

added to Article 93 of the UCMJ. Since females do not deserve to be harassed sexually, or in any other manner, soldiers, regardless of sex, do not deserve to be harassed or chastised for being mentally ill. They deserve treatment. Therefore, I recommend Article 93 be amended to emphasize that any forms of stigma towards soldiers, regardless of rank, be a violation of the article.

MEDICAL EVALUATION BOARDS (MEB)

Medical evaluation board (MEB) proceedings should be commenced for all soldiers demonstrating symptoms of mental illness, regardless of the symptoms or the illness. An MEB establishes a disability rating, and the soldier is separated under honorably. Subsequently, he or she is able to obtain VA medical care for a service-connected disability, and may request disability percentage increases if his or her condition worsens. If a psychiatrist diagnoses a soldier with a "personality disorder," the soldier should not be separated under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200 governing personality disorders. He or she shall be medically separated with a disability rating.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned in the abstract, this correspondence involves recommendations and proposals that may already have been taken into consideration, or implemented within the Army. This correspondence is not intended in any way to insult the Army in any way. Its primary purpose is to attempt to assist with the prevention of suicides within the Army, regardless of whether soldiers are deployed or not. Too many soldiers have taken their lives over the past few years for unknown reasons. However, I have seen first hand soldiers take their own lives due to failed leadership. It is time to be proactive, and ensure more preventive measures are taken. Soldiers are human beings, not super heroes. Hence, missions cannot be completed without healthy soldiers on the front lines.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, our next big objective is health care reform.

We have a unique opportunity to move forward on health reform this year. Now we must act. We simply cannot afford to wait any longer to fix our Nation's health care system.

We must work together to reduce health care costs, improve quality, and make coverage affordable for all Americans.

In the Finance Committee, we have held 13 hearings to prepare for health reform. Last week, we held a hearing on our Nation's health care workforce. The hearing examined ways to address our current workforce needs. The hearing considered ways to prepare our medical providers for health care reform.

At our hearing, four experts in the field testified about current health care workforce shortages, especially in primary care and nursing, and the witnesses told us that we must address these health workforce needs to meaningfully reform our health system.

Dr. David Goodman, the director of the Center for Health Policy Research, said: "The workforce we train today will shape, for good or bad, tomorrow's health system."

Dr. Goodman continued, "It will be hard to improve access, achieve better

health outcomes and decrease health care expenditure growth rates unless we get workforce policy right."

I could not agree more.

Our efforts on health care reform are only as strong as our Nation's health care providers—the nurses, doctors, and other professionals—who are on the front lines caring for patients.

Investing in our health care workforce is critical as we work to expand health insurance coverage to millions of currently uninsured Americans.

During our hearing, Dr. Allan Goroll, a primary care doctor and professor at Harvard University, told us about the Massachusetts experience following the enactment of State health reform. Dr. Goroll said that some newly insured people in Massachusetts are waiting up to 2 months to get a doctor's appointment. That is simply unacceptable.

For our health care reform efforts to succeed, we must directly address these health workforce challenges.

It starts with primary care. Our current system greatly undervalues primary care. As a result, fewer students are going into the field. A recent study found that only 1 in 50 medical students plans a career in primary care internal medicine. That is down from more than one in five in the early 1990s. This trend is especially troubling, because it is clear that a strong primary care system is a key determinant of high quality, efficient medical care.

During our hearing, we learned that areas of the country with a high proportion of primary care doctors spend less money on health care. And patients there have the same or better outcomes.

We need to invest in our Nation's primary care providers to help improve the quality of our medical care and to bring down health care costs.

Our workforce challenges extend beyond primary care. Our Nation's hospitals continue to face a nursing shortage. Recent news reports tell of shortages of general surgeons and dentists in rural areas. Many parts of the country need more mental health practitioners. And the list could go on.

We need to tackle these challenges head-on. We need to place our Nation's health care workforce on sound footing. And we need to meet the medical needs of all Americans.

This is going to require a renewed focus on the way that we pay for and deliver health care. We must ensure our payment systems reward high quality medical care and encourage medical students to go into critical fields like primary care.

And we are going to need to take a hard look at our national workforce policies to make sure that our health care providers have the right training and skills to deliver excellent care.

This effort is vital for our health reform efforts to succeed. So let's get to work now.

Let's work together to strengthen our Nation's health care workforce.

Let's build a health care system that delivers high-quality medical care for everyone. And let's act now.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering well over 1,200, are heartbreaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant. To respect the efforts of those who took the opportunity to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through an address set up specifically for this purpose to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Read below and explain why you or anyone would vote to stop drilling when the country is in such turmoil. Please [tell me why so many people have plenty while] I struggle with student loans that I just paid a company to try and get eliminated. If you want to help me, call the Department of Education and tell them to forgive my student loans. I paid [a company] \$399 to get my loans discharged, so make a call and tell Department of Education to just do it without me suing them. It is said you get a denial letter, then you go to a lawyer just like for disability. Well, here is your chance to help an Idaho teacher that just lost her job due to mismanaged funds with [a local school district]. They are \$2 million in debt so they [laid off several teachers and para-educators]. So I am asking for help.

BLOCKED IN D.C.

Investors Business Daily estimates there are 1 trillion barrels of oil trapped in shale in the U.S. and Canada. Retrieving just a 10th of it would quadruple our current oil reserves. There is a pool of oil in the Gulf of Mexico that is estimated to be as large as any in the Middle East. There is an equally large pool believed to be in Alaska.

The Chinese are attempting to tap into the Gulf oil supply by drilling diagonally from Cuba. I wonder what environmental safeguards they are using?

The fact is that there are environmentally safe methods of extracting oil from shale and drilling in both the Gulf and Alaska. Congress, however, continues to block these efforts. Just last week, the Senate voted to block any extraction from shale in Colorado. In essence, they voted to make your trips to the gas station more expensive, to make air travel more expensive, and to make heating your home more expensive. That is something to think about in an election year.

Another topic: Social Security

Another issue that concerns many Americans these days is the sustainability of