

To put it in perspective, the Veterans Hospital in southern Ohio, where I serve, tells me that the average veteran who gets a prescription medication there on average gets 10 or more prescriptions. So if we take \$7 a prescription and we multiply it by 10, that is \$70 per month. Many of these veterans receive a 3-month supply of medications at a time. Three times \$70 is \$210. If I multiply the cost of a 1-month supply of medication at \$7 per prescription for 10 prescriptions, that is \$840 per year.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is an unnecessary burden to place upon our veterans. We hear a lot of lofty rhetoric in this Chamber about how we appreciate the fact that so many American citizens are willing to serve in our military, and many of them give their lives and limb in order to protect our freedoms.

It seems so inappropriate at this time in our Nation's history to place this additional burden upon our veterans. So I have introduced H.R. 2820. I have over 75 cosponsors at this time, bipartisan cosponsors, and I am happy to say the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) has introduced this legislation with me. This legislation is very simple. It would simply return the cost of the co-payment for a prescription drug from the \$7 that has been imposed down to the \$2 level where it has been. It would freeze the co-payment at the \$2 per prescription level for the next 5 years.

Mr. Speaker, surely when we can find the resources to give a \$15 billion bailout to our airline industry, surely when we can find the resources to give tax breaks, surely when we can find the resources to do a whole host of other things in this Chamber, we can find the resources that will enable us to keep from imposing this additional burden upon our Nation's veterans.

So, once again, I ask all of my colleagues of both parties in this House to simply cosponsor H.R. 2820 so that we can remove this burden which has been placed upon our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to mention another burden for our veterans. For category 7 veterans, there is a proposal that we would place upon them an annual \$1,500 deductible when they go to our veterans' health centers and clinics and hospitals to receive medical attention. This also seems like something that we should take action to prevent in this Chamber. I urge my colleagues, this is something that we can do. We ought to do it. I believe if Members talk to veterans around the country, this is something that they are keenly aware of and keenly object to.

We can solve this problem regarding the prescription co-pay by passing this very simple but important piece of legislation, H.R. 2820.

PRESIDENTIAL DECISION ON STEEL IMPORTS

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment on President Bush's decision to levy up to a 30 percent tariff on steel imports coming into the United States. I am glad the President took a step forward, something that we hoped he would do, but he did much less than we asked. Steel companies, steelworkers, elected officials representing steel States, asked the President to levy 40 percent tariffs for 4 years, something to level the playing field for imported steel in the United States.

The International Trade Commission had found that steel companies in foreign lands, especially in Russia, Brazil, Korea, and China had violated international trade laws by subsidizing and selling into our market illegally priced steel, so-called dumping. The President had the option of levying tariffs up to 40 percent for 4 years. That is clearly what we needed for LTV in Cleveland, for RTI in Lorain, for CSC in Warren, Ohio, and steel companies all over this great country from Alabama to Ohio to Michigan, to Indiana, wherever steel is made in the United States.

Unfortunately, the President's decision to do up to 30 percent, understanding that it was not 30 percent in every case but up to 30 percent for only 3 years, fell short on that mark. It also fell short because the 30 percent is phased out during those 3 years.

The second thing that the President neglected to do was deal with the issue of legacy costs. That is those costs of health care and pensions that companies have promised to steelworkers that in many cases the commitment will not be met.

So on the one hand steelworkers with their health care are left out in the cold, those people who are retired. Second, those companies that absorbed legacy costs are in a competitive disadvantage with the rest of the world because most countries have universal health coverage provided by a government program, while in the United States in our employment-employer based health care system, the steel companies and other companies pay for the cost of the health care. So that puts us at a competitive disadvantage there.

It also is an argument for universal coverage because all American companies are at a competitive disadvantage when the government provides the health care in a Medicare-type system that most countries around the world have. Yet, in America, employers must pick up those health care costs.

The third problem with the President's decision on steel and where he fell short and the reason for my disappointment is that the President opened up several loopholes in his tariff proposals, in his tariff enactments.

For instance, there is a Mexico exception which allows companies in China, Korea, Japan and other places to sell their steel into Mexico at very low or nonexistent tariff rates. Then Mexico will sell that steel into the United States at a zero tariff because of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

So that Mexico exception allows those companies which have illegally priced their steel according to the International Trade Commission to back-door their steel through Mexico into the United States at no tariff. All Mexico has to do, if even that, is a Mexican company needs to do a little value added to the steel, stamp Made in Mexico, and send it into the United States.

Mr. Speaker, that could be a difficult thing to do, except that we do not police our borders well enough. We do not have tariff and customs inspectors in as nearly a comprehensive way as we ought to have.

Those are the problems with the Bush tariff plan. One, it is not 40 percent over 4 years. It falls woefully short. Second, it does not deal with the legacy costs which is unfair to those retirees. LTV workers lose their health care March 31. Other retirees have already lost theirs. It does not deal with the legacy costs for those companies that are continuing to produce steel. And, third, it creates the Mexico exception. That will hurt our steel industry. It is a question of national security. That will hurt our steelworkers. It is a question of our communities.

TRIBUTE TO TECHNICAL SERGEANT JOHN A. CHAPMAN

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

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I offer my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Technical Sergeant John A. Chapman of the Twenty-fourth Special Tactics Squadron of the United States Air Force who gave his life in the service of our country. I join with his family and friends in paying tribute to him for his ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our Nation. My prayers are for his family.

John Chapman was a decorated soldier who readily and courageously participated in Operation Enduring Freedom. Among his many awards and decorations were: two Air Force Commendation Medals, two Air Force Achievement Medals, and two Joint Service Achievement Medals.

This tragedy should act as a reminder to all Americans that the liberties we hold dear are neither free nor secure. Our freedoms are earned and protected by our servicemen and women. They risk their lives so that freedom may survive.

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Technical Sergeant Chapman's courage in the face of danger reflects a