as she indicates in her letter.

She indicates here that she hopes that everyone who needs these drugs will be able to afford them and live a healthier life.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise, as we approach Memorial Day, to recognize the fact that not only my constituent from Fenton, Michigan, but four million veterans and four million spouses of veterans in this country have no help for their prescription drug coverage. We are talking about people who were willing to lay their lives on the line.

This Monday we will honor those who gave their lives in service for our Nation. And in light of this and these statistics, I believe we need to call upon all of us to act immediately to address the issue of the high cost of prescription drugs, particularly for our older Americans where we have the opportunity by just simply passing Medicare coverage, by modernizing Medicare, to cover the way health care is provided today with prescription drug coverage.

We can honor our veterans by fulfilling the promise of health care that was made to them. Each one of our servicemen and women, as they come to the service of our country, they sign on the dotted line; and we, in return, indicate to them the promise of health care. Not only are we not fulfilling the health care promise to our veterans as it relates to full funding health care for our veterans, but when we have 4 million of our veterans, 4 million of their spouses that do not have any access to help cover their prescription drug coverage, we need to act. There is something wrong; and we need to take it very, very seriously.

It is not right when someone who has cared for her disabled husband, someone who is a disabled veteran, his wife, who goes on to have health care problems herself, who has saved a little bit in her life now finds herself using all of those little bit of savings in order to pay for her medication and then find herself on a fixed income paying almost \$400 a month for medications.

We need to act. It is time now to lower the cost of prescription drugs and to modernize Medicare.

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

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

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

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

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES PASSES BILL TO PURCHASE BACA RANCH IN NEW MEXICO

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, today the Committee on Resources passed a bill to purchase the Baca Ranch in New Mexico. This is a very bad deal for the taxpayers.

The family that owns this ranch bought it in 1961 for \$2.1 million. Now, under the bill passed out of committee today, the Federal Government is going to pay \$101 million for this property, almost 50 times the original purchase price.

I would bet almost everyone in this Nation would like to sell their property for 50 times what they paid for it.

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This is a colossal rip-off of the taxpayers. My office yesterday asked the Congressional Research Service to run the numbers for us. According to CRS, there has been a 452 percent inflation since 1961. Adjusted for inflation, this property should be worth \$11.7 million, or about 5½ times the original purchase price.

We definitely should not be paying \$101 million for property that was bought for \$2.1 million, and today adjusted for inflation should be worth \$11.7 million. This is welfare for the rich, a windfall for the wealthy.

However, it will be passed by a huge margin, because it has strong bipartisan support in New Mexico. I watched a tape about this property. It is beautiful; however, the most overused word in this Congress is the word pristine. We are constantly told that we have to buy this property or that property, because it is beautiful and pristine, but if the Federal Government tried to buy every beautiful, pristine piece of property in this country, it would bankrupt our government and shatter our economy, besides the Federal Government already owns 37 percent of New Mexico, millions of acres.

The Federal Government certainly does not need any more of New Mexico; it has too much already. Private property is one of the main foundations of our prosperity. It is one of the cornerstones of our freedom. Private property is one of the main things that has set us apart from socialist and Communist nations.