

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 gentlewoman 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?